Faith, Class and Politics:
The Role of the Churches in Teacher Training, 1914–1945

Mark Lofthouse

Dedication

This book is dedicated to my family:
Frances, Anna and James, Richard and Stephanie, Helen and David.

Preface and Acknowledgements

In November, 2008, Anglicans were accused by Professor Jonathan Clark[1] of collectively losing their memory. If, as Clark argues, you have forgotten your past, you are in danger of forgetting your identity.[2] This book attempts to address cultural memory loss by re-examining the critical role played by the churches in the development of teacher training, focusing on their colleges. If Anglicans and other denominationalists are losing their memories, amnesia is being encouraged by secularist historians[3] airbrushing out of history the contribution made to British society by religion. As L.P. Hartley observed, 'The past is a foreign country. They do things differently there'.[4] In contrast to the secularist tendencies apparent in British society at the opening of the twenty-first century, re-tracing the development of teacher training takes us to a foreign country. It takes us to a place where religion was central to the development of society in the nineteenth century, where religion became a weaker influence during the twentieth century following the disasters of the First World War and finally to the first decade of the twenty-first century, where religion has become a life-style choice.[5] However, to take this last view (which is in any case contestable) and argue it back into the nineteenth century is foolish. Current orthodoxies are not good time travellers.

This volume is a substantially revised edition of *The Church Colleges 1918-1939: the struggle for survival*[6], originally published in 1992 and now both extended and updated. In the introduction to this second edition, the birth and subsequent development of the denominational colleges during the Victorian period is described. Secondary source material for this period is abundant and general readers will find the topic well covered by Rich[7] and Tropp.[8] A more modern account covering the period 1907 to 1950 is provided by Cunningham and Gardner.[9] Academic scholars seeking to probe deeper are recommended to consult Fuller[10] and Shakoor.[11] However, the abundance of materials rapidly dwindles and becomes a famine as the twentieth century develops. This account is an attempt to redress the balance. The story of the denominational colleges as recounted in this book begins at the outset of the First World War in 1914, and ends at the conclusion of the Second World War in 1945. Why this period? Mainly because apart from a sprinkling of academic articles and insights derived from institutional histories, the collective history of the colleges

during these years is predominantly unknown and ignored.[12] In short, the denominational colleges became academically unfashionable during the inter-war period, before ceasing to exist (in large numbers) during the Government-inspired cull of 1975–1976.[13] The final chapter of this book attempts to bring the story up to date but 'From Blitz to Blair' constitutes a survey rather than a study. If there are students reading this, can I observe that there are several PhD theses nestling unwritten in the final chapter concerning both the demise of the denominational colleges[14] and the end of what I would consider to be intelligent teacher training during the Thatcher and Blair years.[15]

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In recording my thanks and appreciation I must exempt all mentioned from responsibility for the judgements and opinions expressed. These, along with any remaining imperfections in the book, are entirely my own.

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Introduction

In 1597 John Lyly complained, 'If any man among all his servants shall espy one either filthy in his talk or foolish in his behaviour, him he committeth ye guiding and tuition of his sons'.[1] This is perhaps the first of many examples of the peculiarly English habit of selecting teachers on the basis of negative qualities and, having done so, ensuring that they receive scant recognition for their labours.

While teachers in Europe were marching purposefully towards respectable middle class status during the nineteenth century, their counterparts in England were marking time. In *Lark Rise to Candleford*, Flora Thompson's detailed portrayal of late nineteenth century rural England, the vicar's wife is described as being in an agony of indecision whether to invite the village school mistress to scullery, or parlour, tea. Her quandary is not fully resolved until Miss Holmes' long engagement to the head gardener ends in marriage and they move into a proper cottage. As a married woman, Miss Holmes ceases to teach and can therefore be received by polite society – in the parlour and not in the scullery.[2] However, even this was viewed with disfavour in many circles. Charles Dickens, a sensitive barometer of Victorian feelings, reserves some of his most vicious character portraits for teachers attempting to rise above their social station. In *Our Mutual Friend* the elementary school teacher, Bradley Headstone, is scorned as a social climber and a villain. Dickens makes no attempt to separate the two because in Victorian eyes they were inseparable.

Part of the problem was the reluctance of the state to become involved in the provision of schooling. In England it held back until 1870. Prior to this, elementary education was seen as charity and the provision of charity was linked to the maintenance of social control. When it was reluctantly conceded to be necessary, teacher training was inextricably bound up in the social expectations of the period.

When James Kay-Shuttleworth set up a training college in Battersea, London, in 1840, he left his students in no doubt regarding the strictly vocational nature of their calling. He was convinced that the drudgery of teaching the lower classes could be successfully and conscientiously carried out only by persons motivated by a real feeling of vocation. His great fear was that a little learning acquired during training

might foster an empty intellectual pride. The cure for this evil was to be found in a religious training allied to a Spartan standard of living.[3]

Just how Spartan the regime at Battersea was, is vividly recounted by one student, Thomas Adkins. Kay-Shuttleworth and his partner, Mr Tufnell, rose with the students at 6.00am and toiled long hours in the gardens which supplied the college with food. Like the students, both men seem to have been engaged in ceaseless activity from morning till night. 'The remainder of our day' wrote Adkins, 'follows on corresponding lines. We are in the classrooms again from two to five; the gardens and the animals claim us from five to six, and at quarter past six we partake of our frugal supper, of which bowls of bread and milk constitute the principal feature. Drill, copying and religious worship fill the rest of the day, till at twenty minutes past nine we retire to rest.'[4] Adkins' vivid description of life at Battersea College is important because he captures a pattern of life and expectations which were to endure in England long after the nineteenth century had given way to the twentieth.

In 1843 financial difficulties forced Kay-Shuttleworth to relinquish control of Battersea to the Church of England National Society, who found they had acquired the ideal model for mass production. The principles of training were founded on religious belief and practice. The methods were simple and cheap to apply. The National Society found little need to alter existing practices, apart from the appointment of a clergyman as principal, a precedent that was soon to become standard practice. Not surprisingly, these conditions encouraged the National Society to expand its teacher training efforts rapidly. Writing in 1875 Mr Tufnell, Kay-Shuttleworth's original partner, proudly declared, 'I have had the satisfaction of seeing the establishment of forty training colleges, all founded on the principles first exemplified at Battersea'.[5]

A generous interpretation of these principles might be: plain living as preparation for vocational living. Narrowly interpreted, the same principles gave rise to complaints of a training servitude. The voices of secularists and dissenters, increasingly loud and insistent, began to criticize the emphasis placed in denominational colleges upon vocational duty. Secularists and nonconformists began to look enviously north of the border to the Glasgow Seminary, where David Stow paid far more attention to

developing a student's individual knowledge and personal qualities.[6] Although this Scottish model made some progress in Wesleyan and Congregationalist colleges,[7] these colleges were, like their Anglican counterparts, residential and their management imbued with religious principles, albeit nonconformist ones. For good or ill, the residential religious college came to dominate the teacher training scene,[8] and indeed a far wider terrain. In terms of Hartley's remark that the past is a foreign country[9], culturally speaking the mid-nineteenth century takes us into very unfamiliar territory. At this time religion was an extremely serious business, where Godliness and good learning were the two faces of the same coin.[10] 'What is a college without a chapel?' Bishop Christopher Wordsworth once asked a friend who was a canon of Winchester Cathedral. 'An angel without wings' came the prompt reply.[11] The Bishop rejoiced because his friend's swift response confirmed his own passionate belief that to separate religion from education was a grievous error. The Bishop was not alone. Annan[12] argues that evangelical morality was the most widespread and most potent influence at work in Victorian England. The evangelicals imbued nineteenth century society with a moral earnestness which encouraged philanthropy, missionary zeal and, above all else, enthusiasm.[13] The Church training colleges sprang into life on a wave of religious enthusiasm.. When the first tide of evangelical fervour began to ebb, the denominational colleges (like their counterparts in the universities and public schools) quickly embraced a new enthusiasm for the games ethic[14] which quickly led to Godliness being express through manliness.[15] Histories of the individual colleges sometimes fail to capture the fact that these institutions were collectively part of wider religious and social movements impacting on society.[16] Given the tepid response to organized religion in the twenty-first century, it is startling to explore a period when religious conviction dominated public life.

From 1840 until 1890, fuelled by changing mixtures of religious enthusiasms, the denominational colleges enjoyed a monopoly of teacher training. Like most monopolies, it was soon to be resented. Apart from a handful of nonconformist and dissenting establishments, the majority of colleges were Anglican in establishment and management. 'Entry to such colleges', complained James Yoxall, Secretary to the National Union of Teachers, 'is not based on merit but rests solely on the response to the question, "Are you a communicant member of the Church of England?"'[17] Thus both nonconformists and secularists had good grounds for resenting Anglican

hegemony and they united to challenge this during the Royal Commission on the Elementary Acts, 1888 – familiarly known as the Cross Commission.

One of the most striking members of the Commission was the Honourable Edward Lyulph Stanley[18] who, according to his nephew Bertrand Russell, 'Spent his time fighting the church on the London School Board'.[19] Stanley skilfully combined an outright secularist programme with nonconformist grievances. By so doing he won acceptance for 'The experiment of a system of day training for teachers and of day training colleges on a limited scale'.[20] The establishment of these colleges represented a major breach in the denominational wall, for they were not to be run by the churches, but by the universities.

Once announced, the idea caught fire. The limited experiment of launching just a few day training colleges was quietly put to one side as large numbers of students applied to universities taken by surprise. Almost immediately the 'day training' title became redundant because students could acquire teacher status through full membership of a university or university college.

Regrettably, even the great enhancement of the university connection did little to curb the malign tendency of the English to despise their teachers. A salutary counterblast to the typically triumphalist accounts of the rise and rise of day training colleges is provided by Elspeth Huxley. Studying at Reading University during the mid 1920s, Huxley mercilessly reveals the snobberies and attitudes prevalent at the time:

> I soon discovered that, as in all walks of English life, this unpretentious university of some eight hundred lower middle class students was honeycombed with subtle snobberies. There was a pecking order among studies as well as among people; agriculture ranked high, not because farming was regarded as a snob pursuit, but because most of the graduates would join the staff of some local authority or Government Department, the latter in the Empire as it was then.
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> So to be an 'agri' was all right, and so was a 'horti'; pure scientists, historians and classicists occupied a middle range, and at the bottom, I regret to say,

> came the future teachers, who read for a two year diploma instead of a three or four year degree. Why future teachers should have been so poorly thought of I do not know – I suppose because they were so poorly paid. 'Edu's' tended to cluster together, looking earnest, pallid (probably from malnutrition) and even more drearily dressed than the rest of us; to dodge coffees in the buttery because twopence was beyond their means; and if girls, to live in a remote hall called St George's that no-one else ever visited.[21]

Contemporary in age with Elspeth Huxley was John Betjeman, who famously describes in his blank verse biography *Summoned by Bells* his sad departure from Oxford.[22] However mistreated by the world Betjeman felt, his fate was kinder than that experienced by malnourished 'edu's' emerging from provincial Reading. Despite being sent down from Oxford without a degree, Betjeman experienced little difficulty in picking up a job in a public school as a games master, a post for which he was ludicrously unfitted.[23] In sharp contrast, Huxley and her contemporaries found their vocational roads harder and tougher. This point signals a need to understand some of the complex attitudes to class examined in this book. Undertaking teacher training was a badge, signifying to the outside world that the holder was predestined to work in state schools. Betjeman and others, with or without a degree, were perfectly at liberty to work in independent schools, as is the case today. The golden world of undergraduate Oxford described so lovingly and passionately by Betjeman[24] is a world away from life in the Church colleges. Indeed, however difficult life was for the 'edu's' at Reading University, it nevertheless compared favourably with regimes operating in the denominational colleges. Although denominationalists were apprehensive of their new rivals,[25] during the 1890s there is little evidence to suggest that they seized the opportunity to overhaul the Battersea model. Only in 1902, with the passing of the Balfour Education Act, did alarm bells start ringing in denominational circles. Embedded in the 1902 legislation were powers for the newly created Local Education Authorities (LEAs) to build a new tier of non-denominational training colleges. With access to funding via the rating system, the new LEA colleges had the means to surpass existing denominational and university models. The prospect of rivalry from both university and LEA sectors acutely dismayed the Anglican Inspector of Colleges. Writing to the Dean of Chichester in June, 1903, he lamented 'It is a very unholy trinity of training being imposed upon the

country'.[26] Unholy or otherwise, it was this three tier pattern of college provision which took root and began to grow during the first years of the twentieth century.

It is against the backdrop of this three tier pattern of provision that the people, policies and politics of our story unfold. What unifying themes knit together a potentially disparate narrative? The impact of class attitudes throughout the inter-war period (and beyond) is a consistent reference point. The issue of class amounts to rather more than a crude reiteration of the class war along Marxist lines. In the field of teacher training unconscious class attitudes played a major role. Successive ministers and their civil servants, before and after the Second World War, had no first hand experience of the schools and colleges they administered. F.H. Spencer, who rose through the ranks and attended Westminster Methodist Training College before joining the inspectorate, wrote scathingly of the incomprehension that dominated policy making. Referring to politicians and administrators alike Spencer complained, 'They lack imagination and they lack positive enthusiasm ... in sum, their attitude is always critical and seldom constructive'.[27] Spencer drew a final, definitive conclusion. 'These people' he wrote 'are no good for their purpose'.[28] No good for their purpose, argued Spencer, not just because of their disdain for training, but because of their political and administrative incompetence. George Bernard Shaw once complained that the only factor uniting all English people was their collective and 'obstinate prejudice against the organization of any competent bureaucracy'.[29] Developing competent bureaucracies eluded governments and denominationalists alike throughout the inter-war period, leading to the persistent tensions and misunderstandings between college staff and their controlling bodies, which is another motif running through this book. One point can be concisely observed. Bureaucratic government becomes petty, narrow and coercive when there are no means available to transform administration into action. There is an old adage, 'Weighing the pig does not fatten the pig'. Throughout the inter-war period it was the misfortune of the denominational colleges to be consistently weighed but never fattened. Notably absent from the extensive records of the Board of Education is any sense of responsibility for the state of the colleges. While Board officials took delight in managing the colleges by circular and administrative minute, they did not own the colleges. Regrettably, only at times of acute crisis did denominationalists acknowledge ownership of their colleges – usually wringing their hands without reaching into their pockets.[30]

Class and bureaucracy partly explain the rhythm of events but arguably these themes (in the specific context of the Church colleges) are dwarfed by the growth of secularization. If these colleges were born in a wave of religious enthusiasm, what happens when this enthusiasm begins to wane? A the end of the First World War secularization made sudden, spectacular progress, fuelled by a widespread disillusionment, in many parts of English society, with pre-war standards and values. The voice from the pulpit became drowned by radio, and bishops and biblical teaching were increasingly subjected to ridicule in an expanding tabloid press.[31] During the period examined by this book, 1914–1945, increasing numbers of people began to look to the state and not to God for redress of their grievances.[32] Such a trend became even more pronounced during the post-Second World War period, culminating in Blair-led New Labour administrations when religion morphed into a quasi-worship of the state.[33]

Class, bureaucracy and secularization are therefore the three major themes within which events in this book unfold. With such a wide backdrop it is fatally easy to forget students and staff toiling in the obscurity of isolated colleges. The conditions in many of these colleges during the inter-war period were nothing short of scandalous. In 1932 L.C. Knights wrote a blistering indictment of the whole training system in his article 'Will Training Colleges Bear Scrutiny?'[34] His conclusion was an emphatic no. Knights paints a depressing portrait of students and staff alike struggling to survive in circumstances of physical discomfort, petty and futile discipline and a 'cram and grind' approach to study. In the midst of this struggle there was much quiet heroism, a recognizable determination by all involved to make the best of a bad job. In the midst of politics and policy making, this book ultimately needs no excuse if it catches at the wing of time and enables echoes of student voices to reach beyond the grave to a more fortunate generation.

Chapter One

The First World War, Dancing into the Shadows

In 1911 England was a riven society. The upper and middle classes were dancing into the shadows. The scorching summer was dominated by George V's coronation and accompanied by balls and celebratory parties organised by the English aristocracy. At country houses across the land the strains of dance music drifted serenely across parched lawns, while roses wilted in the unprecedented heat. New dances were accompanied by new music as couples took to the floor in the turkey trot, the bunny-hug and the chicken scramble. It was all hugely enjoyable but unfortunately for all concerned, Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany was not interested in performing a chicken scramble.[1] On the contrary, he was on manoeuvres, conducting war games which to the English, looked nothing like games. There was a distant whiff of war fever in the air. The Kaiser's taste in music favoured military bands and Berlin resounded to the incessant blaring of brass and beating of drums. As an absolute monarch the Kaiser looked with contempt on the rising level of strikes and social unrest he observed in England. Casually, the 'most indiscreet tongue in Europe'[2] informed his courtiers that he would have to invade England to save it from socialism, adding that one of his first actions on arriving would be to have Ben Tillet shot.

The object of the Kaiser's ire was the Dockers' leader who, in the summer of 1911, was pursuing for his trade union members a claim for eight pence an hour and a shilling for overtime.[3] The London Dock strike was only the most prominent of a rash of strikes that broke out across Britain. Liverpool came to a standstill, with the dock cranes as idle as those in London. In Lancashire the railwaymen downed tools. Perhaps the most extraordinary but least reported event was a strike by children attending elementary schools located in the East End of London.

In the September of 1911 police were called to Shoreditch to find children noisily thronging the streets, demanding an end to caning and reduced homework.[4] An observer of the police reinforcements drafted in to march the children back to their classrooms was Alexander Paterson, an assistant teacher in a nearby council run elementary school. Living in the same tenements as his pupils, Paterson had a

sympathy for the children and their parents not evident in the press.[5] He wrote 'The vapour of the slum is so indefinable as to be more of an atmosphere than a smell. It is', he continued, 'the constant reminder of poverty and grinding life, of shut windows and small inadequate washing basins, of last week's rain, of crowded homes and long working hours'. Combined with the stench was the relentless covering of dirt and grime. 'The soft gentle shower of dirt and grime which falls and creeps and covers and chokes. No man can cope with it.'[6] Paterson and his colleagues had to try and cope with it. The sombre black and dark grey clothes of male teachers, matched by the black bombazine and dark blue serge dresses of female colleagues were designed for both longevity and concealing dirt. Female teachers frequently had flowers of sulphur stitched into the hems of their dresses, in a vain effort to smother the stench of the children and to ward off the diseases which decimated schools and classrooms on a regular basis.[7]

The grim realities of everyday life in elementary schools serve to negate the argument that teachers in 1911 were purposefully moving into the ranks of the Edwardian middle class.[8] Alexander Paterson for one would have laughed at the notion. Perhaps the truth is that aspirations towards enhanced social status were growing among some sections of elementary teachers,[9] but aspiration alone does not reflect multiple realities. Jennings captures this fractured picture in the title of her book, *Lofty Aims and Lowly Duties*.[10] Sensitively exploring the lives of three Victorian schoolmasters, Jennings illustrates how hopes of social advancement were frequently dashed against the rocks of class antagonism. For example His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) were constantly lecturing schools, training colleges and teachers on the need for deference and humility. In 1859 the Reverend Cowie, HMI, had summed up the position in a stern warning. 'They cannot be too often reminded that the difficulties of their calling… are aggravated by any attempt on their part to step out of their position.'[11] What was first said in 1859 was still being repeated in 1911. The Inspector of Anglican Colleges railed against the mood of 'unrest and desire for change'[12] which he detected and condemned out of hand the inflated social pretensions of young teachers. The black mood of pessimism which infuses Inspectorate reports on all the church colleges in the immediate pre-war period reflects despair at their efforts being derided. If England was a society dancing into the shadows, by 1911 the shadows had already arrived for the church colleges. These shadows did not as yet constitute the

all-enveloping gloom that was to surround them in the inter-war period, but pre-war problems began the process through which darkness was to subsequently spread.

The root problem was that by 1911 the residential denominational colleges were judged to be old fashioned. The colleges, described as being, 'cabined, cribbed and confined' collectively reflected a 'conception of teacher training as it had been in the nineteenth century'.[13] The 1902 Education Act had enabled the introduction of Local Authority Colleges for the training of teachers, whose funding through local rates facilitated a more adventurous perception of how teacher training might be conducted.[14] Even more adventurous were the University Day Colleges which eschewed the principle of student residence and firmly rejected the regimes of cram and grind which continued to dominate residential teacher training. While rival institutions moved forward, the denominational colleges were severely criticised for remaining largely static and inert.[15] Underlying all of this were contemporary class perceptions and divisions. University education was a world away from vocational training and it was not long before the popular press was complaining that teachers were being educated beyond their place. The *Daily Mail* discovered that a small number of students attending university-provided teacher training courses 'were avoiding entrance into the profession at the conclusion of their studies'.[16] Unfortunately church authorities were almost entirely on the side of the *Daily Mail*. One Methodist principal roundly declared that universities were guilty of encouraging 'academic arrogance at the expense of professional application'.[17]

The almost entirely negative press and Inspectorate coverage of church colleges in the period 1910 to 1914 largely results from influential educational historians finding them and their churches to be on the wrong side in the class war.[18] With some notable exceptions[19] the majority of denominational principals clung to methods and beliefs that by 1911 were seriously out of date. Taking nineteenth century concepts of vocation as their justification, many principals actively promoted the idea that teaching could not be conceived of in any other way than as missionary work among the poor. Poverty, of course, went hand in hand with the working classes. In this context Simon is correct in identifying the training system as being principally concerned with social and class reproduction.[20] Charles Dickens observed the process of training teachers for elementary schools as being akin to a factory manufacturing

pianoforte legs. As they were moulded and trained, so they repeated the process on their pupils.[21] However, this analysis is only a partial explanation. In his book *After the Victorians*, Wilson describes how the tectonic plates of English society began to shift, break and crumble during the Edwardian period.[22] Religion, he suggests, became more a matter of private taste and less a cause of public duty; after 1911, society was beginning to accept secular pluralism rather than pursuing any singular religious certainty.[23] This latter trend was to be a cause of much grief for all denominations as the First World War drew ever closer.

On 28th of June, 1914 a shot rang out in Sarajevo. It was fired by a young Serbian revolutionary Gavrilo Princip, and his fateful bullet killed Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Hapsburg monarchy. As Taylor persuasively argues, Princip's shot signals the opening of the First World War.[24] Austria-Hungary appealed to their ally Germany, Germany threatened Russia, Russia appealed to France, France turned to Britain. One by one the treaty alliances were called in like so many pawnbrokers' slips. Germany declared war on France on 3rd of August, 1914, then marched into neutral Belgium. It was such a provocative act that previously hesitant Cabinet resolved to act. The Mobilization Proclamation was read in the House of Commons and an ultimatum was dispatched to Germany by telegraph. The ultimatum expired at midnight. Prime Minister Asquith summoned his colleagues to wait together in the cabinet room for a German response. None came. Big Ben struck the first note and each chime thereafter sounded to Lloyd George like 'Doom, Doom, Doom!'[25] Later Gray, the Foreign Secretary, declared 'The lights are going out all over Europe. I doubt that we shall see them lit again in our lifetime'.[26] The shadows fell, intensified and turned to darkness. Britain declared war against Germany on 4th of August, 1914.

On this day 104 students of King Alfred's College, Winchester, were taking part in military exercises at Bulford on Salisbury Plain. Being territorials they were mobilized overnight, waking on the morning of 5th of August to find themselves not trainee teachers but soldiers of College B Company of the 4th Hampshire Battalion Regiment.[27] Rumours of their immediate posting to France circulated freely among the members of the newly formed company and the issue of Lee-Enfield rifles was daily expected. However orders to move, like the rifles, failed to materialize. For weeks the company remained under canvas at Bulford until, to their disbelief, they

were transported back to King Alfred's College. Unable to find either rifles or training facilities for the new company, War Office officials paid the denominational authorities three pence a night to billet the student soldiers in their old college.[28] Not until December, 1914 did the company depart for service in India. When they finally left they took with them an unseen and unwanted guest – death. Death came to these young men in the form of dysentery and fever in India as surely as it came by shell and bullet to their compatriots in the muddy killing fields of France. Not that anyone at the time appreciated a whole generation was marching to oblivion. Marwick argues that the first eight months of the war were characterised by a strange combination of normality and panic.[29] In September, 1914, Winston Churchill coined the phrase 'business as usual' and English society responded to the slogan. Unfortunately business as usual meant unreformed attitudes to class. It is difficult not to see in the enlistment process class assumptions at their worst. In its Annual Report for the year 1914 the Board of Education noted that it was usual for universities to organize Officer Training Corps. 'Training colleges not connected with university institutions' continued the report, 'did not furnish contingents to Officer Training Corps; in these colleges ... it was the regular practice for students to become members of the Territorial Force'.[30] A clearer distinction between commissioned and non-commissioned recruits is hard to imagine. In a nutshell, universities produced officers and gentlemen. The training colleges did not.

The church colleges did not deserve such slighting disparagement. Old fashioned values came into their own when war was declared. Like the pals regiments from the north, training college pals stuck together. All the students from King Alfred's enlisted immediately in the 4th Hampshire Battalion, where their Principal and a lecturer, Mr. Goddard, continued to lead their students as Captain and Lieutenant respectively.[31] This was a model followed by almost all the church colleges, who went to war as extended families. Having studied and then trained together, they died together in increasing numbers at Ypres, Passchendaele and on the Somme. Letters sent to their families have an almost unbearable pathos.[32] In common with hundreds of thousands of others, the fortitude and patriotism displayed by these young men make it obscene to categorize them as second class citizens. Sadly, both class attitudes and antagonisms lingered. For both survivors and church colleges, class attitudes were to cast a malign shadow across the inter-war years.

Such thoughts were far away from the attention of generals and politicians at the outset of 1915. The demands made by the war rapidly escalated. The National Society, acting on behalf of the Church of England, issued a scheme of concentration.[33] Eight men's colleges closed and the small groups of students unable to enlist were reallocated to other colleges, sometimes to be moved again as the War Office abruptly commandeered more of the training institutions for temporary wartime occupation. Women's colleges were not exempt from these wholesale changes; Saint Gabriel's, Kennington became an emergency hospital and all the resident female students were dispatched, at very short notice, to Culham.[34] When suitable temporary accommodation in colleges could not be found, small groups of students found themselves housed in seaside boarding houses, where dwindling numbers of both students and staff spent long, cold, dispiriting hours looking out on barbed wire and grey seas. Abrupt changes posed particularly severe challenges for enclosed orders of nuns running Catholic colleges. The peace of the cloister was suddenly replaced by participation in seemingly interminable wartime train journeys, when nuns were called on to escort students to new premises. Doubt, anxiety, terror and confusion afflicted all parties. The same emotions assailed their male colleagues fighting in the trenches.

The sheer numbers of men being killed meant that 'business as usual' could not be sustained. Strict press censorship was no guard against the delivery of increasing numbers of black-edged telegrams, each of which brought in their wake misery, sorrow and anger. Such anger had to be appeased. Asquith was deposed as British Prime Minister in December, 1916. His famous policy of 'wait and see' was no longer tuned to people who demanded action, determination, and ruthlessness in winning the war. His successor, David Lloyd George, promised all of these in abundance. Even Lloyd George's most sympathetic biographer, A.J.P. Taylor, cheerfully describes him as a rogue, 'a man without scruples'.[35] Ditching his former Liberal, pacifist beliefs with astonishing speed, Lloyd George grasped that nothing mattered now but winning the war. Only victory could justify and assuage death on a monstrous scale. His experience as Minister for Munitions and Secretary for War during 1915 to 1916 taught Lloyd George that the war could only be won by gearing up the whole of society to this single purpose. As Prime Minister, Lloyd George gave full rein to his

'passion for getting things done'.[36] The Archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Davidson, responded vigorously to the Prime Minister's lead. Hamstrung in the decade before the war by internal opposition and denominational jealousies, the Archbishop relished wartime conditions, which enabled him to provide strong leadership. Prime Minister and Archbishop thus vied with each other in piling new initiatives, new departments, new controllers, new people in new committees, all on top of one another.

One such committee was led by George Eden, Bishop of Wakefield. In 1916 he was charged with finding out, as a matter of urgency, the position of the Anglican Training Colleges concerning their buildings, finances and prospects for post-war student recruitment.[37] Despite the urgency, the Bishop and his committee took time to complete their work. Slow progress resulted from one of the most marked features of the colleges, their rural isolation. His Majesty's Inspectorate had for a long time fumed at the impervious nature of training methods and courses pursued in country houses with high walls and ivy covered gates.

Culham College in Oxfordshire was typical and Eden's visit to Culham was one of many where a day's travel preceded any inspection. Leaving the Randolph Hotel in Oxford early one morning, Eden and three colleagues made stately progress by car to Abingdon before taking a pony and trap to the college. The final part of the journey was peaceful, larks sang in a blue sky above the meadows. A little anxiety began to creep in as dusk fell and the college was still not in sight. The driver lit an oil lamp and the trap proceeded down the dark lanes – a rural silence punctuated only by the sound of the pony's hooves. The party arrived late in the evening to a chilly welcome. All the students were gone, either to the army or to other colleges. The troops which had been billeted there had also departed, as had the female students from St Gabriel's, Kennington; neither contingent had been able to bear the lack of facilities. Rooms were cold, as was the food. In the morning light the Bishop looked out onto gardens that were rank and overgrown, 'the Autumn blaze of geraniums and dahlias and sunflowers choked by weeds and the indifference of Army occupation'.[38] Eden, normally a genial man, was depressed – more so when his colleague, Mr Burrows, consulting architect to the National Society, found the heating, lighting, ventilation, sewerage, water supply and sleeping accommodation at Culham entirely inadequate.[39]

Culham was not alone in its deficiencies. As Burrows somewhat primly observed, 'The nineteenth century architecture of the colleges, though imposing, is not always practicable'.[40] Students knew exactly what Burrows was referring to. Dormitory accommodation of partly curtained, unheated cubicles was a hated feature of college existence, at Culham and elsewhere. A student at Bishop Otter College, Chichester, when taken on a farm visit in 1920, tartly concluded that the cows on the local farm were warmer, better fed and had fewer draughts to contend with than students in the college.[41] Eden and his colleagues, briefly exposed to the rigours of student life, found the discomfort of sleeping accommodation intolerable. Prior to the war, such deficiencies had been shrugged off by arguments that students were being trained for a hard life in arduous conditions. However, as members of the Wakefield Committee recognized, such views would not serve after the war. Bishop Eden and his colleagues faced up to the uncomfortable truth that the majority of Anglican colleges were in no position to compete with their better endowed rivals in the local authority and university sectors. The Bishop recommended that five colleges, including Culham, should close and large sums of money had to be found rapidly to improve student accommodation in all other colleges if post-war recruitment was to be sustained.[42]

When Archbishop Davidson received the completed report on 24th of November, 1916, he was not displeased. George Eden had kept him well informed of conditions in the colleges, which had perturbed him for some time. A smack of firm government, he believed, was needed to sort out the mess. Working closely with H.A.L. Fisher, President of the Board of Education in the Coalition Government, Davidson agreed on the creation of a central management board to oversee the operations and management of the previously autonomous colleges. The smack of firm government was to be delivered by the appropriately named Board of Supervision for the Church Colleges.[43]

College principals, jealous of their freedoms, did not easily acquiesce in the apparatus of centralized control. Two powerful factors prompted their collective willingness to go along with the Archbishop's proposal. Throughout 1918 and 1919 it was confidently expected that money was going to be made available and would be channelled to the colleges through the new Board. It was well known that Fisher had accepted a seat in the Cabinet on the 'understanding that money would be found for ambitious measures'.[44] The reform of teacher training was to be one such ambitious

educational measure. A second factor, more elusive, more muffled and destined to thread its way like a will-o'-the-wisp throughout the inter-war period, was the tantalizing hint of stronger links between the training colleges and the universities. When Fisher declined to deal with individual colleges and the Board of Supervision was instituted to act on their collective behalf, hints were dropped that the new Board might play a major role in linking the colleges into a system of higher education. Such thoughts were abroad in 1918 as the war came to its blood-soaked climax.[45] In his analysis of the role played by the Anglican Church during the conflict Lloyd comments, 'No war is good for religion and that war was desperately bad for it'.[46] In the long term Lloyd's judgement is correct. Bishops blessing tanks contributed to the disillusionment with religion that came to characterise post-war society.[47] In the short term Lloyd's judgement may be challenged. Agreements reached between Archbishop Randall Davidson and H.A.L. Fisher, forged under the pressure of wartime necessity, saved the Anglican colleges. Centralisation may not have been popular but it enabled the colleges to survive. The creation of the Board of Supervision finally ended the debilitating financial and managerial isolation of the Church of England colleges. Ironically, the phase of what may be termed bureaucratic enlightenment lasted just long enough to save the training institutions but not long enough to bring them positive benefits.[48]

Some accounts of the First World War argue that Britain changed beyond recognition. Not true. Some underlying aspects of pre-war society remained stubbornly intact and in place. Class attitudes and antagonisms survived the war, albeit in new guises. If, as Keegan argues, many soldiers lost respect for the officer class during the Battle of the Somme, many of the latter were so affected by what they learned of working class life that survivors devoted themselves to social and political reform.[49] Such reforms were distressingly slow in coming. Thus, at the end of the war universities and training colleges went their separate ways, as did their students. Until 1914 the University of Reading Day Training College had given preference to candidates living in the local area.[50] After the war the local clause was dropped. With the aid of the university grants system, Reading University embarked on a national rather than a localised destiny. As its chancellor W.M. Childs made clear, 'In our view an institution doing the work of a university should be free and independent… it should be free to develop along its own lines'.[51]

In sharp contrast the denominational teacher training colleges just managed to survive the war but, unlike the universities, achieved neither academic or financial freedoms. The handful of survivors returning to King Alfred's College decided that their first task was to erect a memorial 'to those who made the supreme sacrifice during the war'.[52] The memorial consisted of oak panelling to be placed on the walls of the college chapel, the names of the fallen to be incised on the wooden frieze. Neither the surviving students nor the carpenter realised the numbers of students who had died. Extra panels had to be erected and there were insufficient funds to pay for additional carving. The memorial remained incomplete until students, staff and the Bishop of Winchester finally raised the extra funds needed for completion in 1920. In retrospect it is difficult not to believe that such students, and the colleges they attended, had not earned a measure of the more generous treatment afforded to the university sector.

Chapter Two

A World Falling to Pieces

The boom of gunfire reverberated briefly in the damp air and patches of oily black smoke hung on the horizon. Silence then descended across the trenches of the Western Front. It was 11am on 11th of November, 1918. Soldiers at the Front could hardly comprehend the meaning of the Armistice. As Winston Churchill wrote, 'Motionless in the silence the soldiers looked at each other with vacant eyes'.[1] In London it was very different. At 11am maroons were fired, arching up into the sky as people poured on to the streets, singing, shouting, waving flags, ringing handbells and blowing whistles. Across Britain factories closed, pubs filled and church bells rang out to signify the end of the Great War.

Soldiers returned to an England which did not know whether it was going backwards or forwards. As Douglas Jerrold wrote, 'The Brigade of Guards got back into scarlet, and the Treasury set about restoring Treasury control. After the march of the armies the wiggling of martinets ... No wonder that no-one knew whether we were going on or going back'.[2]

At first it seemed that the country was going back. On the surface a veneer of pre-war normality re-formed easily. The first post-war election, held on 14th of December, 1918, brought about a Conservative landslide. In Stanley Baldwin's memorable phrase, many of the new members were 'hard faced men who looked as if they had done well out of the war'.[3] 338 Conservative members packed the Government benches in a coalition government led by the wartime Prime Minister, David Lloyd George. Having won the war, Lloyd George was eager to win the peace. However, the overwhelmingly Conservative tendency of the Coalition Government began to erode ambitious social programmes inspired by the Prime Minister, especially when the new members found normality dangerously fragile. Riots broke out among troops impatient to be home, and when they were home, their restlessness was one factor causing a series of strikes. An influenza epidemic brought death to soldiers and civilians alike.[4] If these symptoms were not sufficiently alarming the determination demonstrated by many women to flout pre-war social conventions sent shock waves

through establishment circles. Dismissed in large numbers from wartime employment throughout 1918–1921, young women were as restless as the returning troops.

A symbol of a new freedom was the Charleston and the syncopated rhythms of the Black Bottom, which began to sweep the country as bright young things, 'flappers', squealed and kicked. One of the most popular tunes was, 'Let's Do It' – and doing it meant 'Dance, Make Love, Sing, Laugh, Spit on the Carpet'.[5] Such attitudes shocked the older generation, including representatives of the churches. An Anglican vicar in Bristol, dwelling on the iniquity of the new dances, declared, 'Any lover of the beautiful will die rather than be associated with the Charleston. It is neurotic! It is rotten! It stinks! Phew, open the windows!'[6] Negative and hostile statements like this confirmed the image of puritanical joylessness which many young people came to associate with official religion.[7]

As the novelty of peace-time conditions began to settle on the country, one obvious difference was the evidence of a widespread decline in religious belief and an associated loss of interest in, and respect for, religious institutions. Evidence gained during the war[8] of the hostility and indifference shown by the majority of enlisted men to all forms of religious belief became commonly known.[9] But atheism and secularism were not confined to the working classes. In his book, *The Twenties*, Alan Jenkins asks the pointed question, 'Where was God?' and notes that 'God was dead, indeed all Gods were dead'.[10] Bernard Shaw, with typical acerbity, summed up the situation by describing the religious atmosphere of inter-war Britain as being 'atheism tempered by hymns'.[11]

Such an atmosphere was demoralising for denominational leaders who quickly found themselves under attack from representatives of organized labour. In 1922 the Trades Union Congress and the Labour party jointly published a booklet entitled *The Education and Training of Teachers*.[12] The authors of this document demanded a root and branch reform of teacher training. The central issue, as perceived by trade unionists, was one of social status. 'The problems which confront teachers as individuals' wrote the editor, G.S.M. Ellis, 'is not merely a problem of pay; it is one of social status, and it is bound up inseparably with the question of their own education and training'.[13] Ellis condemned the latter system as unfit for purpose. In

particular, when training was linked to religion, Ellis and his co-authors considered the outcomes to be disastrous, namely 'segregation via denominational isolationism' and infantile learning 'conducted in barrack-like buildings'.[14] Now these complaints has been raised prior to the First World War.[15] What is new is a change of tone. In the pre-war period the National Union of Elementary Teachers had respectfully yearned for increased social status for their members.[16] Now in the post-war period the National Union of Teachers demands 'a full partnership in the control and administration of education'.[17] In short the gloves were off. This more abrasive, militant approach was bound to have repercussions, not least because 'the left', in varying shades of opinion, came to regard denominational authorities as hindrances to the legitimate aspirations of teachers.[18]

Such aspirations dramatically increased immediately following the war. Burying pre-war timidity, the NUT executive saw the future of teacher training as resting in the hands of the universities. Training colleges were to be taken over by universities, becoming halls of residence or colleges of a university, stripped of denominational affiliation.[19] Once this measure of integration had been achieved, the NUT looked forward to a time when 'the post graduate year devoted to a professional training would be regarded as a fourth year at a university'.[20] In these and subsequent documents,[21] the NUT and the Labour movement declared its faith in a pattern of training frequently referred to as 'three plus one'; a first degree followed by a one year post-graduate certificate in education. For Labour the universities were to be the saviours of a discredited and inferior teacher training system.[22]

Perhaps it is a measure of the changed condition of England brought about by the war, that the publication of Labour demands did not bring about the kind of denominational counter attack that could have been confidently predicted prior to 1914. Denominational diffidence had a variety of causes. First, University Day Training Colleges were proving very successful and consequently expanding rapidly.[23] Fisher, who came from the university sector, was delighted. His praise of the university colleges was in contrast to his silence concerning other training institutions. Church leaders drew their own conclusions. Many denominationalists privately wondered whether the policies advocated by Labour were not secretly shared by the Board of Education. At first it seemed that this was indeed the case.

R.G. Mayor, who in 1918 was leading an investigation into the future of teacher training, gave broad hints to denominationalists that some kind of 'university led solution'[24] was imminent. Speaking on behalf of the Board of Education at the second meeting of the recently instituted Anglican Board of Supervision held on 1st of October, 1918, Mayor anticipated in almost every way future Labour demands. He urged Anglicans 'to consider seriously' the advantages of 'stronger links between colleges and universities'. He promoted the idea that Anglican colleges 'might in some way make themselves hostels for four year university students'.[25] When Mayor's proposals received a frosty reception from Anglicans, he made little attempt to mollify their discontent. At the end of 1918 it was clear for all to see that some kind of university solution for teacher training was being planned.

As Dorothy L. Sayers began to establish herself as a leading member of a formidable group of inter-war detective novelists,[26] the Board of Education between 1918 and 1922 hatched a mystery of its own. If a university solution for teacher training was being planned in 1918, why was this plan rejected by the same Board less than four years later? To unravel this plot, one has to untie the knot linking people, politics and policies together during this period. People first. H.A.L. Fisher, President of the Board of Education, began brilliantly and faded badly. Selected and appointed at the height of wartime fever by Lloyd George, Fisher used wartime necessity as a lever to achieve substantial educational reform. During 1917 and 1918 Fisher was undisputed master of his department and a prominent figure in the Government. He found, to his cost, that in the immediate post-war period patronage from Lloyd George was as fickle and capricious as the English weather. The Prime Minister, sensing the conservative tendencies of his coalition government, began to trim his policies for innovative domestic reform. Characteristically Lloyd George concealed his changed intentions from Cabinet colleagues who most needed to know. An early victim was Christopher Addison, Minister for Health, sacked by Lloyd George on 1st of April, 1921 for driving through housing policies and reforms which had originally been devised by the Prime Minister.[27] Shock waves reverberated throughout Whitehall, with the gossip suggesting that Fisher was the next to go. A whispering campaign, hostile to Fisher, reached the press.[28] The result was Fisher became a lame duck minister. Within weeks power slipped from Fisher's grasp and landed in the hands of his Permanent Secretary, Sir Lewis Amhurst Selby-Bigge. Fisher and Selby-Bigge

had been pupils together at Westminster public school and loyalties of school and class prevented there being any overt signs of disagreements between them. However, Fisher was a liberal and interested in achieving a university solution for teacher training. Selby-Bigge was a conservative who, for complex reasons, came to reject a university solution. The main problem was that the Permanent Secretary began to see 'reds under the bed', and once he had detected them, his staff were not slow to spot the same creeping menace.

Much of the hysteria derived from the press. Newspapers offered lurid and partisan descriptions of the war between Red and White Russians.[29] Trade unionists made themselves hostages to fortune by grossly exaggerating events in the pages of the *Daily Herald*.[30] By becoming a propaganda tool for extreme Socialist action, the *Daily Herald* became the *bête noire* of a growing number of MPs determined to squash the red menace. Nervously watching these events L.A. Selby-Bigge and R.G. Mayor tended to reinforce each other's anxieties. At first, Mayor was confident because he had the firm backing of Fisher. However, when Fisher's political star began to fade, Mayor was left to his own devices. He became acutely aware of differences in policy emphasis between Fisher and Selby-Bigge. To make matters worse, Mayor became aware that large numbers of His Majesty's Inspectors were totally opposed to reforms and legislation initiated by Fisher.[31] Realising that he could not please two masters, Mayor fell back on every civil servant's ploy; he procrastinated. In fact he dillied and dallied so effectively that a small in-house report on the future of teacher training begun in 1918 did not emerge until late in 1920, more than two years after its inception. It was a miserable piece of departmental filibustering, a report which examined everything and achieved progress in nothing, This suited Mayor very well; by examining everything and recommending nothing he upset no one.

Harold Macmillan, Conservative Prime Minster during the 1960s, was once asked by a journalist whether anything in particular frightened him. 'Events, dear boy, events' came the reply.[32] One particular event was now to play a decisive part in determining inter-war policy for teacher training. As Mayor's opaque report on this topic was circulating in a leisurely fashion within the Board of Education, four teacher training colleges announced they were bankrupt. Colleges at Borough Road and Stockwell in

London, and at Darlington and Saffron Walden, all owned by the British and Foreign Schools Society (BFSS), filed for bankruptcy.[33] In a sense they were the unlucky ones as their financial plight was similar to the problems confronting all denominational colleges. Fisher was shocked but impotent. Ducking the problem, he sent the correspondence and file to his Permanent Secretary, Selby-Bigge.

With the withdrawal of political will, administrative expediency had full play. The BFSS would have willingly integrated its colleges into the university system, the greatest hope being that arguably its best college, Borough Road, might fall into the ambit of London University. Unfortunately for the Society, London University did not want anything to do with teacher training. A contemporary inspection report gave strong reasons why the University was so anxious not to acquire Borough Road College. Describing the student common room, the inspectors wrote, 'There were a few broken and disused bookcases dimly illuminated by antiquated and unsuitable incandescent gas burners ... saucepans, boots, horse chestnuts littered the floor ... a foetid and offensive smell emanating from blocked toilets suffused the whole building'. The college premises were 'bare and comfortless' and none of the damage caused by wartime occupation had been attended to, five years after the war had ended. In a final parting shot of measured condemnation, the inspector declared, 'It may be said with no exaggeration that there is no place in the building ... where a student can be comfortable, unless he is in bed'.[34]

The desperate state of the college was well known to University officials who were determined to steer clear of dilapidated buildings and training entanglements. Civilities were preserved by a display of public blandness and private candour. In private the University of London offered uncompromising opposition to any form of merger with Borough Road. Selby-Bigge, having anticipated University rejection, in addition to numbers of memos along the lines of 'I told you so', bent his efforts towards a rescue operation. The BFSS needed to be encouraged to seek partners operating at the right level, namely local authorities. In the midst of these negotiations, Selby-Bigge killed off any last, lingering hopes of a university solution for teacher training. Affronted by the new militancy demonstrated by organized labour, Selby-Bigge's personal pique was fed by wider considerations. While the Permanent Secretary lost no time in blaming the universities for ending 'the university

connections'[35] Whitehall insiders knew it was not so straightforward. A university-led take over of the training colleges would, at a stroke, remove teacher training from the Board of Education's control. Faced by such an alarming prospect, Selby-Bigge suddenly found the servility and social conservatism of the denominational colleges much more appealing than the academic independence demonstrated by universities. By expertly shepherding the denominational colleges into the Board of Education pen, Selby-Bigge deftly deflected reform. Unfortunately he also caused a peculiarly torpid and stagnant *status quo* to descend on the teacher training sector, a condition from which it was to suffer throughout the inter-war period.

In retrospect, while it is ultimately futile to cry over historical spilt milk, it is impossible not to linger over one of the great 'might have beens' of alternative history. The period 1918 to 1922 is littered with a series of 'if onlys'. If only Fisher had been granted more time to pursue his reform agenda. His early talks with the universities pursued in 1918 and 1919 showed promise.[36] They certainly give no hint of the rebuff delivered by the University of London to Fisher and Selby-Bigge in January, 1921.[37] It is impossible therefore, with the benefit of hindsight, not to conclude that the University of London was speaking for itself and not the whole university sector. Just as R.A. Butler was to find during negotiations in 1944 that there was 'some give in the universities' position', this also proved the case in 1921.[38] If only R.G. Mayor had pressed ahead more energetically with his departmental enquiry into teacher training. In 1918 and 1919 the door was still open for teacher training reform. By 1920 it was closing. By 1921, when the crisis caused by the BFSS closing its four colleges struck, the door was firmly shut. The man who turned the key and locked it was L.A. Selby-Bigge. If only the Permanent Secretary could have resisted the temptation to place the interests of the Board of Education above the needs of the wider teacher training sector. The number of 'if onlys' multiply.

All of this perhaps places too much responsibility on the shoulders of individual actors. No one knew at the end of 1918 whether Britain was going forward or back. By 1922, when organized labour launched its bid for university led teacher training reform,[39] it was quite clear that the country was going back. In this context Selby-Bigge was part of a majority whose primary interest was in averting social revolution.[40] Widespread fear of such a revolution helps to explain the topsy-turvy

turn of events which accompanied the hasty retreat from domestic reform. By 1921 social action was abruptly replaced by a return to old style belief in self help. Money for ambitious educational advance was removed with disconcerting speed. Drifting with Lloyd George to political oblivion in 1922, Fisher had the unpleasant task, in 1921, of telling church leaders that there was no money to improve their colleges. Financial bankruptcy was matched by a bankruptcy of ideas. Briefed by his officials, Fisher could suggest nothing better to leaders than to raise training college fees and to encourage former students and their associations to offer donations. As one principal bitterly expressed it, 'It was like asking the Royal Navy to run a raffle in order to keep a boat afloat'.

George Eden, Bishop of Wakefield, left the meeting with Fisher feeling betrayed. The 'Wakefield Report' was known throughout the Anglican Church and had caused the Bishop a good deal of personal unpopularity. He now had to contemplate a future where links with universities were nothing more than a remote possibility and, worse still, there was no money. No money meant that the 'trail of cheapness' affecting every aspect of Anglican teacher training would continue.

The grim realities of what this actually meant is vividly captured in an incident at St John's College, York. A.J. Copps, who had enlisted in 1915, survived the war and returned to the college in September, 1919. Four years of wartime experience met, head on, an unreformed system, which ran on pre-war wheels.

> 'The Principal, the Rev. H. Walker (referred to as Taggy) was very watchful of our morals and put such areas as Coney Street out of bounds for some stupid reason. He was as sour and dour a specimen of the cloth as I have ever met ... We had quite a job to reform him, or to make him understand that we were not young lads but men who had come out of tribulation and having wives and families. So we objected to many petty regulations. Particularly did we criticise the dietary and one Sunday evening at the supper – save the mark – of half a cup of watered milk and a half-penny bun, we struck. Taggy, the VP and the other masters were sitting at a table on the dais when we filed in to get our thick mugs half filled – if there happened to be sufficient in the ewer to accomplish this. Then, after a hurried Grace, we raised our mugs and let them

> crash to the table. There was a sound of smashing crockery, followed by a deadly silence, broken by the Principal's tensely uttered order 'You may go to your studies'.
>
> There he hinted at sending us all down for insubordination, but our chosen speakers pointed out that we had not disobeyed any order in making our protest against conditions that could not be tolerated and savoured too closely of Dickensian times. This seemed to hit him between the eyes and he began to temporise. Finally he asked our representatives to meet him in his study to state their case. When they did go he tried to browbeat them without success. Our men had a good deal of practice in calling bluffs. Besides, the VP sympathised with us, so much against his inclination and with evident chagrin he gave in, but before capitulating he enquired what we would do if he turned down our requests. Our leaders diplomatically replied that, in that case the students intended to send a petition to the Archbishop. Poor Taggy raved, but our 8pm meal became a late dinner that even exceeded our expectations.'[41]

In retrospect it is clear that students and staff alike deserved better. The enhanced evening meal was paid for by economies elsewhere; in similar colleges at this time, this included embargoes on buying library books.[42]

Robbing Peter to pay Paul became a familiar method of keeping church colleges open. Looking back in 1937, Stanley Baldwin indulged in some characteristic ruminations: 'So after the war, when we had packed half a century of political evolution into four years, we had to readjust for a new age ... unity and stability again had to be sought in the middle of a world falling to pieces'.[43] The disintegrating factors of society, the falling pieces, were constantly to block the progress of the denominational colleges throughout the inter-war period. Baldwin's first administration, 1923–1924, began to create the kind of debris that made progress, and even hopes of progress, minimal.

Chapter Three

Lord Eustace Percy Takes Control

Stanley Baldwin, Prime Minister three times during the inter-war years,[1] continues to be one of the most enigmatic personalities of the period. From 1908–1919, Baldwin led an undistinguished existence as a back-bench Member of Parliament. Devoted to the countryside and particularly his native Worcestershire, Baldwin made no speeches and had a habit of ambling round the House of Commons' library, sniffing the backs of books. Round and stolid in appearance, with a tendency to come to Parliament dressed in old fashioned, ill-fitting suits, his only reputation before the war was that of a country simpleton. Party patronage took him to minor Cabinet rank in 1921, when he was 53 years old. From within the Cabinet he had daily opportunity to observe the methods of the 'Welsh Wizard', Lloyd George, and intensely disliked what he saw. Although silent and outwardly impassive in Cabinet, Baldwin inwardly hated the 'Lloyd George set with their first class brains, their levity and insincerity, their extravagance and recklessness'.[2] Baldwin privately determined to resign from the Cabinet and challenge Lloyd George 'in the interests of clean government'.[3] His decision came at the moment when the Coalition and its mandate for active policy-making was already breaking up.

Although he did not resign from the Cabinet, Baldwin decisively broke with Lloyd George and his closest followers at a meeting of Conservative ministers held on 16th of October, 1922. His arguments for doing so were repeated at the meeting of Conservative MPs convened at the Carlton Club only three days later, when the fate of the Coalition, and with it the future direction of inter-war government, was decided.

Both Arthur Balfour, a former Conservative Prime Minister, and Austen Chamberlain spoke in favour of continued support for the Coalition and for Lloyd George's leadership. Baldwin spoke third. The previously passive audience was transformed by the vehemence and eloquence of his appeal. 'Lloyd George' began Baldwin, 'is a dynamic force and a dynamic force is a terrible thing. He has smashed the Liberal Party and if left alone will soon smash the Conservative Party also'.[4] Baldwin's

speech was essentially negative; he was against Lloyd George, without being positively for anything else – except, perhaps, the paramount necessity of keeping the Conservative Party together. The latter appeal struck a responsive chord among the Tory back-benchers. Andrew Bonar Law, the wartime Conservative leader, spoke last and sided with Baldwin. It was a decisive moment. Conservative MPs voted 187 to 87 to end their support for the Coalition.

Through their continuing loyalty to Lloyd George, many of the leading Conservative ministers debarred themselves from office in the new administration. This new administration was led by Bonar Law, who at the Carlton Club meeting was already suffering from cancer of the throat. Within a few months Bonar Law was gone, leaving the way open for Baldwin. By this curious set of chances Baldwin came to be Prime Minister in May, 1923: wafted into office by side winds and misunderstandings.[5]

G.M. Young, Baldwin's biographer, declared that the central theme of history 'is not what happened, but what people felt about it while it was happening'. Baldwin's appeal to the electorate throughout the inter-war period cannot thus be understood without making a distinction between what was really happening and what people thought was happening. Baldwin was arguably the first Prime Minister to perfect the arts of mass communication and image projection. Master of the fireside chat on the radio, Baldwin also used 'photo opportunities' of himself, dressed in tweed suit and plus-fours, gently poking pigs. He projected himself as the country gentleman – honest, four square, trustworthy and altogether the people's friend. The tranquillity and assurance of this image rested partly on his shire background.

Baldwin was, however, equally happy to trade off the comforting certainties of the established faith. In one of his most famous early Commons speeches, he asserted that salvation for the country rested on four things, 'Faith, Hope, Love and Work'.[6] It was stirring stuff – untainted by any acknowledgement of Baldwin's private doubts. Like the majority inter-war leaders, Baldwin gradually found himself uncertain about the forms and institutions of religion and having little faith them.[7]

In forming his first Cabinet, Baldwin set out to please the Tory footsoldiers who had revolted against enterprising and expensive government. Speaking at the Old Boys' Association of Harrow Public School, Baldwin said, 'When the call came to me to form a government, one of my first thoughts was that it should be a government of which Harrow should not be ashamed'.[8] Far from being ashamed, Harrow was elevated. By deft juggling, Baldwin included in his cabinet no less than six former Harrovians. At the Board of Education, two Etonians found a niche. E.F.L. Wood, later Baron Irwin, finally Viscount Halifax, was President of the Board. Wood's understudy was Lord Eustace Percy who, during Baldwin's first administration (from May, 1923 to January, 1924), cast a jaundiced eye on his Minister's limp control and subservience to permanent officials. Percy, who secretly admired Neville Chamberlain's more brusque ministerial methods, determined that if he were promoted, things would be different.

Lord Eustace gained his chance in Baldwin's second administration formed in November, 1924. Having transferred Wood to Agriculture, the Prime Minister was at a loss for anyone deal with Education. Baldwin consulted Tom Jones, Departmental Secretary to the Cabinet. 'What I want from you' he demanded, 'is a Minister of Education: have we any man in the Party who takes an interest in education?' Jones suggested Percy, to the evident satisfaction of the Prime Minster.

'Eustace Percy was very pleased to go to Education' he told Jones. 'What a chance he has got! He is only 37.'[9] Lord Eustace came in like a lion. In an elderly Cabinet, Percy was the epitome of the coming man. Being adept at making speeches up and down the country, he was warmly received by Party members during his first months in office. Percy's high profile in the country was partly facilitated by his absence from the Board of Education. Here there was one change – the Permanent Secretary, L. A Selby-Bigge, retired and was replaced by Sir Aubry Symonds. New to the department, his credibility was undercut. Percy was not displeased; he made it clear that he intended to be his own Permanent Secretary.[10] Symonds, often absent from the department due to periodic bouts of illness, was shocked by Percy's frigidly combative style of doing business. Whether in or out of the department, Symonds and his staff were isolated from decision making. So much were they in the dark as to their Minister's intentions, that part of the new routine was a rota of officials

designated to glean from the press indications of policy. Percy was gratified to hear Whitehall gossip that his measures were achieving results. He had succeeded in putting his officials in their place.[11]

Under this regime it is doubtful whether Percy ever read the briefing papers compiled for him by his civil servants. In April, 1925 teacher training was dragged out of its customary obscurity by the Report of the Departmental Committee on the Training of Teachers for Public Elementary Schools – the Burnham Report.[12] R.G. Mayor, who had been at the Board for a very long time, felt that it was his duty to warn his Minister what shaky ground he was standing on. While the LEA colleges were doing 'tolerably well' with aid from the rates and the university colleges 'generally captured the most able students', Mayor warned Percy that the denominational colleges were 'economically and educationally weak'. 'Catholic colleges', asserted Mayor, 'are as good or as bad as the order running them, and Anglicans own colleges they cannot pay for'. Mayor concluded with the bleak observation that 'the nonconformists have shot their bolt and are no longer a force in the training field'.[13]

Percy was not paying attention because he had already made up his mind. Lord Eustace, without making exceptions, was unimpressed by training colleges. Profoundly disturbed by 'a propensity in primary schools to civilize children rather than instruct them', Percy detected that 'this infantile bias was spreading upwards into the training colleges'. For this reason he discouraged the building of new colleges.[14] As well as discouraging the building of new colleges, the Minister was determined to curtail the activities and ambitions of contemporary ones.

The Burnham Report had reopened the age-old debate as to whether teaching was an art or a science and whether preparation for teaching was mainly concerned with vocational training or personal education. Committee members were divided. The majority report had no doubt that training meant vocational training and colleges should certainly not dabble in providing degrees for children of the less well-to-do classes.[15] The minority report, signed by one of Percy's senior officers, E.K. Chambers, argued that training would only succeed when it followed extensive personal education. Chambers argued that the training colleges urgently needed to be integrated into a coherent system of higher education in order to achieve the correct

educational and training balance. In short, the minority report was an open invitation to Percy to consider the merits of bringing the training colleges within the university system.

Percy wasted little time in rejecting any university solution. Although masking his intentions behind his chosen style of secretive autocracy, Percy was determined to achieve economies and trim educational ambitions. Winston Churchill, as Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Baldwin administration, had returned to the gold standard in 1925.[16] It was a characteristic device of going back in order to go forward. The net result of the move was to intensify the need for financial retrenchment – a policy which hung like a fog over all inter-war governments. With the gold standard to be defended, Churchill demanded from Percy sustained and significant economies. Percy obliged by issuing Circular 1371 which slashed over a million pounds from the elementary schools' budget. Officials at the Board of Education were shocked, as they had no knowledge of the proposals until they were published in the press.[17] Percy was soon engulfed in unprecedented opposition to his economy drive. With so much trouble already to hand, R.G. Mayor wanted to temporize and allow the training college issue to wait its turn.

Percy would not wait. He issued Circular 1377. Students whose level of attainment was limited to School Certificate would follow a two year teacher training course. However, those who had reached Higher School Certificate would qualify for a course 'wholly consisting of one year's professional training'.[18] There could now be no doubt about the Minister's intentions; limited and limiting vocational courses were to be put in place – courses whose standards and length precluded a university connection. Percy was subjected to sharp criticism, most of which targeted his autocratic style of 'Government by Circular'.[19] In his memoirs he rather quaintly ascribes his problems to 'the new sensitiveness of the enlarged post-war electorate'.[20]

This sensitivity meant that economies were easier to achieve on paper than in reality. Churchill's bid for further cut-backs followed the 'ruthless, relentless and remorseless'[21] measures already put into place by the Geddes Committee in 1921–1922. Having initially demanded a reduction of £18 million from the education budget, the Geddes Axe finally severed £6.5 million from educational spending.

Teachers' salaries were reduced and many working in schools found themselves joining lengthening dole queues. Thus when Churchill and Percy came to raid the educational larder again in 1925, there were few goods to steal, despite Lord Salisbury's flat assertion 'that a great deal of money had been wasted on elementary education'.[22]

A generation of teachers working in the elementary schools during the 1920s knew how nonsensical Salisbury's claim was. A child's work was rubbed out in order to use a single sheet of paper two or three times. Dreary routines of meticulous distribution and collection of pencils went hand in hand with issuing and returning broken-backed text books. As many teachers found, the loss of any part of classroom equipment was a serious matter – costs of replacement were deducted from their wages. To his evident surprise and discomfort, Percy found little that could be trimmed from the estimates.

In beginning to defend the educational field, Percy soon found how fickle and uncertain a career in politics could be. As the virility of any minister was judged in the popular press by the depth and extent of cuts achieved, Percy's belated attempts to fend off cuts soon brought about a campaign of organized contempt from the tabloid press. An editorial in Rothermere's *Daily Mail* said, 'The fact is that Lord Eustace Percy belongs to the Socialist or "pink" wing of the Cabinet. And he is always thinking of "pink" measures in the vain hope that he will please the "Reds"'.[23]

Loss of support brought about an abrupt end to Percy's attempt to rule the Board of Education by personal circulars. When the Minister sought the support he had previously spurned but now needed, his officials shrewdly used contemporary events to weaken him further, before helping him back on to his feet. In examining the training college problem, R.G. Mayor lost no time in playing the red card. Against the backdrop of the General Strike and Percy's alleged 'pink' tendencies, Mayor was adamant that the training colleges, good, bad or indifferent, should not be allowed to run their own affairs. 'Any withdrawal of the very extensive powers possessed by the Board over the running of the colleges', warned Mayor, 'creates a vacuum for the unions to exploit'. 'In any case', he argued, using a delphic phrase beloved of civil servants, 'the training colleges are not up to it'.[24]

Not being up to it seemed to consist of training colleges not possessing the educational autonomy and robustness of the universities – precisely what organized labour had been emphasizing for some time. In 1922 the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party had published a booklet entitled *The Education and Training of Teachers*, containing comprehensive proposals for the reform of teacher training.[25] These all hinged on the training colleges being taken over by universities so that teachers might have the chance of obtaining a degree.[26] Looking towards this new model, the National Union of Teachers contemptuously repudiated the regime of 'cram and grind' offered in training colleges, where 'discipline is of the worst possible kind, repressive and foolish'.[27] Such abrasive comments provoked a hysterical response from some denominational representatives along the lines of 'better dead than red'.[28] Board of Education officials shamelessly exploited fears of union encroachment to bolster their own position – more so as labour proposals gained increasing popularity among teachers.[29] In the aftermath created by the publication of Circulars 1371 and 1377, Percy was most anxious to deflect the thrust of labour proposals and to dampen down teacher expectations.

Percy needed a way out and R.G. Mayor provided him with one. Recommendation 38 of the Burnham Report suggested that examining boards, consisting of universities and training colleges, should be set up 'to examine the students of a college or group of colleges for the purpose of the recognition of the students by the Board as Certificated Teachers'.[30]

So began the Joint Board scheme – a scheme which was to take up much time and effort on the part of senior administrative staff in universities and training colleges.[31] The majority went along with the scheme, perceiving it for what it was – a manoeuvre designed to enhance the academic credibility of the Certificate, without entangling the universities in a direct relationship with the training colleges.[32] Percy provided the Joint Board scheme with a rueful little epitaph of his own. Having left politics to become Chancellor of the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, he noted in his memoirs, 'Though the scheme seemed important to me at the time ... I cannot say I found it effective when, during the last half of its life, I came to operate it from the University end'.[33]

Perhaps, as an elder statesman, Percy can be forgiven for forgetting that the Joint Board scheme was never designed to be very effective. However, in one respect the scheme produced unexpected results. All the newly created Joint Boards unanimously rejected government proposals for training colleges – thereby saving them from becoming institutions providing one and two year courses of professional training. To spare Percy any embarrassment over a reversal of policy, officials at the Board of Education covered their Minister's retreat with a series of opaquely worded Board Circulars – so dull and so technical that they attracted no press coverage at all.[34] After the brief flurry of excitement provided by the publication of the Burnham Report, both Percy and the training colleges for which he was responsible retreated into obscurity.

This obscurity, to which the whole of the inter-war period was consigned during the decades following the Second World War, is now lifting as the historical focus changes with the on-going passage of time. A number of re-evaluations have taken place, including an extensive reappraisal of Stanley Baldwin. His skills as a politician are more highly regarded now than when his reputation collapsed during the war.[35] As a politician Baldwin was the master of the counter punch. Arguably his greatest triumphs – handling the General Strike and the King's abdication – were reactions to events which, in other respects, were national failures. Baldwin expended much of his fragile energy on simply keeping the boat steady, rather than taking it in any particular direction. Much has been made of Lloyd George's imprisonment by the Conservative majority within the Coalition. Surprisingly little has been said of Baldwin's dependence upon the back-benchers who voted with him to get rid, not only of Lloyd George, but a phalanx of alternative Tory leaders. Baldwin may, by inclination and instinct, have found himself more at ease consorting with Labour members in the Commons' tea room, yet he never attempted to challenge the views of the unreconstructed Tory rump; Baldwin's rhetoric never quite matched reality. When, by skilful manoeuvring, Baldwin brought the 'Coalition Conservatives' back into the Tory fold, it was too late to alter fundamentally the nature of successive inter-war administrations. As C.L. Mowat observes, Baldwin's first administration set the tune for all that was to follow, 'adequate discharge of routine duties, complacency, the failure of imagination and will'.[36]

In some respects, but not all, Lord Eustace Percy's spell at the Board of Education reflects the above shortcomings. Percy's selection as President of the Board of Education exemplifies the low standing of education during the inter-war period. A succession of Board Presidents used the department either as a waiting room for retirement or, alternatively, as a step to greater things. Percy's desire to be more than a figurehead singled him out as atypical. His total defeat at the hands of his permanent officials is all the more significant because he was the only inter-war President to challenge them seriously. His defeat fended off the imposition of short term vocational training upon the colleges. However, the political 'fudge and fix' over the Joint Board arrangements left the training colleges as isolated as they had always been. Board of Education officials, in concert with HMIs, jointly ruled and criticized every aspect of training college work. Despite regulating every minute of the students' day and advising on every aspect of administration, they nevertheless complained continually about the colleges' collective lack of educational independence. Consciously or unconsciously, it was a hypocritical stance. The Board of Education was like a parent who could not bear the children to grow up.

A dependency model was one which suited officials and politicians alike. R.G. Mayor was very clear in his advice to Percy: allow the colleges too much autonomy and the Board will lose control. To lose control to the unions would be a disaster – to lose it to the universities would raise the spectre of training becoming confused with education. Faced with such a proposition, Percy beat a hasty retreat, angrily telling denominationalists that any settlement of the training issue 'was pure political madness'.[37]

During Percy's final years some aspects of inter-war politics are all too clearly visible. Throughout 1928–1929, a sort of stagnant equilibrium set in – any attempt at activity failed to bring results. Office boys approaching the Board of Education premises were reported to whistle the tune, 'We are busy doing nothing'. The tune had a greater significance than perhaps they were aware.

The *status quo* for the Church colleges did not even represent stagnant equilibrium. While some, (mainly the women's colleges), were reaching out in search of a new

distinctiveness,[38] the majority were engaged in a grim daily struggle for survival. Like ships impaired by perpetual, unplugged leaks, many denominational colleges were daily settling lower in the water. Inspectorate evidence paints a sombre portrait of the denominational colleges as they were in the 1920s: inadequate and restricted buildings, housing, in their opinion, inadequate staff and restricted students. Conditions in some of the northern colleges were so bad that the Inspectorate seriously considered demanding closures.[39]

When you are struggling to survive, what you are struggling survive for becomes a second order question. The conclusion of the Percy era left many college principals, like the parliamentary opposition, completely confused as to future policy.[40] When he left the Board of Education in 1929, Percy had completely failed to assert the view taken by the majority on the Burnham Committee – that the primary function of the training colleges was to provide nothing but vocational training. On the other hand, his permanent officials were as adamant as the universities that the colleges were not ready to be integrated into a system of higher education. Many conflicting factors thus blocked secular solutions and drove harassed principals back to the churches that had founded them, to seek future purpose in Christian distinctiveness.

Chapter Four

Denominational Dilemmas

In a world falling to pieces, Christian certainty and distinctiveness was perhaps best sought in the Roman Catholic church. After centuries of persecution, Catholics were extremely wary of the state. They were therefore more willing than other denominationalists to entrust their interests to the leadership of bishops acting through the hierarchy. From the celebrated conversion of the saintly Newman to the defection of the more worldly Manning, the ranks of Catholic bishops were strengthened by the arrival of exceptionally able converts.

Manning began life as an Anglican priest, who drove horses fast through Sussex lanes and ended his life as a Cardinal, being chauffeured through London in highly polished cars – the embodiment of a powerful prelate. Hated or revered,[1] it was Manning who exercised a decisive influence over Catholic education policy, teaching church members to distrust any aspect of state policy smacking of secularism. Far from relying on the state, Manning encouraged Catholics to assert a sturdy independence. Such independence was clearly evident in the Catholic policy for education; Catholic children were to be educated in Catholic schools and taught by Catholic teachers. Only through such a degree of denominational distinctiveness, argued Manning, could Catholic children be protected from being shepherded down the ultimately barren and secularized paths of state paternalism.[2] A clear appreciation of this emphasis upon the ultimately religious purposes of education is essential to any understanding of Catholic policy. It led, in fact, to misunderstandings between the Catholic hierarchy, concerned with religious outcomes, and politicians and civil servants intent on achieving secular standards. The needs of this world and the needs of eternity were not often compatible, as both parties were to discover.

The first of many disputes arose over the maintenance of the pupil teacher system whereby bright pupils were identified, and after a brief period of maturing, trained on the job to assume the teacher's role. It was a poor system because it trained teachers without educating them. Nevertheless, it was vital to Catholics, as it supplied the majority of teachers working in their schools. Thus, when it came under attack as

being ‘the cheapest and worst possible system of teacher supply and one which should be abolished root and branch’,[3] Manning decided that attack was the only form of defence. Suppressing or ignoring internal evidence,[4] Manning mounted a resolute public defence of the pupil teacher system, claiming it to be a critical part of Catholic denominational education. It was the first of many instances where he unblushingly played the denominational card. His legacy to the Catholic Education Council was potent, but dangerous: be assertive, admit no mistakes, fight always to assure the primacy of religious principles over secular interests and outcomes.

Catholic investment in the pupil teacher system meant that moves towards building residential teacher training colleges were hesitant. In 1900 Catholics possessed six colleges[5] and only gradually did this number rise to 16 during the 1920s, before then declining.[6]

The problem was money – as always in any part of the denominational sector. Although the Catholic laity gave generously, the initial costs for a college, in terms of land and buildings, were high. Thereafter the running costs were negligible, as the Catholic Education Council was to discover with delight and relief. Religious orders paid no wages to nuns whose devotion to spiritual duties encouraged personal abstinence and frugality. While this was of great benefit in expanding Catholic training cheaply, the organization of the teaching orders was to prove a source of enduring acrimony between the Catholic Education Council and the Board of Education.

In 1919 R.G. Mayor was asked to organize a survey of Catholic training institutions on behalf of the Board (the word ‘survey’ being adopted because the hierarchy objected to ‘inspections’). A swift succession of surveys[7] resulted in a shocked Education Council being informed that the colleges at Hull, Southampton and Birmingham would have to close unless there were immediate improvements in buildings and staffing. The issue of staffing was the one which reduced some inspectors to virtual incoherence. One HMI despaired of being able to convey to a lay audience the limitations he observed among some teaching orders: ‘The sisters,’ he wrote, ‘while interested in their work, are very under-developed, their minds and

natures being like children ... and like children they seek to please, always working to the standards of others and not thinking for themselves'.[8]

This was the crux of the problem at La Sainte Union where, stated the inspector, 'the whole difficulty is traceable to the powerlessness of the order to produce women of culture and of educational experience.[9] Educational experience was difficult to come by in enclosed orders where, when teaching stopped, the religious life began. Sometimes nuns never saw the schools to which their students were sent and can hardly be blamed for running 'convents instead of colleges'.[10] It was the only life they knew – a life where devotion to obedience could make nuns appear more foolish than they were. Just as children in Victorian England were prepared for inspection visits by singing jolly ditties, such as 'We will be bright and gay for 'tis our inspection day', so nuns were also primed as to how to respond. A combination of common sense and cunning prepared the nuns at La Sainte Union for the day of visitation. Common sense underpinned the orders that clean socks and well ironed habits be worn; cunning lay behind the advice from the Mother Superior to say as little as possible, but if engaged in difficult conversation, 'to excuse oneself by announcing the next chapel service'. Assuring them that 'The Lord will preserve you in all things', the Mother Superior nevertheless stationed a young novice by the chapel bell, with orders to ring for a service if required. Perhaps some of the nuns were not as naive and inexperienced as the inspectors considered them to be.

Life at the college in the early 1920s was a peculiar mixture of the saintly and the secular. The sisters lived a life of partial seclusion, rarely passing the high outer walls of the college and certainly not visiting local schools on teaching practice. Most teaching was carried out in simple, whitewashed rooms, where shafts of pale sunlight occasionally glinted on the crucifixes which hung in each room. The teaching day was punctuated by the tolling of the chapel bell. The nuns' dedication to the Christian vocation of teaching was not always understood or appreciated by students – nor by the staff brought in to do school work. The latter often felt excluded from something they did not understand; misunderstandings were frequent and relationships poor. The simple severity of the regime struck inspectors as being an unacceptable way of training – a method, asserted one, 'which sacrifices efficiency in the interests of economy'.[11]

The sequel to the survey of La Sainte Union College demonstrates just how awkward and abrasive relationships could become between the Board of Education and the Catholic authorities. When summoned to the Board, Mr Anderton, secretary of the Catholic Education Council, conceded that buildings and equipment could be improved. Staffing, however, was quite another matter. 'Religious orders took their instructions from Rome and not from the Council' declared Anderton, 'perhaps the inspectors would like to write to Rome?' 'Where in Rome?' asked Mr Mayor. Mr Anderton had no idea – nor, apparently, did anyone else.[12] The file concludes, like many others in the Catholic colleges section: 'Action suspended pending further information'.

If management at the college level was sometimes diffuse and difficult to assess, overall Catholic policy was, in total contrast, highly centralized. All national legislation was carefully scrutinized by 'watching committees' set up by the Catholic hierarchy. If legislation such as the Joint Board scheme for examining in the colleges was deemed damaging to Catholic interests, a policy of obstructive procrastination was brought into play. Principals who wavered in the face of secular pressures were upheld in their struggles by sharp reminders from bishops as to the religious primacy of their training mission.[13] Painstaking, centralized negotiations undertaken on behalf of all the Catholic colleges kept their denominational purity intact, but at a price. The essential problem affecting all training colleges was their isolation, both intellectual and, frequently, physical.

In the Catholic colleges this isolation was intensified by active measures designed to keep Catholic students undefiled by the sins of the world: gates locked at dusk, compulsory attendance at mass, banned books and warnings from cardinals that the saxophone was 'the instrument of the devil'[14] were all significant, visible signs of the price paid for denominational integrity. Where loving Christian leadership was exercised, the punitive potential of such regulations was discarded as meaningless. In the absence of such leadership, the weight of Catholic authoritarianism, insensitively applied, could, and did, lead to student riots[15] and intense personal unhappiness, recalled with much bitterness by students years after the conclusion of their course.

Just as students, on occasions, were critical of their courses, His Majesty's Inspectors were frequently savagely critical of the standards achieved by Catholic students. 'Ritualism, anti-intellectualism and traditionalism may fairly be said to characterize too many Catholic students,' wrote one, 'but what else can be expected when colleges are little more than seminaries and convents?'[16] The rhetorical question highlighted one of the central dilemmas facing Catholics throughout the inter-war period – how to assert the religious primacy of their teacher training, while raising secular standards to meet national criteria? The magnitude of the issue tended to obscure internal problems, the greatest of which was to balance the autonomy of the teaching orders against centralized directives from the Catholic hierarchy. The latter's zealous protection of Catholic interests did not endear itself to other denominationalists.

Living now in an age when the sharp edges of denominational divisiveness have been worn away, it is a considerable shock to find Catholic bishops in the 1920s described as 'mad, bad and dangerous'. However the Rev. Dr Workman, secretary to the Methodist Education Committee and a stalwart of nonconformity, found no reason to allow old enmities to rest. Old antagonisms flared into life throughout the 1920s because, while Catholics held their ground, nonconformity went into a downward spiral.

The varying elements of dissenting religion during the nineteenth century had formed the backbone of the Liberal Party. When H.H. Asquith was forced to relinquish the premiership in 1916, the Party began its long, distressing decline.[17] Some Liberals continued to support Asquith, some stayed with Lloyd George and others began to desert to join the Labour Party. Factionalism brought with it ugly divisiveness – with traditional hatred of Catholicism being stoked up by internal quarrelling. The bitterness among dissenters eroded their collective energy and began to limit their vision. In the field of teacher training the vision began to shrink dramatically. The British and Foreign Schools Society wished to sell their colleges, Congregationalists focussed on Homerton, while Methodists preserved an obsessive pride and interest in their two colleges, Southlands in the London suburb of Wimbledon, and Westminster.[18]

The Methodists could be justly proud of Westminster, which established a national reputation,[19] but two colleges, however good, did not constitute a large stake in the training sector. Board of Education officials came to regard demands for information from the Wesleyan Education Committee as an irritation, especially as these approaches seemed designed to perpetuate historical, inter-denominational quarrels, whose arcane origins stretched back to before the Great War.[20]

When it finally became clear that there was to be no Liberal revival and that Lloyd George was destined to remain in the political wilderness, Wesleyan officials were treated shoddily by the bureaucrats. Subjected to long and humiliating waits in dreary rooms, Wesleyans were fortunate to be allotted five minutes at the end of meetings, whereas Catholics and Anglicans had been accorded both precedence and extensive time. If the underlying purpose of such treatment was to cool the interest of Methodists in national issues, it succeeded. While the indefatigable Dr Workman could summon the energy to challenge the insolence of Rome and the hegemony of Canterbury, it appeared in other areas that the great engine of nonconformity was slowly running down. R.G. Mayor's remark to Eustace Percy that 'nonconformists had shot their bolt' was uncharitable, but true.

This could not be said of Anglicans in 1928, although organized labour and elements of nonconformity fervently wished that they also had 'shot their bolt'. Hatred and distrust of Anglicans derived from the Church of England being the established church. Close relationships between church and state provoked frequent jibes from many quarters that the Church of England was out the Tory Party at prayer. True or false, the Anglican church paid a heavy price in the aftermath of the First World War for having been closely associated with wartime policies.[21] Revulsion against the brutality and squalor of the war led to massive support for pacifism within and beyond the churches.[22] In such a climate, images of bishops blessing tanks seemed obscene.

Pacifism was one sign of inward disquiet within the Church of England; another was the advocacy by the Bishop of Durham, Hensley Henson,[23] of the disestablishment of the Church. In championing this cause, Henson clashed with Archbishop Randall Davidson, who believed profoundly in the link between church and state. The Archbishop's final years as supreme leader of the Church, from 1920 to 1928, were

neither happy nor especially constructive. Having achieved so much during the war under a system of centralized decision making, Randall Davidson quite understandably carried on in like manner during the post-war era.

At first this centralism seemed to be accepted by church members, most notably through widespread lay support for the founding of the Church Assembly in 1920.[24] Unfortunately for Davidson, such enthusiasm proved short lived, partly because increasing numbers of Anglicans began to distrust their leader's autocratic inclinations. Whispers circulated in the pews to the effect that, 'Davidson was the first Pope to live in the new papacy at Church House'.[25] When the Archbishop attempted to contract the responsibilities of the Church by shedding some oversight of Anglican schools, members repudiated the terms offered.[26] Thus, church schools continued to exist, despite the obvious disinclination of Davidson and officials at the Board of Education to accept the costs entailed in supporting them.[27]

Davidson was a realist and a manager. He knew that the Church of England was no longer able to sustain both its schools and its colleges properly. The defeat of his schools policy led him to try to compensate for the growing temporal weakness of the Church by developing in the laity a sense of responsibility for affairs. In the educational field, this proved easier at school than at college level. While Anglican parents could take an interest in primary schools, few either understood or cared very much about training colleges. Disparity of interest had curious repercussions. At the precise moment when Davidson and senior colleagues came to appreciate that teacher training should have pre-eminence, the Anglican laity rushed to the defence of church schools. The net result was that both schools and colleges limped along, equally underfunded and each seeking improvements which beggared the other.

One of the distresses of old age is to be granted wisdom at the moment when energy is failing. Randall Davidson was a tired man some time before he left office in 1928. He was succeeded by Cosmo Gordon Lang, a man who had plenty of energy but questionable wisdom. When Sir William Orpen came to paint Lang's portrait he declared, 'I see seven Archbishops – which of them am I to paint?'[28] While Lang undoubtedly possessed a dazzling array of gifts, humility was not among them. The friend of royalty and accustomed to moving in the most exalted social circles, Lang

believed that any temporal weakness being experienced by the Church of England could be compensated for by 'understandings in high places'.

The fruits of this new policy had immediate repercussions in the training field. R.G. Mayor, for so long the lynchpin in the teacher training section in the Board of Education, was persuaded to delay retirement in order to join the Anglican Board of Supervision. His move predictably led to renewed gossip among Catholics and Methodists concerning a special relationship existing between the Church of England and the Conservative Government.[29] Although the relationship was denied, evidence in the training field suggests grounds for suspicion. Information, leaking out from inspectorate reports, was beginning to threaten seriously the reputation of the Anglican colleges. Lang met Mayor at a private meeting at Lambeth Palace – a meeting during which the Archbishop exerted all his charm to explain to Mayor the problems from an Anglican perspective. Mayor seems to have been receptive. On 10th of July, 1929, he produced a lengthy report[30] on the Anglican teacher training colleges, which, in sharp contrast with his previous work, was amazingly supportive. While Mayor repeated, in muted form, anxieties concerning deficiencies in college buildings and standard of accommodation, little was said about the controversial topic of academic standards among staff and students. In any case, any latent threat contained in the report was lost in the blandness of Mayor's conclusion. 'There is no reason at present' he wrote, 'for suggesting any further measure of concentration or the closing of any college'.[31]

Mayor was unrealistically optimistic, but his sanguine outlook was commonplace in 1929 and was certainly shared by the incoming Archbishop of Canterbury. Lang firmly believed that the difficulties and dilemmas facing Anglican schools and colleges were finally to be resolved in a blaze of expansion. A Labour Government was in office, pledged to the raising of the school leaving age at the earliest opportunity.[32] More children in schools would require more trained teachers. The National Society lost no time in telling its members, 'vastly increased numbers of teachers'[33] would be needed. A mood of excitement and expectation spread among all denominationalists and throughout the training college system at the end of 1929. A blossoming into growth and improvement was finally visible. The denominational

dilemma of poverty and underfunding was to be solved by the expansion of student numbers.[34]

Chapter Five

A Momentary Lapse of Reason

Playgoers leaving Shakespeare's Globe theatre in Elizabethan London passed a sign written in Latin, *Totus mundus agit histrionem* – 'we are all players'.[1] Only a handful of Shakespeare's audience would have known what the Latin tag meant. Similarly, only a handful of staff and students attending the denominational colleges during the 1930s would have realised that they were players in an unfolding tragedy. Staff working in training colleges had high hopes and expectations of the benefits which would flow from the anticipated expansion. However, events now unfolded in such unpredictable ways that collective hope perished as reason lapsed and a kind of madness seized governments and countries. Viewed in retrospect, the inter-war period is like a door swinging on a hinge. From 1918 until 1931, the year full impact of the great financial crash reached Britain, the door is closing on the First World War. From 1931 till 1939, the door is opening towards the Second World War. At the moment when the door was coming to rest on its hinge, the financial crash began in America during October, 1929. Within weeks seriously bad financial symptoms began to cross the Atlantic. With disconcerting speed, all hopes of expansion were obliterated in campaigns for cuts and more cuts.[2]

In the Introduction of this book persistent themes are identified; class, secularization and the difficulties of creating a competent bureaucracy to administer the colleges. All these issues crowd together and come centre-stage during the years of social mayhem caused by the financial crash (1929–1933). Their origins, however, were already apparent before the severity of the financial situation struck home. Before 1929 there was a degree of social optimism, a tentative feeling that Britain was putting the past into the past. A circulation war among newspapers, particularly between the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express*, encouraged journalists such as Beverley Nichols and Godfrey Winn[3] to write ever more enthusiastic articles extolling the new libertarianism, embodied in the fashions of sunbathing, nudism and hiking. All of these pursuits slid into England from the continent and especially Germany, under a general title of 'strength through joy'. They made uncertain progress, not least because of the English climate.

The serious naturists and seriously wealthy groups quietly built luxurious nature camps where ladies attempted to avoid the cold by indulging in drill and eating lettuce and tinned salmon teas.[4] In casting off their clothes they were assured that they were both casting off inhibitions and the unwanted remnants of class. Nothing could be further from the truth. The butlers and maids brought in to serve the lettuce and tinned salmon sandwiches had to wear loin cloths and aprons respectively as it was considered rude for the lower classes to display their private parts. Strict rules were enforced to ensure that no inappropriate physical contact was made; these rules however only applied to the upper classes. Waitresses regularly left with red weals across their bottoms caused by 'gentlemen' being unable to resist the urge to pinch them. Complaints invariably led to the dismissal of the waitress, while the perpetrator went unpunished. Class differences dictated that apart from a tiny minority in ultra-progressive colleges, nudism was an irrelevance to staff and students in teacher training. Naturism was not acceptable on a teacher's CV and anyone considering joining the movement was strongly deterred by the majority of journalists persistently regarding all naturists as covert perverts.[5]

The new fashion of hiking, though, was an acceptable activity for teachers and was popular among students at all types of training colleges, mainly because it was cheap and could be afforded on the meagre wages paid to teachers. Provincial newspapers sponsored Hikers' Leagues and Clubs, and the railway companies competed with each other to cater for the new market. On the morning of Good Friday 1932 the Great Western Railway ran a Hikers' Mystery Express from Paddington, taking walkers to a remote country station and bringing them home again late in the evening after they had traipsed 20 miles to another rural station. The popularity of this soon saw hiking holidays extended to days and weeks, with enthusiasts committing their annual fortnight's holiday to the pursuit of hiking in ever more remote places. Journalists swiftly exploited a new audience, repeatedly telling hikers how they were bravely casting off the old in order to embrace the new.

Unfortunately the old had a habit of clashing with the new, and again class was at its heart. When the Great Western Railway ran a hikers' excursion as far as Exeter, the letter columns in *The Times* were filled with complaints concerning hikers in muddy

boots being given access to First Class carriages, unflattering observations regarding the disgustingly garish clothes worn by hikers and sarcastic comments that hikers had an obsession with displaying knobbly knees, fat legs and big bottoms.[6] Hikers found an unlikely champion in the Bishop of Exeter who robustly defended their right to wear what they liked and hike where they were legally entitled to do so.[7] The Bishop was at least consistent in defending his own practice. At the age of 72 he rode round his diocese on a bicycle painted brilliant vermilion, dressed in a purple cassock and singing hymns at the top of his voice. While the Bishop was regarded by most of his parishioners as an eccentric, they tended not to extend the same latitude to hikers. While parts of the national press lauded hikers for their modernity, country folk mainly thought of them as a menace. The right to roam became another contentious and, in part, class-based issue: hikers' excursions were more and more met by game keepers with shot-guns and gun dogs on leashes, a pattern which culminated in the famous 'mass trespass' on Kinder Scout in 1932.[8]

The public's attitude to teachers and their training was a fickle commodity. For example, secularisation ebbed and flowed against the backdrop of falling stock markets. While the Bishop of Exeter robustly pursued a libertarian line on behalf of hikers, he received little support from his parishioners. Why, one complained, was the Bishop defending hikers' rights to trample down the countryside, when they should be in church on the sabbath day?[9] Exactly the same criticisms were directed at students in the denominational colleges when Chapel attendances began to drop.[10] Church and chapel attendance, and the sacredness of Sunday, came to the forefront during 1930 to 1932 as clerics warned that the financial disasters being encountered represented God's judgement on a sinful nation.[11]

Finally, before once again picking up the narrative threads, what about the competent bureaucracies? The panic generated by the financial crisis ended normal politics. A National Government, bringing together parties and politicians of all shades and descriptions with a 'doctor's mandate' to heal the county's ills was sworn in on 24th of August, 1931[12] With Labour marginalised and unable to resist swingeing cuts, the axe once again hovered over all the training colleges as the Treasury demanded both cuts and closures. It is at this point, 1930–1931, that voluntarism finally imploded. Called on to take tough decision on college closures, the Anglican Board of

Supervision made a catastrophic mess of the process, losing the confidence of both Church and Government. The days of gentlemen of good standing offering impartial, non-technical advice were at an end.

None of this was apparent when Ramsey MacDonald led a minority Labour government back into power at the beginning of June, 1929.[13] He was probably the least competent politician capable of dealing with the impending financial crisis. While Baldwin's reputation has been partially vindicated by reassessment, biographies of MacDonald have served only to underline the personal tragedy of a Prime Minister who retired while still in office.[14] Ironically dubbed 'Gentleman Mac' by his disillusioned back-benchers, MacDonald was fatally seduced by the very society he was supposed to reform. Like his distant successor, Tony Blair, MacDonald found mixing with the rich and famous addictive. Also with parallels to Blair, the more MacDonald mixed with high society, the more he came to despise the Labour Party and its rank and file members. His authority rapidly began to diminish as he indulged more and more frequently in what his critics described as 'Scotch mist rhetoric'.[15] He had a fatal facility for confused metaphors; one he repeated often was, 'Ah, my friends, how easy it would be to listen to the milk of human kindness'.[16] He sadly had an equal talent for seizing on the facile and making it sound even more banal. 'Society', he declared, 'goes on and on and on. It is the same with ideas'.[17] Most newspaper commentators and Labour MPs had concluded early in MacDonald's premiership that MacDonald (like Margaret Thatcher at a later date) had only one aim, to stay on and on and on as Prime Minister.

The far-reaching consequences of the 1931 financial crisis failed to impinge upon MacDonald as he chaired the final Cabinet meeting of the Labour administration on Sunday, the 23rd of August, 1931. Perhaps it was just as well, since everyone else seemed afflicted by a momentary lapse of reason. Lord Ponsonby, a participant observer, described the mood of unrestrained hysteria that settled on departing ministers:

> Headlines, crowds, police, hectic movements, day and night meetings, with the door of Downing Street loosened on its hinges by the constant passage of

> leading figures of all three parties as they hurried past the ever present battery of photographers.[18]

Perhaps the hysteria and fatigue explain why, as the final Cabinet discussions became more heated, MacDonald sat absent-mindedly doodling on a blotter, 'waiting wearily for the end'.[19] Having received the resignations of his ministers, the Prime Minister departed shortly after ten o'clock for what all concerned thought was to be his final meeting with the King.

It proved to be far from a final meeting. At noon the next day MacDonald informed his former Cabinet, 'to its utter stupefaction, that though it was out, he was in'.[20] He had agreed to head a National Government, composed of individuals rather than parties, as a temporary expedient for the sole purpose of settling the financial crisis. The temporary expedient was to enjoy a remarkable longevity because, in Robert Boothby's derisive words, 'It was no "National" Government, simply a get-together on the part of the Boys of the Old Brigade, who climbed onto the bandwagon and sat there, rain or shine, until they had brought the British Empire to the verge of destruction'.[21]

After a brief period of ministerial musical chairs, a very distinguished old boy climbed back onto the bandwagon at the Board of Education. E.F.L. Wood (about to become Viscount Halifax), President of the Board in 1923, re-emerged in July, 1932 to resume the office. Fresh from his triumphs as Viceroy of India, Halifax displayed all the boredom and lack of interest in education that had characterized his earlier tenure of office. Any spark of interest displayed to his civil servants at the Board of Education would quickly evaporate and his voice would trail away into silence.[22] The same disconcerting lapses of concentration and ensuing silences were to be observed in his answers to questions on education in both House of Commons and House of Lords.[23]

However limp in terms of public performance, Halifax's return to the Board of Education was greeted with great joy in Anglican circles because of the Earl's well known devotion to the Church of England. At the ancestral home at Garrowby, Halifax had a private chapel decorated in all the splendour of the Anglo-Catholic

style. Cosmo Lang, Archbishop of Canterbury, was frequently both house guest and celebrant at private communion services held in the chapel. As Halifax and Lang frequently encountered each other in the select group invited by MacDonald and Baldwin to country house week-ends,[24] Anglicans confidently expected that the fruits of Cosmo Lang's policy of 'understandings in high places' would soon be evident.

It was imperative that Lang's policy should work, since Anglican colleges were in disarray. Within a period of six months all the indicators had changed from go to stop. Massive expansion was abruptly succeeded by severe contraction, primarily because Philip Snowden, pursuing his role as the Iron Chancellor in both Labour and National Governments, believed that educational expenditure had run out of control.[25] With a view to promoting confidence abroad, Snowden had appointed the Committee on National Expenditure, led by Sir George May, to investigate the state of the British economy. It was the May Committee which had achieved the dubious distinction of starting a run on the pound, leading to the fall of the Labour Government in 1931.

When MacDonald and Snowden returned to their respective posts as Prime Minister and Chancellor in the National Government, the May Report awaited them. Its proposals, although not attracting the same degree of publicity, were only marginally less drastic than those of the notorious Geddes Committee in 1922. Where Geddes had called for a 30 per cent cut in government expenditure, May recommended reductions amounting to just over 27 per cent. 'Profligate expenditure' on education was singled out by the Committee for censure and educational economies totalling £13.6 million were demanded. May urged significant cuts in grants paid to universities and training colleges.[26]

The extent and severity of the proposed cuts in teacher training were well known to the new cadre of permanent officials working at the Board of Education when Halifax returned.[27] E.H. Pelham (Permanent Secretary), M.G. Holmes and S.H. Wood, in common with most civil servants working in spending ministries during the inter-war period, had led a troubled existence attempting to appease their Treasury colleagues. The lowly status of the Board of Education caused its officers to be unduly dependent on residual crumbs falling from Treasury estimates. Dependency bred servility and by

1932 the triumvirate at the Board of Education were more interested in pleasing their colleagues than in pleasing the Minister.

Pelham, Holmes and Wood were as intent as their predecessors on maintaining the Board of Education's extensive powers over the running of every aspect of the training system. If cuts had to be made, they judged that these should be applied swiftly and efficiently, thereby enhancing their reputation with the Treasury. Pleading the national economic crisis as its excuse, the Board thus informed all denominational authorities that, 'building improvements in colleges financed by loans should cease to be implemented from the 1st of October, 1931'.[28] Fearing an over-production of approximately a thousand teachers, the Board imposed a ten per cent reduction in the number of teachers to be trained in the academic year 1932–1933, effectively reducing the number of students in denominational colleges from 4,076 to 3,655. Even before these measures had taken effect, the Board announced a further eight per cent reduction of teachers in training from September, 1934.[29] The cumulative effect of all these measures was severe. Closures of training colleges became inevitable. For surviving institutions, deficient models of training were likely to be granted an indefinite lease of life because nothing better could be afforded.

When the implications of government policy were plain for all to see, storms of protest erupted. Among denominationalists, protest took different forms. The Catholic Education Council refused to implement any cuts in the number of students recruited to their colleges and these institutions proceeded in an atmosphere of relative calm.[30] Similarly fortunate was the Wesleyan College at Westminster. By 1930 this college had become firmly integrated into the structure of the University of London.[31] Thus, although members of the Wesleyan Education Committee, particularly Dr Workman, were angry with the government, the only Methodist college seriously affected by the cuts was Southlands.[32] Within Anglican circles responses were mixed. Those principals working in the provinces and possessing only partial knowledge of events were as alarmed as their counterparts working in the LEA sector. Their shrill cries of consternation were met initially with reassuringly soothing noises from the Anglican Board of Supervision. The chairman of the Board of Supervision was Walter Buchanan Riddell who, like Lord Grey, chairman of the Anglican Board of Finance, was a close friend of Halifax. Both men were anxious to allow Lord Edward (as

Halifax was known to his intimates) time and space to come up with a deal on behalf of the Anglican colleges.

At first such a deal seemed likely. Shortly after he resumed office, Halifax received a letter from the Boards of Supervision and Finance requesting restoration of some of the student places allocated to Anglican colleges, in order to stave off closures.[33] The letter, while adhering closely to the facts, left Halifax in no doubt concerning the aggrieved feelings of his friends, who felt they had been badly treated.[34] Halifax was perturbed. Passing the letter to his officials, he asked whether the position as outlined by the Church of England was accurate and if so, whether anything could be done. Pelham quickly conceded that the case presented was accurate[35] and remained silent as to remedial action. Reiterating Government policy that training colleges 'should do everything they can to help themselves, both by raising fees and making all reasonable economies',[36] Pelham returned the file, hoping that the debate was closed.

The matter would probably have ended there if Pelham had not found out that Lord Grey, on behalf of the Church of England, had arranged a private meeting with Halifax to plead the case of the Anglican colleges. The Permanent Secretary made this useful discovery through a junior official, whose duties to Halifax extended to tasks such as arranging for his hair to be cut, reading train timetables and making seat reservations. The junior official so employed overheard Halifax complain of 'the tiresome necessity of having to get together like this with Grey',[37] and Pelham was thus warned in advance of a confidential meeting.

Pelham, Holmes and Wood were mildly alarmed because it appeared that their minister was about to slip out of the leading reins which they had so effectively applied. Any concession to Anglicans which exceeded the Treasury allowance threatened their status and credibility in Whitehall. Privately, they also agreed that if cuts had to be made it was preferable if these fell on the weakest sector, namely the denominational colleges.

With much at stake, Pelham indulged in some sophisticated micro-political activity. Halifax's lax work habits (his long week-ends commenced on Thursday mornings) provided Pelham with the opportunity to secure the departmental position. Recalling

his initial private minute, Pelham, over a long week-end, stiffened his appraisal of the outlook for the colleges. Reminding Halifax of the additional eight per cent cut due in 1934, he asserted, 'The outlook for most of the colleges after 1933–1934 is bankruptcy and the possibility of closing one or two small colleges should be explored'.[38]

The delivery of the amended minute was carefully timed. Halifax invariably returned from the north on a Monday morning train and was not usually at his desk until after lunch. The private minute from Pelham and Holmes was awaiting him on Monday the 2nd of August. On Tuesday the 3rd, he was due to receive the official deputation from the Church of England. With barely enough time to read his papers, far less to discuss them, Halifax was predisposed, as always, to accept the considered advice of his officials. Having raised the hopes of Anglicans in private, Halifax crushed them in public. When members of the deputation arrived, Halifax stuck firmly to the prepared statement. 'There is' he said 'no question of extra financial aid being made available and, in the circumstances, the only alternative is college closures'.[39] It was fortunate that Halifax did what he was told. To cover any late change of ministerial mind, Pelham and Wood had published a press statement – well before the meeting.[40]

Members of the Anglican delegation left Whitehall in a state of shock. As news of the meeting spread and Pelham's press release penetrated the most isolated colleges, the uproar mounted in intensity. Edmund Phipps, one of the most experienced Anglican officials, candidly warned of the 'horrible situation' which confronted members of the Board of Supervision.[41] The principals in the colleges had been right and the Board had been wrong. Writing to Pelham warning of 'the imminent dangers', Phipps identified 'the misunderstandings and anger which will be raised against the Board of Education and the Board of Supervision on the ground that individual colleges have been kept too much in the dark. Our leaders have acted for the best', he concluded, 'but are under suspicion as being too bureaucratic and centralizing'.[42]

Pelham sympathized but, being under pressure from the Treasury, began with decreasing degrees of civility to press the Anglican Board of Supervision to supply the names of at least three colleges for immediate closure. Neither the Board of Education nor the Church wished to incur the odium attached to naming individual

colleges for closure. Five weary months passed, with all parties playing a game of pass the parcel and with Pelham privately fuming at the Board of Supervision's inability 'to deliver the goods'.[43] On 2nd of December, 1932 Halifax reluctantly grasped the nettle. He announced that the Board of Education would accept 'the ultimate responsibility for closing individual colleges'. Privately, he conceded to his permanent officials, 'These are autocratic measures which will no doubt be unpopular with individual colleges, but we have had to do many autocratic things'.[44]

Aware that their credibility was diminishing with Pelham and others, and believing that they had successfully pinned the blame for closure on the shoulders of the Board of Education, members of the Anglican Board of Supervision proceeded towards a display of the kind of autocracy which was in keeping with that of Halifax. The secretary, Richard Holland, and Canon Partridge set about restoring the reputation of the Board of Supervision. Lethargy was abruptly succeeded by a furious and largely misplaced energy. Another momentary lapse of reason blighted rationality as Holland and Partridge dispatched telegrams to the principals of Fishponds, Lincoln and Chester colleges, informing each of their institution's suspension and temporary closure.[45] Although rumours had abounded, the telegrams came as a complete shock. Neither the Church Assembly nor the Council of Church Training Colleges had sanctioned the peremptory course of action pursued by the Board of Supervision.[46] However, once committed, the Board pressed on with increasing desperation. Having cursorily listened to outraged pleas of the college deputations, a statement was issued on 30th of November, 1932 confirming college closures.[47]

Having recovered from their initial shock, the principals and governing bodies of the threatened colleges refused to accept their suspension. Instead they took their case to the Church Assembly. The Assembly debate, which opened on 9th of February, 1933, was the culmination of weeks and months of uninhibited oral and written warfare among the contending parties. On 27th of January, 1933 members of the Anglican Board of Supervision had issued to all Assembly delegates a toughly worded statement defending their actions.[48] Three days later members of the Church Assembly received an appeal from Canon Thomas, Principal of Chester College, questioning both the policy of concentration and the truthfulness of the Board of Supervision's latest statement. Pointing to the fact that the Board had failed to consult

with any of the threatened colleges, Thomas angrily concluded that, 'This method of action must appear to others as it appears to its victims, callous and autocratic'.[49]

These bitter accusations, published in *The Times*[50] and thereby gaining wide publicity, were in the hands of all delegates when Lord Grey and Sir Walter Buchanan Riddell, on behalf of the Anglican Board of Supervision, made long opening statements justifying the Board's policies. Buchanan Riddell's combative verbal style proved the more effective. Castigating the perfidy of Government policy regarding teacher training, he stressed that the Board of Education had presented the Church with two choices: a general reduction in student numbers, or selective closures of colleges for a limited period. Ignoring remarks from some delegates that temporary closure in this case meant permanent closure, Buchanan Riddell insisted that a general reduction in student numbers 'would enfeeble all the colleges and put at risk their expansion programmes'. 'Twenty-three colleges' he concluded, 'are preferable to twenty-six weak ones'.[51]

Delegates remained sceptical. Many of them had been present at an earlier debate when claims of the closest cooperation existing between the Board of Supervision and the Board of Education had been used to achieve a unanimous vote in support of training college modernization and expansion. Now, instead of expansion, they were being asked to support concentration.

Bewilderment turned to anger. During discussion over coffee, George Bell, Bishop of Chichester, a persistent critic of the Board of Supervision, remarked loudly that it was, 'a compliant body which seldom met'. A Church Assembly delegate, Mr Harrison, took his cue from Bell and launched an aggressive attack on the Church's Board of Supervision in the post-coffee session. Harrison accused the Board of being supine in its duties and compliant in its attitudes. 'On the first important point of policy which has arisen,' claimed Harrison, 'the colleges are complaining that they have been unfairly treated by the very body appointed to help them'.[52] Delegates agreed with Harrison and voted for an amendment which postponed for 12 months the closing of any of the colleges.[53] The motion was carried by a large majority and, by inference, constituted a vote of no confidence in the Board of Supervision's handling of affairs.

The aftermath of the Church Assembly debate was both confused and unpleasant. Buchanan Riddell resigned as chairman of the Board of Supervision – not just over the issue of church colleges, but over the attacks launched on the colleges in the second part of the debate. Once it was clear that official policy was to be overturned, aroused delegates exploited the situation to pursue issues which had previously been confined to private gossip. The focus of discontent was the alleged backsliding of the denominational colleges from their founding Christian principles. Dr Alfred Blunt, Bishop of Bradford, was the first of many speakers to express dissatisfaction regarding the teaching of religious knowledge in church colleges. 'The clarity and purpose of the Christian teacher has been obscured' declared the Bishop, 'by Anglican doctrine being subverted'. Cultural pluralism and secularism were abroad in the colleges and, if left unchallenged, would destroy them.

Despite the bishop's lofty language, ordinary delegates had no difficulty in understanding that the key issue was compulsory attendance by students at chapel worship. Some colleges had dropped compulsion in favour of voluntary attendance. Those delegates with an ear for scandal were quick to relate lurid stories of students staying in bed on Sunday morning and filling the rest of the sabbath day with drinking and card playing.[54] Tempers were rising and Cosmo Lang, chairing the debate, was becoming progressively more uneasy at the turn of events. The way out was a Commission of Enquiry which Lang hastily sanctioned, hoping that the time taken to make detailed enquiries would allow inflamed feelings to subside. Delegates therefore went home well satisfied that they had struck a blow against both excessive bureaucracy in church government and an over-abundance of secular attitudes in church colleges.

Had they been aware of the intense disappointment felt in the Anglican colleges, their satisfaction would have been somewhat tempered: as the Executive Committee of the National Society bitterly informed its members, 'During the last few years the training colleges have been the very playthings of circumstances'.[55] Such circumstances left all in the colleges ruefully aware of the truth of the saying from Francis Bacon, 'Hope maketh a good breakfast but poor supper'.[56] Hopes of expansion had been blown away in the financial storms of 1931. Facing contractions and closures, policies

euphemistically referred to in the Church and by government as 'shortening the line'[57] and 'concentration',[58] college principals now found additional burdens were to be placed upon them. An enquiry into theological mission and student morals was regarded by the majority of principals as the last straw. As one observed bitterly, 'Instead of theological blood-letting, what is required is a massive blood transfusion to get the colleges back onto their feet'.[59]

What was true of the college situation could equally well be applied at a national level. Philip Snowden, Chancellor of the Exchequer, resigned in September, 1932 baffled, like so many inter-war chancellors, by the failure of the British economy to pick up. Any figment of a National Government went with Snowden's departure - yet Ramsay MacDonald stubbornly clung on to power, 'a conservative Prime Minister leading a conservative administration'.[60] MacDonald's power and passion had long departed and his rambling speeches and dithering during cabinet meetings was tolerated only because Baldwin was biding his time.

In fact, marking time was the order of the day. Pelham, Holmes and Wood at the Board of Education emulated Baldwin in pursuing a policy of masterly inactivity. Confident that the denominational colleges were, in civil servant parlance, 'withering on the vine',[61] they sat back and waited for them to fall off. The principals working in these colleges had undergone many painful years of practice of the art of hanging on. On this occasion, however, they were aware that their fate depended, not so much on the vagaries of government policy, but on the findings of a number of enquiries, including the Anglican Commission. At the end of 1932 the future of the colleges was as uncertain as it had been in 1922. At the closing of the year one principal confided to her diary:

> The outlook, as always, is bleak. We are blamed for not doing enough, but we scarcely have enough to keep the daily routine going. Unless help comes soon I cannot see us surviving another year.[62]

Chapter Six

Drifting

The year 1933 marks a watershed in the Church colleges' struggle for survival. Many of them had been drifting for some time and in 1933 large numbers were perilously close to final shipwreck. Board of Education officials estimated that if full inspections of the denominational colleges were applied, three quarters of the Anglican colleges and half of the Catholic institutions would be closed immediately.[1] Those most at risk were the small ones, working in rural isolation, whose methods infuriated visiting inspectors.[2] Mr Oppé, author of the private Board of Education minute, estimated that thousands of pounds needed spending on the Church colleges, 'in order to bring them up to scratch'.[3]

Oppé's private thoughts were echoed in the colleges, where harassed principals bombarded their denominational authorities with requests for financial assistance. In the Catholic sector such requests were invariably met with terse advice to 'make do and mend'.[4] In the Anglican field the rising tide of dissatisfaction was partly stemmed by a plethora of Enquiries. The 1933 investigation of the Anglican colleges was the third probe into their affairs within the space of five years.[5] The more astute college principals were well aware that they were being kept busy in order to be kept quiet.[6] They were collectively kept very busy indeed by what became known as the Peterborough Commission.[7] Throughout 1933 commissioners, led by the Bishop of Peterborough and R.G. Mayor, visited every Anglican college. Many college principals eagerly anticipated the visits, hoping for some clarification of their financial position.

When you are terminally ill, you hardly expect the doctor to enquire about minor ailments. This, however, was precisely what happened during the course of the Peterborough enquiry. Astonished and outraged principals were asked by commissioners not to discuss their balance sheets, but to give detailed accounts of student morals and attendance levels at chapel services. The commissioners' interest in these matters stemmed from the anxiety in the Anglican Church regarding the secularization of the colleges. When principals recovered from their surprise at the

line of questioning pursued, they hastily covered their tracks by claiming that the colleges were acting as bulwarks against the all too apparent evil of secular tendencies in society. The Bishop of Peterborough was pleased to hear such evidence. Coming from the liberal wing of the Church, he was privately appalled by what he termed 'the backwoods behaviour'[8] he encountered in some colleges. Abandoning any attempt to fulfil the role of a dispassionate chairperson, the Bishop strained every nerve to commend progressive solutions to college staff, particularly voluntary attendance by students at chapel service.[9]

When the Report of the Committee of Enquiry was finally presented to members of the Board of Supervision on 16th of December, 1937, four years after it had begun work, its recommendations[10] provoked little comment among church members. While the Bishop of St Albans was later to ascribe this passivity to the extraordinary lack of interest shown by the laity in the cause of religious education[11] there was, on this particular occasion, an alternative explanation. The commissioners' recommendations were not controversial: they had halted the suspension and temporary closure of the colleges; they had been hard on bureaucracy and soft on secularization. On the whole, therefore, the report said everything which lay members were disposed to accept. After the tensions and anger displayed in the recent Church Assembly, most of its members were inclined to forgive and forget. The generally perceived view among church men and women was that the report, although a little too progressive in parts, was the product of the brand of enlightened liberalism represented by the Bishop of Peterborough. As the years passed, the majority of Assembly delegates (especially bishops) became proud of what soon came to be regarded as a forward looking document.

While it was undoubtedly forward looking, it was also a report which was economical with the truth. The final summary of recommendations paid selective attention to the evidence from the 26 colleges visited. This evidence, along with interviews with former students, was never published. If it had been, church members would have been shocked rather than soothed. The year 1932–1933 marks the point at which the voices of students were heard and they were predominantly very unhappy voices. One of the reasons why the Bishop of Peterborough commended voluntary attendance at chapel was because former students had candidly admitted to him that compulsory

worship was one of the most hated features of college life. As one student bluntly told R.G. Mayor, 'In a week when you are run off your feet from morning till night it is the last straw to lose half of Sunday singing dreary hymns, pumping cranky organs and confessing sins you never had time to commit'.[12] The principal of the college which this student attended was equally blunt. Mr. J.H. Simpson, Principal of St Mark and St John's College, told the Bishop that membership of the Church of England meant nothing to his students. 'Confirmation by itself' asserted Simpson, 'is a ritual and students arriving at this college distance themselves from their religious background as speedily as possible. Having "crammed" in order to pass the religious examination, they resent spending time on any work associated with religious instruction'.[13] Religious instruction and personal faith were both being 'pushed into the margins' declared Simpson, 'by the extent of the secular curriculum imposed on them by the Board of Education. At the end of the week in this college,' he concluded, 'students are too exhausted to attend chapel'.[14]

The harsh note in Simpson's evidence could be ignored (as it was by the commissioners) because Simpson, unlike most Anglican principals, was not ordained. However, Simpson's views were given powerful support in an independent investigation by the distinguished literary critic, L.C. Knights. In December, 1932, Knights published an article entitled, 'Will Training Colleges Bear Scrutiny?'[15] Student revelations concerning homosexual practices in training institutions brought the article immediate notoriety. One offending passage from an anonymous female student was widely quoted and wildly misquoted:

> Attachments were common. Sometimes they existed between two pretty girls who related their adventures with their men to each other and got the thrill twice over, who slept with each other, and usually walked about touching each other. Sometimes a sporty girl had a satellite who fagged for her and pushed her claims at college. There were few genuine friendships as far as I know.[16]

This mention of the unmentionable attracted a far wider readership than usual for the 1932 article, published in *Scrutiny*. Far from being salacious, it was a scholarly denouncement of the whole training college system, notable for the incisiveness of its analysis and the sharpness of its language. Its sharpness and severity came from

Knights' use of student evidence. Catholic and Anglican students complained to him of lives confined behind gates, where a routine of 'cram and grind' was regulated by bells: lecture bells, chapel bells, rising bells and dormitory bells. Drawing on this evidence, Knights brought it together and wrote:

> The Training college day, we are told, was characteristically a day of lectures; the electric bell rang every hour to change lecture rooms, the classes filing along the corridors. The picture is symbolic. Compulsory attendance at lectures was the rule, to cut even the most futile of them is a serious offence. The sense of frustration and time wasted is intensified by the methods adopted in the classroom. The information imparted is dry, academic, often irrelevant and normally suited to the intelligence of the lowest level of the audience.[17]

Knights was unsparing in his criticism, grimly concluding that, 'Training Colleges have become a byword for futility, because of their overcrowded and irrelevant curricula, their arbitrary and unfair systems of discipline and their collective obsession with training as opposed to education'.[18]

The publication of the article brought a flood of additional mail to Knights from students in the training system. Most denominational students wrote anonymously, fearing reprisals, drawing Knights' attention to the fact that compulsory lectures were only one aspect of the many compulsions existing in church colleges. One student wrote, 'Why did you stop at compulsory lectures? In our seminary we have compulsory chapel, compulsory games, compulsory meals and compulsory giving to charity'. She ended her letter with a poignant, perceptive insight, 'We are like caged birds, we peck at each other because we have no personal freedom'.[19]

The lack of freedom in the colleges was evidenced by the litany of complaints addressed to Knights concerning the petty tyrannies applied through unreformed systems. One young lady wrote of having been 'gated' because she was seen in the town wearing a college blazer with a button missing.[20] A male student from York wrote of 'being confined to barracks' for the term because he had been spotted in a part of the city 'off limits to students from St John's'.[21] Some students contrived to make light, literally, of petty impositions. At one Catholic college lights out meant

precisely that, as the Mother Superior threw the main electric switch at 9.30pm, reducing the whole campus to darkness. She was never able to account to the Catholic Education Council for the astonishing number of candles consumed in worship at the college and her nuns never managed to explain to her the equally amazing number of scorched blankets which had to be mended at the end of an academic year. Far less amusing were the allegations of bullying, intimidation and distorted relationships which came to Knights from staff as well as students.

Enterprising and energetic staff frequently found the stultifying routines of denominational life insufferable and applied for posts in the universities. A fortunate few escaped – a much larger majority found themselves trapped in the pedestrian routines that represented life in the training system. While some staff adjusted and dedicated lives of quiet devotion to their colleges, others became embittered and disillusioned. Starved of incentives for innovation and of the means to achieve it, many staff and students in church colleges during the inter-war period found themselves trapped, slavishly following the minutiae of out-dated and irrelevant routines. Heroic leadership sometimes broke the pattern,[22] sensitive leadership sometimes ameliorated the worst excesses of the system,[23] but the sad truth is (as Knights' evidence reveals) the majority of the denominational colleges during the inter-war period were very grim places indeed.

In the wake of Knights' article people began to refer openly to 'the training college scandal', but it was a very muffled scandal. In part this was due to the curiously inert quality of life observed during the inter-war period, when a whole series of crises went off like underwater explosions, resulting in minor eruptions on the surface and with Baldwin assiduously collecting the debris. Nobody wanted a crisis in the training field, so everybody agreed not to have one. Initially, however, Board of Education officials feared exposure. The publication of Knights' article, allied to the progress of the Peterborough commission, led to some hasty calculations between Pelham, Holmes and Wood concerning appropriate strategies. They quickly ruled out full inspections of the colleges followed by large scale closures as impossible, due to the impact on teacher supply.

After much careful reckoning, it was judged by Pelham that the extremely cheap supply of teachers coming from the Church colleges was an indispensable, if unloved, element of the teacher supply system. Pelham additionally considered that any refutation of the conditions revealed in the colleges by Knights' article, however carefully worded, was likely to reveal to the public the subordination of Board policies to Treasury demands. When the issue was finally put to Halifax he was adamant that no account of Board of Education activities should be offered, other than through annual reports.[24] All of these considerations led the Board to respond to a scandalous crisis with profound silence.[25]

Among denominationalists, Knights' article provoked silence, followed by the unwelcome sounds of sectarian quarrelling. With a display of purblind moral rectitude, one of the least attractive features of sectarianism, each denomination interpreted Knights' accusations as applying to someone else. Catholics thought he was talking about Anglican colleges, Anglicans were convinced the revelation concerned Catholic colleges and Methodists were quite sure the accusation applied to both the former and had nothing to do with them. None of them looked in their own mirror. When the Bishop of Peterborough did so in 1933, he was so perturbed by what he saw, he offered remedies without a diagnosis – because the diagnosis confirmed Knights' judgements.

There is a traditional English saying, 'Happiness flies out of the window as poverty walks through the door'. At the beginning of 1933, all training college authorities were suffering from the effects of a 20 per cent reduction in student numbers and were anxiously attempting to offset the associated loss of income.[26] It was at this point that the quarrelling began. In this highly competitive market each denomination was intent on safeguarding its own position, regardless of the consequences for others. The potential for friction existed and became all too evident at a conference hastily convened by the Board of Education on 14th of December, 1933. On this occasion, Mr Oppé, acting as postman for the Treasury, was concerned to impress upon training college representatives the latest demand from the Treasury, namely that increased fees should cover anticipated, but not forthcoming, rises in grants. This demand faced all those present with a challenging little calculation as to how far it was possible to raise their fees to cover costs, without losing students. Anglican representatives made

an opening bid by saying that the Church of England was moving towards a general increase in fees to the level of £50 per annum.[27] There was general consternation among all denominationalists when LEA representatives said they had no intention of raising their fees[28] and university members walked out of the meeting. To add further to this disarray, the Roman Catholic delegation then declared that a fee of £50 a year was inconceivable for Catholic students. Most Catholics, they asserted, coming from 'situations of poverty', were already disadvantaged by the existing scale of fees.[29] The conference broke up without any agreement, but with all parties well aware that unbridled competition was the order of the day.

Competition may provide a challenge for those who can win but in the field of teacher training during the 1930s it was apparent that the only possible winners were the universities and local authority colleges. Universities received funds via the University Grants Committee and local authorities had access to the rating system. In both cases financial independence fostered academic autonomy. In sharp contrast denominationalists were almost entirely dependent for their financial viability on grants paid by the Board of Education in respect of individual student places[30] and therefore any reduction in student numbers threatened their very existence. Dependence on the Board became virtually total by the 1930s as the number of believers fell. With their departure, disposable revenues within each church declined.[31] In the colleges, principals found themselves caught in the vice of declining revenues and rising expectations.

The Anglican Board of Supervision, in attempting to stave off closures, was caught in the same vice. Having been rebuffed by the Church Assembly in its first attempt to achieve concentration, the Board had no alternative but to seek other ways of squaring the circle. In 1934 the Board pushed ahead with a scheme of common pool funding, whereby the revenues from the stronger urban colleges were partially diverted towards helping the small rural colleges to survive. The horizon of the latter had shrunk to the point where staying open was the only thing that mattered.[32] Not everyone, however, shared this passionate commitment and 'survival of the weakest'[33] was a jibe that had a sharp edge to it.

Principals in the London colleges, who saw their expansion plans delayed or curtailed by revenue being siphoned off to their country cousins, found strong support in their protests from George Bell, Bishop of Chichester. Bell, who had a profound contempt for 'back slapping among bureaucrats and for the Church of England being run like a business'[34] had lost faith in the Board of Supervision, and wanted the colleges to be returned to diocesan control. In one sense Bell's judgement was right. By 1934 the Board of Supervision was suffering from the financial anaemia afflicting the whole Church and, as a result, its members lacked the energy to plan.

Throughout 1934 and 1935 the colleges and the Board of Supervision stumbled from one crisis to the next. Heating systems in some of the older colleges collapsed and there was no money to replace them. Students at Lincoln pushed wheelbarrows of coal across playing fields and worked in shifts stoking antiquated boilers.[35] At Culham broken windows and broken pipes went unrepaired, wind and water tearing at the fabric of the college.[36] It was deeply symbolic of a system which had come to the end of the road. In December, 1936, recognizing the hopelessness of their position,[37] Anglican principals asked the Board of Supervision whether concentration was necessary and anticipating the answer, formally requested the Board to prepare a scheme of closures.

Although spared the odium of having to demand closures, the Board proceeded to mismanage what was undoubtedly an unpleasant task. It presented to Anglicans what appeared on the surface to be an incontrovertible set of rational criteria concerning money, recruitment and geographical position, which led logically and unavoidably to the necessity of closing colleges at Brighton, Truro and Peterborough.[38] The neatly argued public case owed not a little to the fact that the memorandum by the Board of Supervision[39] justified decisions which had been arrived at privately through clandestine discussions which were neither rational nor unbiased.

From an Anglican point of view, things went sadly wrong from the very beginning. In November, 1936, the Board of Supervision set up a secret committee to select colleges for closure in 1937.[40] A number of the members serving on this committee, especially its unofficial chairman, Sir Edmund Phipps, had old scores to settle with the Bishop of Chichester who for some time had been the most severe critic of the

Board of Supervision. Without conducting any lengthy research, the committee placed Brighton Diocesan College first on the list to be closed. Richard Holland, secretary of the Board, unaccustomed in his normal round of duties to the kind of intrigues going on around him, then caused a furore by telling Bell of the intentions of the secret committee.[41] The Bishop was furious and would have been more so if he had known of the negotiations being conducted by the committee with the Board of Education.

On 13th of November, 1936, Phipps wrote to Oppé at the Board of Education in an attempt to persuade him to place the authority of the Board behind the closures being planned. Oppé wrote a very careful reply: 'You seem to have in mind a principle or process of elimination according to ability to bring premises to a given degree of perfection' he commented. 'This seems to me quite possible but it would be exceedingly hard for us to back you at all positively as we have pronounced no premises inefficient'.[42] Despite further letters and a visit from the now not so secret committee, the Board of Education refused to entangle itself in the issue of college closures. As a disappointed Phipps confessed to his colleagues, although ' politically understandable', the Board's behaviour was 'hypocritical'. 'Its penny-pinching policies directly promoted college closures,' he said, 'but when the results of these policies 'are clear for all to see, the Board shows a remarkable fastidiousness in not wishing to be present at the executions'.[43]

By January, 1937, the Board of Supervision was close to panic. Its negotiations with the Board of Education had been abortive and it was no closer to publishing the anxiously awaited list. Phipps therefore took drastic and pragmatic action. On 7th of February he placed before the committee a map of England and Wales. Starting from the north, the panel gradually assessed the merits of individual colleges. The northern colleges, formerly the weakest, had rebuilding programmes and were geographically well placed; consequently they emerged unscathed. Moving south, Phipps pointed out two pairs of adjacent colleges, Lincoln and Peterborough, Chichester and Brighton. The smaller of each pair, Peterborough and Brighton, were nominated for closure. Continuing down and across the map, Board members came to Truro, the smallest and most western of the Anglican colleges. Its isolated position and lack of financial reserves resulted in its name being added to the list.[44]

This summary selection process could have been justified if there had not been an extraordinary sequel. Just as members were leaving the meeting,. Canon Barker remembered two things. The Board of Education had suggested that at least six colleges should be nominated for closure, preferably men's colleges. Thinking that they had selected three women's colleges, a non-quorate rump of the committee, Barker, Phipps and Holland, hastily added the names of three men's colleges, Culham, Cheltenham and Winchester to the original list.

When rumours of these extraordinary proceedings began to emerge, Anglicans quite properly had reservations concerning the competence of the Board of Supervision. Consequently Culham, Cheltenham and Winchester were rescued but Brighton, Truro and Peterborough were closed. The latter could consider themselves unlucky since practically every Anglican college was considered for closure during the years 1933 to 1936. Brighton, Truro and Peterborough had the misfortune to be the three colleges shot in order to encourage the others. Although the debacle of execution was blamed on the Board of Supervision, the real culprit was the Board of Education, which profited from Anglican disarray. The college closures sanctioned by the Church Assembly in 1937 publicly signalled the failure of Cosmo Lang's policy of 'understandings in high places'. Less than a year earlier, the Archbishop had promised the Church Assembly that Anglican training colleges were 'part of the fortress which could never be surrendered'.[45] As the Archdeacon of Lewes complained during the closure debate, 'three of the gates to the fortress have just collapsed, and the more the Church surrenders the more the state steps in'.[46]

The Archdeacon was perceptive. After 1937 the Board of Education stepped in to carry out overtly what it had been doing covertly for some time, namely run the Anglican colleges. Although the Board of Supervision limped along, the Board of Education set the training colleges a secular agenda – one which went unchallenged by the Church of England. Halifax, who had been singularly ineffective either in promoting or protecting Anglican interests,46[47] was rewarded with promotion. To his great satisfaction Halifax became Lord President of the Council in Neville Chamberlain's first administration and whispers circulated within the Conservative Party concerning his prospects of becoming the next Prime Minister.[48] Such prospects were not unfavourable. Stanley Baldwin had finally departed in May, 1937,

smothered in public adulation following his adroit handling of the abdication crisis. Baldwin's retirement made way for Neville Chamberlain who, like his predecessor, came to the premiership late in life. Halifax, among others, calculated that Chamberlain might not last long. They were wrong. Although elderly, Chamberlain had firm ideas about what constituted efficient government. Halifax, along with other ministers and civil servants during the final years of the inter-war period, began to march at a brisker pace. Chamberlain was in office and he was a man in a hurry.

Chapter Seven

Peace in Our Time

Neville Chamberlain had long wanted to be Prime Minister. For years he had chafed under MacDonald's imbecility and Baldwin's lethargy. In May, 1937, having finally reached the summit of the slippery slope, he was determined to run his government in a more businesslike manner because, above all things, Chamberlain was a man of business. Roy Jenkins has shrewdly observed that 'Chamberlain had the mind of a Birmingham bank clerk'.[1] His first recorded letter contains the sentence, 'I have spent sevenpence, but I do not intend to spend any more'.[2] Personal economy was a constant preoccupation throughout his life. His ability at mathematics redeemed an undistinguished school career after his transfer to Rugby Public School, which he loathed.[3] At school, as in later life, Neville found solace and pleasure in juggling with figures and theorems. Gladly leaving Rugby behind, he first found real happiness as an apprentice in Howard Smith's firm of chartered accountants, where the production of business audits gave him intense satisfaction. Travelling round the Midlands, staying in commercial hotels, in daily contact with the world of work in a provincial setting, Neville Chamberlain found himself in his natural milieu.

Chamberlain's character was already well formed when his display of business acumen persuaded his famous father, Joe, to send him to the Bahamas to run a sisal plantation. Neville took with him to the exotic islands ingrained habits of work and thrift. The venture was a complete failure, but the young Chamberlain spent hours on the lonely island of Andros, making twopence equal a shilling and preserving his sanity by working out mathematical problems.[4] He was deeply marked by the shame of the failure in the Bahamas. The experience had the effect of increasing within him an obsessive attitude to work and a belief that 'a day without incessant action seemed a day wasted'.[5] Adherence to the puritan work ethic of his family and his religion assisted him to cope with an early life overshadowed by his powerful father and middle years eclipsed by his more talented brother, Austen. In his most troubled moments, Neville subscribed to the belief that 'Life must be lived, money made' and he could never rest 'until the books finally balanced'.[6]

With these beliefs, it is not surprising that the Chamberlain administration of 1937 added a new snap and vigour to national government. To all intents and purposes Chamberlain himself was the government – he took a personal interest in everything and demanded from ministers two year action plans. As R.H. Tawney predicted at the time of Chamberlain's accession to power, 'Once he has forgotten Baldwin's avuncular touch. Neville will make central government run the country'.[7] He certainly tried to run the country from Whitehall and as Iain Macleod has argued in his reassessment of Chamberlain, it could have been one of the great reforming ministries, with Chamberlain being a great reforming Prime Minister.[8] However, history is full of unfulfilled hopes and this last ministry of the inter-war period exemplifies this. As a Prime Minister uniquely equipped to drive forward domestic reform, it was Chamberlain's tragedy to be completely preoccupied with foreign affairs throughout his premiership. He was entirely out of his depth in this field. His decent English provincialism failed to comprehend the enormities of a European realignment planned by Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin. The fatuity and irony of Chamberlain's notorious declaration of 'Peace in our time' has irrevocably tarnished his reputation.

However untrue in the context of foreign affairs, 'peace in our time' aptly encapsulates the state of affairs at the Board of Education from 1937 to 1939. However energetic, Chamberlain had a narrowly focussed domestic vision – his Birmingham upbringing giving him an interest in health and housing rather than education. He also liked to take charge and, consciously or unconsciously, his appointments demonstrate his preference for compliant rather than adventurous ministers.[9] This is certainly borne out by his appointments at the Board of Education, where neither Lord Stanhope nor his successor Earl De La Warr made any impact whatsoever. Thus when Henry Pelham retired in 1937, Maurice Holmes, who succeeded him as Permanent Secretary, found himself literally master of all he surveyed.

The only threat to the profound sense of administrative calm on the teacher training front, so assiduously cultivated by both Pelham and Holmes, was a letter from the Association of Directors and Secretaries for Education demanding an immediate enquiry into teacher training.[10] Arguing that public confidence in teacher training

colleges and courses was ‘at an all time low’, the Association urged the Board of Education to push ahead with the introduction of a three year course of training by 1938.[11] Seeking guidance and further information, Holmes found that his colleague and head of the training section, S.H. Wood, had the situation comfortably in hand. The latter made no attempt to contest the underlying analysis of the situation offered by the Association, feeling that their case was, ‘both obvious and incontestable’. He was equally candid in informing his new chief of the root cause of public anxiety, asserting, ‘Lack of confidence in teacher training derives from the poor showing made by denominational colleges. These places’ he continued, ‘can only be described as lame ducks; too isolated, too introverted, and having poor buildings, poor staff and poor students’.[12]

Holmes and Wood both regarded the denominational colleges as a millstone hanging round the neck of the training system. Both were eager to see the church colleges either reformed or abolished. Chamberlain’s demand for a two year action plan caused them to refer back hurriedly to earlier recommendations. Thus it came about, right at the end of the inter-war period, that the ‘university connection’ was once again examined. Holmes, in replying to Wood, sketched the agenda. The denominational colleges would have to be retained while the Treasury refused to finance either an extension of the two year course or building improvements in the colleges. ‘However, this might not always be the case’, mused Holmes. ‘If circumstances changed’, he wrote, ‘it will be our duty, through good timing, to introduce a three year course when it will be of maximum advantage to the universities’. In the meantime, he confided to Wood, ‘Your main task will be to damp down demands for a three-year course’.[13]

Since Board of Education officials were well versed in the art of ‘damping down’ (being trained from their first moments within the department), Wood had little difficulty in following Holmes’ instructions. In March, 1938, Wood received three proposals from the Church of England National Society, the most urgent being a request for the introduction of a three year course.[14] When the National Union of Teachers endorsed this demand,[15] and persuaded the Association of College Principals to do likewise,[16] Wood was faced with unprecedented unity among usually differing parties. He was, however, too old a hand to be perturbed by this display of

apparent unity. By announcing a well timed bureaucratic initiative, he soon diverted attention from the central issue. The inspectorate, he said, had been asked to look into the whole question of training college curricula and in the meantime he would like to meet all interested parties, separately, for proper consultation.[17]

Separate consultations proved to be gratifyingly time consuming. They also enabled Wood to pursue a devious course. Meeting Anglican representatives on 30th of March, 1939, the Assistant Secretary told them it was very important that the universities should not attempt to, 'lead staff in training colleges on matters concerning professional work'.[18] While pleasing denominationalists this was, in fact, a back-handed compliment. It accentuated the training function of denominational colleges – a point which Wood was happy to explain to university representatives when they met him. 'While there might be some role left for existing staff in the colleges to deal with school work', declared Wood, 'academic leadership of the whole teacher training sector must fall upon the universities'.[19] In this and subsequent discussions, Wood hinted, as strongly as he dared, that the universities were to take over the training colleges.

Wood's course of action was prompted partly by Chamberlain's mastery of the Treasury. Not since the days of Lloyd George had the Treasury been so ruthlessly pursued by a Prime Minister intent on achieving full and explicit accounts of expenditure. Rumours reverberated around Whitehall that Chamberlain wanted money released for domestic reforms – teacher training being one of the beneficiaries. Holmes and Wood clearly believed that they had secured Treasury agreement for the funding of a three year course and discreetly leaked this information to university representatives.[20] When rumours of Treasury funding proved spurious, disappointment among university staff and trade union members was matched by the chagrin felt by Holmes and Wood. Some balm for their acute disappointment came from the lack of response of denominational bodies. Denominational representatives either did not hear current rumours, or chose not to hear them. Selective deafness almost certainly facilitated the preservation of cordial relations said to exist between the Board of Education and denominational colleges in 1939.[21] Overall it was a characteristically shabby performance, having all the hallmarks of the politics of prevarication. Yet from the Board's point of view, Wood's tactics were successful in

the short term. His negotiations[22] were proceeding at a funereal pace when war was declared in September, 1939. Grass roots pressure for the introduction of a three year teacher training course had been successfully deflected, as had the longer campaign to raise the school leaving age. Neither had been achieved as the Germans invaded Poland. As World War Two broke out, the *status quo* was intact at the Board of Education.

On this inglorious note it would be possible to stop. However, the tale so far has concentrated on what happened rather than why it happened. In addressing the latter, a few issues can be dealt with briskly, not least because they have been extensively considered elsewhere. The issue of class cannot be ignored.[23] Successive ministers and their permanent officers during the inter-war period had no first hand experience of the schools and colleges they administered. F.H. Spencer, a self-made man who had been a classroom teacher before joining the ranks of the inspectorate, wrote what amounted to an end of term report on both ministers and officers when he retired. 'No man of really first rate ability has ever been President of the Board of Education' wrote Spencer. 'Lord Halifax occupied the office metaphorically for five minutes. Lord Eustace was there longer and showed signs of a certain aristocratic-doctrinaire interest and activity.'[24] Having considered Halifax and Percy, Spencer's pen trails into an eloquent silence, apart from his critique of the permanent officials working at the Board of Education:

> The elders in the administrative class are still men recruited by nomination before the changes which assimilated recruitment in the Board of Education to other offices. Most of them are able products of the old universities and public schools, and usually 'well connected'. Intellectually they are well up to the standard of the examination-recruited Class 1 Civil Servant in other offices, probably, on the average, above it. But they are entirely without first-hand acquaintance with the 'proletarian' class whose education they control. As a class they are against enthusiasm, they detest any action which could be termed 'dramatic'. In so far as they desire movement ahead – and probably most of them do – they prefer it to be an inch rather than a mile a year, even in those respects, like material environment, where rapid progress is relatively easy. They lack imagination and they lack positive enthusiasm, though many

> of them burst with brains. So that, in sum, their attitude is always critical and seldom constructive.[25]

Spencer drew the final, definitive conclusion:

> 'These people' he wrote, 'are no good for their purpose'.[26]

Neville Chamberlain found them no good for his purposes. The final administration of the inter-war period expressed most strongly what had been going on in fits and starts since the 1850s, namely the growth within Britain of bureaucratic government. As noted in the Introduction, George Bernard Shaw once complained that the only factor uniting all English people was their collective and 'obstinate prejudice against the organization of any competent bureaucracy'.[27] As Spencer's testimony suggests, Shaw's view held good among civil servants, who regarded themselves as gentlemen first, and bureaucrats a long way second.

The same attitudes were mirrored in the denominational bodies. The Methodist and Catholic Education Committees had a core of members who had first-hand experience of their schools and colleges, but their advice was always subject to policy decisions reached elsewhere. This was particularly the case in Catholic decision making, where it would be difficult to underestimate the role played by the Catholic hierarchy. In the Church of England the nature of the established church drew to it a whole range of what may be termed 'nominal Christians'. While some of these members may have had sincere religious convictions, most served their Church and their country from a feeling of moral obligation. It was the proper thing to do. Thus, throughout the inter-war period, the Anglican Board of Supervision was composed of a mixture of aristocrats, country gentlemen, bishops, some clergy and a minority of permanent officers. The majority of board members never set foot in a church college and would have found nothing odd in this. They were gentlemen, offering traditional, disinterested leadership of a non-specific, non-technical nature. Unfortunately for them, they lived through a time when 'gentlemen's agreements' (or as Cosmo Lang liked to say, 'understandings in high places') came under strain as the predominant mode of decision making. By the late 1930s government had become too complex for decisions taken by a chosen few to work effectively across the range of administrative

activity. Bureaucratic government, enthusiastically endorsed by Chamberlain, was in the ascendency.

Anglicans, in particular, found bureaucracy hard to deal with. While Roman Catholics had always been formidably and centrally organized, Anglicanism had an honourable tradition of tolerance and a desire to 'live and let live'. In the Anglican colleges this meant vast devolvement of responsibilities to the principals in the colleges – principals who did not take kindly to increased administrative coercion.

The persistent tension and misunderstandings between college staff and their controlling bodies has been an ongoing theme running throughout the narrative. One point can be concisely observed. Bureaucratic government becomes petty, narrow and coercive when there are no means to transform administration into action. Throughout the inter-war period the Board of Education and the denominational authorities bombarded the training colleges with demands for information on spending, when what the colleges most needed, in fact, were actual allocations of money. Neither Anglicans nor nonconformists solved the problem of finding a competent bureaucracy to manage their colleges during the inter-war period, mainly because voluntarism broke down. Ever smaller numbers of volunteers, who gave their time and services free, were defeated by rising amounts of ever more technical and prescriptive legislation. Nowhere is this break-down more sadly evident than in the final closure, or 'concentration' of Anglican colleges.

Class and bureaucracy partly explain the rhythm of events but it can be argued that it was the secularization of society which dwarfed all other explanations. Defined by Owen Chadwick as, 'a growing tendency in mankind to do without religion',[28] secularization had been making fluctuating progress in England ever since medieval times.[29] At the end of the First World War secularization made sudden spectacular progress, fuelled by a widespread disillusionment in many parts of English society with pre-war standards and values. The voice from the pulpit became drowned by radio and bishops and biblical teaching were held up to ridicule in an expanding tabloid press.[30] Increasing numbers of people began to look to the state and not to God for redress of their grievances.[31]

This lack of temporal success inevitably exposed Church members to massive demoralization. As Stephen Yeo has written in his book, *Religion and Voluntary Organisation in Crisis*,

> There is a way of getting the worst of all possible worlds and it is frequently not chosen but drifted into. Organizations can stick to the forms and assumptions of an earlier phase and find that they are not experiencing the success which they desire, except on unacceptable terms, and proceed to blame themselves for this situation, rather than the surrounding circumstances.[32]

This judgement encapsulates the experience of the church colleges. Apart from the Roman Catholic Church, which largely resisted undue introspection, self-blame and self-doubt were rampant among denominationalists during the inter-war period. Large numbers of nonconformists decided that socialism was more potent than traditional belief and like the trade union leader, Ernest Bevin, put their chapel origins behind them.[33] In attempting to come to terms with the growth of secular humanism, Anglicans actively became agents of their own secularization. Alec Vidler in his autobiography *Scenes from a Clerical Life*, catches the influence exerted upon the Church of England by liberal theologians:

> They spoke no longer of redemption, but of civilization; no longer of salvation, but of culture; no longer of sin, but of ignorance; no longer of heaven, but of progress; no longer of the Church, but of humanity; no longer of the Creed, but of science; no longer of eternity, but of the future ... [34]

Church colleges were tossed about on this sea of uncertainty. While Catholics postponed the crisis by shielding their colleges and students from society, Anglicans and nonconformists confronted secularism by embracing it. The Bishop of Peterborough, recognizing the futility of attempting to sustain compulsory worship in Anglican colleges, sowed the seeds for its abandonment. Despite all claims to the contrary, the body of Church of England colleges, described as 'the fort that could never be surrendered',[35] was indeed surrendered, quietly and without fuss, during the late 1930s. The surrender was signified by denominational principals marching to the

beat of the secular, rather than the spiritual, drum. The loss of respect for the Board of Supervision, evident during 1935–1937, paved the way for the Board of Education to run Anglican colleges in everything except name. During the lifetime of Chamberlain's administration, the facade of denominationalism collapsed with the same speed as student attendance at chapel. A detailed comparison of church colleges with their better endowed LEA rivals in the 1930s shows that apart from being markedly inferior in buildings and amenities, in terms of curricula, daily routine and professional work, there were no significant differences. Chamberlain, who was robustly anti-clerical, was not displeased.

R.H. Tawney, Professor of Economic History at London University and adviser to the Board of Education, did not share Chamberlain's satisfaction. Tawney sensed the secular drift of society, and unlike Chamberlain, did not rejoice. The increasing power of the state alarmed Tawney in the same way that it perturbed Hensley Henson, Bishop of Durham.[36] Both men feared that the totalitarian ideologies of Bolshevism and Fascism were eroding the foundations of liberalism upon which traditional English society rested[37] Tawney particularly feared fascism, believing that it embraced secularization and bureaucratization as the means of obtaining squalid ends.[38] Indeed, Tawney considered that secular ideologies prospered because they were opposed by enfeebled churches of shrunken vision and narrowing influence.[39] Because he did not share Chamberlain's untempered enthusiasm for secular efficiency, Tawney was dismayed at the closure of church colleges, but more particularly by their loss of denominational distinctiveness. Tawney and Henson were both clear that attacks by secularists and trade unionists on traditional religious teaching and authority were but the prelude to the imposition of new creeds by those who despised religion – creeds which paved the way for totalitarianism. Both were alarmed at this prospect because neither considered the state worth worshipping.

It is in this context that the decline of the church colleges should be lamented. Few tears should be shed for the departure, in the late 1930s, of a handful of colleges whose thinking and physical structures bore all the hallmarks of ownership by 'enfeebled churches of shrunken vision'. As the New Testament parable suggests, when the salt has lost its savour it should be cast out. What should be deeply regretted during the inter-war period is the loss of Christian conviction and confidence, a loss

which left the reformation of the colleges still-born. Throughout these years most church colleges were looking back – back to the principles and practices of their nineteenth century foundations. From being the pioneers of teacher training, the church colleges slipped into becoming the followers of secular fashions. The echoes of the nineteenth century went on reverberating because they were never challenged or renewed. Gradually, the historical echoes became more distant and during the 1930s the Christian distinctiveness of the denominational colleges was finally swallowed up in the drab conformities of unimaginative rule from Whitehall.

Whitehall proved to be an ungenerous and exacting new master. What the McNair Committee was to term 'the trail of cheapness' contributed to the snail-like progress of the colleges everywhere. Penny-pinching policies from the Board of Education flowed from the department's total subservience to Treasury domination.[40] As a result, the training system froze into a caricature of dated practice. The two decades of financial debilitation suffered by the church colleges during the 1920s and 1930s were both enervating and ultimately destructive. Most of the colleges survived, but at a price. The struggle for survival proved so severe that they jettisoned their Christian distinctiveness and, in so doing, collectively lost the rationale for their existence. When the post-war period finally arrived, the colleges were, once again, to become 'the very playthings of circumstances' because they had severed the roots which sustained their existence.

Chapter Eight

The Deepening Shadows of Barbarism

At 11.15am on Sunday, 3rd of September, 1939, Neville Chamberlain spoke to the British people. The German army had crossed the Polish frontiers at 5.00am on the 1st of September and were spreading across the country with alarming speed. It was clear that no last minute diplomatic intervention was going to deter Hitler on this occasion. Wearily, the Prime Minister recounted that he had asked Germany to undertake a withdrawal of her troops from Poland. He added, 'I have to tell you that no such undertaking has been received and that consequently this country is at war with Germany'.[1] Scarcely had he finished speaking when the first of many air raid sirens sounded. The Cabinet had convened to support Chamberlain, and some of the junior ministers, including R.A. Butler, began to laugh at what seemed an extraordinary co-incidence.[2] They were instantly silenced by the frigid displeasure of Chamberlain and a furious glare from Churchill. These two senior politicians then led the Cabinet down into the air raid shelters, Churchill clutching a vacuum flask and a large basket of food.

So it was war again. Unlike the outbreak of hostilities in 1914, there was little overt patriotic fervour. The British people braced themselves for total war in a mood of resigned determination and their eyes watched the skies. Baldwin had famously declared that 'the bomber will always get through'[3] and most people believed him. Mass bombing was the greatest threat and because of it a million children were evacuated from vulnerable areas two days before war was officially declared.[4] Anti-aircraft gun batteries began to spring up across Britain. Search lights probed the skies for enemy planes, white fingers of light clawing their way across black skies. At first they found nothing. The bombers did not immediately appear and the period of what became known as the 'phoney war' began.[5] Unfortunately the phoney war was to cause almost as much confusion and disruption as the Blitz that followed it. Pre-war planning envisaged that all training colleges situated in evacuation areas and all men's colleges would close immediately.[6] In these colleges all the students were sent home at the outbreak of war clutching newly issued respirators, soon to be universally known as gas-masks. In colleges not designated as being in threatened areas, students

found themselves engaged in a novel curriculum. Male students were sent to college playing fields to dig the foundations for Anderson air raid shelters. These began to sprout like concrete-clad molehills across football and rugby pitches. Female students were issued with rolls of three inch wide brown paper. The backs of the paper had a particularly glutinous mixture that was activated by brushing with several coats of water. Two students then had to mount ladders to apply the brown paper strips in a crisscross pattern across windows as a precaution against bomb blast. Other female students assisted harassed librarians in putting together book boxes in anticipation of relocation to colleges located in rural areas. A sensible plan was rendered useless because the phoney war lulled everyone, and particularly Chamberlain, into a false sense of security. Fellow Cabinet ministers at this time noticed Chamberlain's deadly decency, the austere coldness and formality of his dealings with all who came near him.[7] Chamberlain had no enthusiasm for war and decided to rescind immediate call up.[8] This sudden reversal of policy caused confusion and frayed tempers both in the Board of Education and in the colleges. Some colleges completed their planned evacuation, others did not. Some were on the point of leaving when they were told to stay where they were. Some actually moved to new premises and on finding their old colleges unused, moved back again. Evacuated children began to quietly return to their old homes and, as local schooling had been suspended, roamed the streets.[9]

The strain on teachers and lecturers was severe. Many of the latter, not immediately due for call up, volunteered for ARP (Air Raid Precautions) duties. Iris Forrester, who after the war was to become Head of Education at Avery Hill College, stood, night after night, perched on an outside ledge of St. Paul's Cathedral. She was armed with 'a thermos flask of hot water, an oxo cube and a whistle'.[10] The last was to be blown if a raid began. Similar instructions were given to Margaret Prett, headteacher of a primary school in Epsom, Surrey. After a stressful day moving children and teachers from classrooms into air raid shelters and back again, she would trudge off into the gathering darkness carrying a stirrup pump, a bucket and the ubiquitous whistle. Having reached her fire watching position at Epsom town hall she was cheerfully informed by the ARP warden, 'If a bomb drops, you're in charge'.[11] Having survived the night on weak, sugarless tea (sugar, like petrol, being tightly rationed) Margaret Prett would walk back in the thin grey light of dawn. After a bowl of porridge she went back into school, passing one of the soon to be famous red and white posters

issued by the Government. The slogan captured both the mood and the moment: 'Keep Calm and Carry On'.

Carrying on for the training colleges was not an option. As the phoney war broke and the German Luftwaffe arrived in August, 1940, the colleges began to close in increasing numbers as their students were conscripted. Churchill, who had succeeded Chamberlain as Prime Minister in May, 1940, reinstated the policy of immediate and total conscription. However, even this policy had the same almost casual class discrimination clauses as had been evident in the call up process in the First World War. University students close to the end of their courses were permitted to complete them. Training college students were not. University lecturing staff retained their posts, even when there were no students to teach. Training college lecturers were frequently sacked, given three months notice and no right of appeal. Sometimes staff were ejected in days rather than months. The Army Intelligence Corps took over King Alfred's College, Winchester, in 1940, giving one week's notice of arrival. The Air Ministry requisitioned Bishop Otter College, Chichester, with such speed that staff found themselves ordered to pack a single suitcase and proceed to the Bishop's Palace to take up temporary accommodation. Other colleges, when not actually requisitioned for military use, were often turned into hospitals, rationing centres or found themselves used as alternative locations for government departments moved out of London.[12] The haemorrhage of staff and students alike was never staunched throughout the war. Indeed, the emergency measures executed in 1940 and 1941 ended with sometimes brutal speed the systems and habits of teacher training accumulated during the inter-war period.[13]

Few tears were shed over the demise of what was widely regarded as an inferior system. Winning the war was the paramount objective and Churchill's coalition government, formed in May, 1940, welcomed into its ranks Labour politicians. The formidable Ernest Bevin took over the Ministry of Labour and Bevin, like Churchill, had a long memory. He did not forget the snubs and slights handed out to Labour and the Trade Unions during the inter-war years. Bevin regarded the Board and the colleges it represented as a very poor bunch.[14] Such views were widespread. The editor of *The Economist* summed them up by declaring, 'Rightly or wrongly the

Board of Education has acquired the reputation of being a lackadaisical department which seldom succeeds in delivering the goods'.[15]

Against this backdrop it was something of a backhanded compliment from Churchill to offer R.A. Butler the Presidency of the Board at the beginning of July, 1941. In his memoirs Butler provides a memorable account of his posting: 'He saw me after his afternoon nap and was purring like a tiger … "I now want you to go to the Board of Education," he said, "I think you can leave your mark there. You will be independent. Besides," he continued with rising fervour, "you will be in the war; you will move poor children from here to here" and he lifted up and evacuated imaginary children from one side of the blotting pad to the other…' Butler was then dismissed with a final thought from the Prime Minister that it would be a good idea to introduce a note of patriotism into schools. 'Tell the children that Wolfe won at Quebec'.[16] Although Butler makes light of it, it was an inauspicious beginning. For a start, Butler was the only one to think he had been promoted. Most people, including the King, concluded that Churchill had shunted Butler into a dead-end ministry.[17] The King's judgement was spot on. Churchill considered Butler to be a part of a prominent group of pre-war Conservative ministers who had been willing to appease Hitler and, as Middleton observes, 'Wab' Butler, 'as a junior minister with no personal following, could be ... silenced by the gift of a minor ministry'.[18]

Butler's arrival at the Board of Education has been treated in some detail because many accounts of the period tend to view him as some kind of secular saint. This he was not. Rather, his reputation shines with added lustre because his predecessors were so awful. There was also one additional magic ingredient. Napoleon used to demand of a general, 'Is he lucky?' Butler, on this occasion, was lucky. His arrival at the Board of Education coincided with a report demonstrating a widespread ignorance of religion among troops serving in the armed forces.[19] Such ignorance was given added resonance by growing concern at the bestiality of Nazi policies and actions. In responding to public opinion Churchill, without defining a holy war, began to stress the virtues of democracy and Christianity, and gave the nation blood, sweat, toil and tears. Butler, however, quietly edged forward an agenda of hope, a prospect that post-war society could and would be better. Ignoring magisterial injunctions from Churchill not to meddle in issues he did not understand, Butler kept calm and carried

on, intent on achieving an overall settlement for education by bringing all Church schools into a unified system, an ambition that was to be achieved through the 1944 Education Act. In the event, plans to radically change both education and teacher training progressed simultaneously, although with very different results.

Butler's luck held. By 1944, proposals for the reform of secondary education were ready to go before Parliament. At this point, due to deteriorating relationships with Stalin, Churchill was eager to keep war issues away from the House and was looking for bills to fill up parliamentary time, so Butler saw his chance. However he was successful in getting the 1944 Education Act passed because he consulted widely and obtained widespread agreement as to the aims and objectives of post-war schooling. He successfully persuaded all the denominationalists to sink their differences and to allow the State to move into education in order to provide secondary education for every child between the ages of 11 and 15. The Act introduced the tripartite system of secondary modern schools, technical schools and grammar schools. Children were to be tested at the age of 11 in order to decide which branch of secondary schooling was suitable for them – hence the '11 plus' exam. This later became controversial, but at the time the prospect of universal secondary education was so exciting that no-one quibbled about selective examinations.

The success of the 1944 Education Act was in inverse proportion to the failure of the concurrent plans to reform teacher training. Hopes for a better future had been prominent in a publication entitled the *Green Book*, published in June, 1941. This book, deriving its name from the colour of its cover, contained draft proposals for an extensive reconstruction of the education and teacher training systems. Although marked highly confidential, Butler sardonically noted that the *Green Book* was 'distributed in such as blaze of secrecy that it achieved an unusual degree of publicity'.[20] Butler and his officials at the Board of Education found the lapse of confidentiality a very lucky break. Once the confidentiality clause was stripped away, the *Green Book* exposed what the Inspectorate had been saying in private for years, namely that the training colleges and their staff were not up to the job.[21] As seen in the previous chapter, S.H. Wood, the Inspector in charge of teacher training, and Sir Maurice Homes, the Permanent Secretary, had been voicing this opinion since the late 1930s. Wood adroitly used the opportunity to press for an immediate enquiry into

teacher training. He was shooting at an open goal. On the 20th of January, 1942, a letter from Butler granted Wood his wish. It was the inception of what was to be the McNair Committee of Enquiry into Teacher Training.

It could quite easily have been the Wood Committee of Enquiry into Teacher Training. On the grounds that he was best placed to guide the newly formed committee, Wood offered himself as Chairman. Holmes was not amused by what he termed 'Wood's lapse into self-aggrandizement'.[22] Suspecting that Wood had deliberately leaked the *Green Book*, Holmes dished his colleague's chances of becoming chairman by accentuating the opposition that Wood might encounter from training college representatives.[23] Instead, Holmes lobbied Butler on the need to appoint a Chairman 'acceptable to the University Grants Committee'.[24] Considering that there were 80 training colleges compared with approximately 20 university schools of education, Holmes' suggestion was ominously prophetic of the kind of solution he had in mind. For Sir Maurice Holmes, it was a case that universities and their staff had to be placated. The opinions of training colleges and their representatives were negligible. With this prompting his thinking, Holmes pressed Butler on the merit of appointing Sir Arnold McNair, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Liverpool, as Chairman. Butler hesitated. Privately he favoured Wood, but could not be seen to undercut his Permanent Secretary, not least because Holmes was pivotal in delivering what was to become the 1944 Education Act. Reluctantly he accepted the advice of his Permanent Secretary and on the 25th of March, 1942, Butler announced in the House of Commons the appointment of a committee led by Sir Arnold McNair, 'to investigate the present sources of supply and methods of recruitment and training of teachers and youth leaders'.[25]

The sometimes tedious micro-politics surrounding the inception of the McNair Committee are only important because they subsequently had a huge impact on the ill-fated progress of the committee. Put simply, Wood and McNair did not get on together. Wood came to his task with a thorough knowledge of the teacher training system. He was fond of forecasting to his colleagues the direction that would be taken by varying pressure groups, anticipating the very words and phrases that would be used by such bodies as the National Union of Teachers.[26] Wood was impatient of the public posturing which accompanied the submission of evidence to the committee and

became increasingly irritated by what he considered to be 'McNair's narrowly legalistic interpretation of issues'.[27] In fact McNair, before entering university administration, had been a solicitor and carried with him the habits of his legal training. Those presenting evidence to the committee were startled to find McNair cross examining them, noting down their evidence on a large, yellow paged legal notepad. This intimidating approach did not encourage discussion. On the contrary, it accentuated factual responses at the expense of wider evaluation. By March, 1943, the committee was hopelessly divided between members supporting Wood and those who sided with McNair. Wood wanted nothing less than 'major constitutional reform'[28] and had the enthusiastic backing of organised labour and the trade unions in seeking it. Considering the root problem to be the cultural isolation of the training colleges, Wood argued that this could only be solved by enfolding the training colleges into the university system. Through the creation of schools of education, Wood envisaged the training colleges finally coming in from the cold.

In sharp contrast, McNair wanted to ensure that the colleges stayed right where they were, out in the cold. Strongly supported by the committee of university vice-chancellors, McNair argued that training should not be confused with education. 'Universities', he argued, 'must continually be vigilant lest they become too much training establishments and too little educational institutions'.[29] McNair's blunt assessment rejected training and rejected the idea that training had any place in a proper university. His words sparked off a long post-war debate on what universities should be about and whether more meant worse. In the short term, however, divisions of personality and policies delivered a divided report to Butler. Wood's proposals for merging universities and training colleges were submitted to Butler as Scheme A. McNair's plan for a loose federation of training interests was sent to the minister as Scheme B. Butler privately supported Wood and Scheme A, but was disconcerted to find that most interested parties opted for B. Training colleges and their representatives were frightened at the prospect of joining universities, especially as the latter had made it abundantly clear that they were not welcome. Overall it was easier and cheaper for sectional interests to support the *status quo* rather than opt for bolder solutions. In retrospect, the McNair Report is a prime example of the old adage 'Success has many fathers, failure is an orphan'. The report was a failure and Butler and his officials immediately distanced themselves from it. It failed because it did not

offer a unified vision for the future and was thus hastily consigned to bureaucratic oblivion. Arguably the only phrase from the McNair Report which stuck in the public consciousness was a reference to 'the trail of cheapness' which had blighted teacher training during the inter-war period. Divisions, rapidly followed by recriminations[30] among committee members ensured that the trail of cheapness was set to continue during the post-war period. Basking in the success he had achieved in bringing forward the 1944 Education Act, Butler was nevertheless acutely aware that he was running out of time in terms of achieving a settlement of the teacher training issue. Some of his frustrations are evident in his response to Sir Frederick Mander, Secretary to the National Union of Teachers. When Mander expressed his deep disappointment at the outcome of the McNair deliberations, Butler heartily concurred. Knowing that Churchill had decided to call a general election in 1945 rather than prolong the life of the coalition government, Butler found himself under notice to quit. In his final months in office, Butler discovered that Sir Arnold McNair represented a university viewpoint, not the university view. Sir Fred Clarke and Lord Eustace Percy both intimated to Butler that McNair had got it wrong. A golden opportunity had been missed and too late, Butler discovered what he described as 'some give' in the university position.[31]

It was all too late. With the Education Bill passed in 1944 and with the McNair Report going nowhere, Butler found himself with more time than he was used to. He was fond of slipping into any convenient London church at lunch-time to think and pray. To his surprise he found many of the churches full. In the last two years of the war significant numbers of British people re-discovered religion. A combination of factors prompted what appeared to be a revival of faith, which helped set a mood which was to prove favourable to the retention of denominational colleges in the post-war period. Although media censorship was still tight, intimations of the holocaust and pictures of the Nazi death camps began to circulate. Revulsion was immediate. Archbishop William Temple threw himself into the task of reminding all shades of opinion that there was a Christian alternative.[32] While many found Temple's message compelling, thousands more simply went into churches to be still and to pray for an end to the war. War-weariness was tangible. Having celebrated the D-Day landings on the 6th of June, 1944, most people thought the worst was over. Hitler had other ideas. V1 rockets, popularly referred to as 'doodlebugs' began to target London and its

suburbs. Conceived by Hitler as weapons of mass destruction, rockets had a decimating impact on civilian morale. Highly visible in daylight, when their droning engine cut out, the rocket turned vertical and plunged into whatever lay below. Seeking to spare central London more critical damage, British intelligence fed back erroneous information to the Germans that their rockets were overshooting.[33] The result was a swath of rockets descending on Epsom, Sutton, Dorking and Leatherhead. For everyone living in these areas it was akin to surviving a second blitz. When the V2 rockets came, death literally came out of the blue. Coming at the end of five years of hostilities it was too much to bear; teachers, children, families and soldiers all prayed for an end to it.

An end did come but not before a desperate race by Allied armies across northern France to destroy the German rocket bases. Slowly the allies closed in on Berlin and the end really was in sight. On the 8th of May, 1945, Victory in Europe Day was declared and crowds surged down The Mall to cheer Churchill and the Royal Family standing together on the balcony of Buckingham Palace. If the Second World War had begun in a mood of muted resignation it ended on a note of patriotic fervour. Britain had endured. Amazingly Churchill, in political terms, did not. Calling a General Election on the 26th of July, 1945, the Prime Minister and the Conservatives were decisively defeated. The post-war era began under the leadership of Clement Attlee and a Labour-led administration.

Chapter Nine

From Blitz to Blair

The purpose of this final section is to weave together a tapestry of themes, events and people to explain what happened to the church colleges and what happened to teacher training in the final decades of the twentieth century. Themes first. Bell[1] has argued that education policy in Britain, from the 1960s onward, developed through a four-stage process. The *Social Democratic Phase* from 1960 to 1973 was characterised by a rapidly increasing school population, expansion and a broad consensus about the nature of the educative process which was shared by politicians, administrators and teacher trainers. The *Resource Constrained Phase* followed between 1973 and 1987. There was a growing emphasis on management, a debate about the nature and purpose of education, and a growing concern about the quality and relevance of teaching and teacher training. During the *Market Phase* (1988–1996), opportunities were available for the growth of schools and institutions deemed successful, while those branded as failures contracted or closed. Resource allocation became the function of the newly created education market place. Finally the *Excellence Phase*, from 1977 onwards, placed education at the centre of New Labour's economic and social agenda. Educational policies were designed to produce a literate, numerate work-force, abreast of the information and communication skills at the heart of a knowledge based economy.[2]

While it is possible to finesse the detail of Bell's typology,[3] as explanatory building blocks the periods identified offer excellent signposts as to what was happening. So this chapter follows the signposts to examine the people and events which characterise Bell's four phases.

The Social Democratic Phase (neatly defined by Bell as the partnership in education period) stretches back much earlier than 1960. When Ellen Wilkinson found herself given the education brief in Attlee's post-war government, she willingly accepted the legacy that R.A. Butler left on the table. Known as Red Ellen because of the colour of her hair and the left wing nature of her politics, Wilkinson was even more enthusiastic about implementing Scheme A of the McNair Report than her predecessor. Scornful

of Butler's conciliatory approaches, Wilkinson tried to force Scheme A on the universities; to no avail. By 1955, 16 Area Training Organisations (ATOs), based on McNair's proposals, were put in place. Like the joint-board schemes that preceded them ATOs were designed to give the impression of a unified higher education system. While some worked better than others,[4] the majority of ATOs were talking shops where teacher trainers found themselves patronised and marginalised by dominant university representation. When Wilkinson fretted about the ineffectiveness of the ATO system, she got a bland response from her officials along the lines that there was no need to worry because nobody cared much about teacher training.[5] While this was normally true, in 1947 it was spectacularly incorrect: an acute shortage of teachers, bomb-damaged schools and large numbers of children not in regular education had changed the picture radically. Wrestling with the dominant issue of teacher supply, Wilkinson put in place all kinds of imaginative emergency teacher training schemes. Set against the backdrop of austerity Britain where shortages and rationing pervaded all aspects of life,[6] the emergency training schemes were triumphantly successful. Not only did such schemes represent the finest hour for teacher trainers, they brought into teaching the most outstanding cohort of recruits to enter the profession. During the fifties and sixties many schools were led by staff who, having left the forces, joined emergency training schemes and rapidly achieved senior posts in schools and local education authorities.[7]

Arguably it was training colleges run by LEAs who made the most spectacular progress in the immediate post-war period. Certainly, Wilkinson's officials were terrified that Local Authorities were building up such momentum they could no longer be controlled from the centre. Their anxieties were premature. The erratic progress of teacher training in the last decades of the twentieth century cannot be understood without an understanding of the divided aims and ambitions of the various stakeholders. Gardner and Cunningham concisely summarise the divisions; 'University Departments of Education against college, municipal against voluntary and small and isolated against large and integrated … But most importantly … the voice most commonly heard is that of principals and professors actively promoting the cause of their sectors'.[8] Behind all the wrangling the malign influence of class was never far away and staff in the church colleges were as guilty as their university colleagues in exploiting class expectations. During the 1950s and early 1960s church

training colleges expanded briskly by promoting themselves as alternatives to university departments for training the daughters of the upwardly mobile middle classes. The marketing message was simple: nice girls went to church colleges and then went on to teach in church-related schools. Primary teaching was thus becoming a feminised occupation by the late sixties. All of this jockeying for position was fairly harmless as long as the consensus for expanding teacher training remained intact. Such a consensus held until 1973. One powerful reason why it held was that when Churchill returned to power in 1951, he did not seek to overturn the domestic settlement forged by the Attlee Government. While Marr[9] amusingly describes Churchill's rhetoric on foreign policy as resembling thigh slapping Elizabethan bombast, the old war horse was wise enough to know that on the home front the British people were not going to jettison the newly forged welfare state. He therefore left it alone and handed down to his successors, Eden and Macmillan, what became known as one nation Conservatism.[10]

Contrary to the thesis argued by the new right,[11] one nation Conservatism, far from being a disaster, delivered stability, continuity and a gentle expansion of the schooling system and teacher training during the sixties. It was a Conservative government that in 1960 finally adopted, from the Robbins Committee, the McNair recommendation for extending teacher training whereby teacher training colleges were transformed into colleges of education and four year Bachelor of Education (BEd) courses were introduced into the new colleges.[12] For a brief period, 1963 to 1969, it seemed as if the newly created colleges of education had finally come in from the cold. Universities, however, still had reservations concerning the academic credibility of the colleges. Therefore, instead of being welcomed into a place by the fireside, a very large number of universities kept the colleges waiting in draughty hallways. The main problem was the BEd, which aroused all kinds of suspicions. How could subjects such as domestic science, physical education and arts and crafts be justified at honours degree level? Many universities decided that they could not and proceeded to square the circle by waiting for the award of Certificate of Education (at a high level) before allowing a candidate to proceed to a fourth year. This fourth and final year had an exclusively academic rather than a professional focus. I personally experienced the contradictions of following an in-service BEd. For two years as a certified teacher I attended a college of education, two nights a week, to follow a raft of professionally

orientated courses. For the final 'honours' year we were dispatched to the University to study the history, philosophy, psychology and sociology of education. All these subjects were delivered through lectures and were assessed by essays and examinations. It was a tough experience and resented by many. Of our group of 12 students, only three of us survived to claim our BEd degrees. Robbins had confidently predicted that 25 per cent of teachers could and should be able to achieve graduate status. By 1972 only ten per cent of teachers had acquired a BEd and there was widespread disquiet and criticism. Voices of criticism were particularly loud and vociferous from staff working in Local Education Authorities, who felt that university validation was seriously debasing the reputation and professional relevance of BEds being offered by municipal colleges[13]. The result was the birth in 1973 of the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA), whose remit was to oversee academic standards in the burgeoning public sector of education.[14] Under the patronage of HRH Prince Charles, the CNAA soon grew into a bloated bureaucracy where huge amounts of time, money and energy were wasted in continuously reviewing the colleges' academic virility. The review system was essentially akin to the colleges taking in each other's washing. Needless to say, dirty washing was rarely exposed. What was exposed was a new determination by officials in the Department of Education and Science to use quangos such as the CNAA to wrest back control of teacher training in the public sector.[15] From 1970 to 1973, it became clear that the post-war consensus concerning education was breaking up.

During the Resource Constrained Phase the consensus relating to teacher training broke, in part, because expansion turned to retrenchment. Since 1945 all the training colleges had grown so fast that it seemed impossible to believe they could shrink just as quickly. In 1962, 48,000 training places were provided, an allocation which peaked at 94,800 places in 1968. In 1969 there was a downturn in the numbers recruited into teaching, a trend which few at the time perceived as threatening. In 1970 the downturn became more severe and Hugh Harding, the Permanent Secretary responsible for teacher training, began to circulate dire warnings to his colleagues within the Department for Education and Science (DES) concerning the over supply of teachers.[16] Someone who listened intently to Harding's warnings was Margaret Thatcher, who in 1970 was cutting her ministerial teeth as Secretary of State for Education in Edward Heath's government. Officials at the DES. found Thatcher to be

an abrasive and difficult minister.[17] Characteristically she came to public notice by an attack on welfarist provision. She withdrew milk offered to children in primary schools. I was working as a Deputy Head in a primary school at the time, and was sent out by the Head to stop the children romping round the playground chanting, 'Thatcher, Thatcher, milk snatcher'. The Iron Lady had more on her mind than snatching milk. Famously described by France's President Mitterrand as having, 'the eyes of Caligula and the mouth of Marilyn Monroe',[18] Thatcher's eyes in 1970 were focused on teacher training and teacher trainers, both of which she instinctively distrusted. She invited the Vice Chancellor of York University, Lord James, to review the arrangements for the education and training of teachers. Despite underlying tensions, Thatcher and Harding collaborated on drawing up James' terms of reference. Deft draftsmanship adroitly signposted his eventual conclusions. Thus his Lordship was pointedly asked 'whether a larger proportion of intending teachers should be educated with students who had not chosen their careers or had chosen other careers'.[19] In 1972 James obliged by responding to the hint so heavily given. The James Report recommended the abolition of monotechnic teacher training courses and their replacement by three cycles of continuing education. Narrowness of professional training was countered by James in the Committee's recommendations that all students should first complete a two year Diploma in Higher Education (DipHE), followed by two years of professional training, all this to be topped off by a third cycle of in-service training. Nicely described by John Parry as, 'The Lord James Tricycle' the whole system failed (as Parry predicted[20]) because the machine went on the road minus a wheel. Despite apparently enthusiastic responses from DES. officials to the idea of a DipHE they and their minister, Margaret Thatcher, remained strangely silent about any provision for in-service training.[21] This silence provoked great anxiety in the colleges, where the official government response to James was awaited during the academic year 1972–1973.

The timing could hardly have been worse. 1973 saw the financial downturn caused by the first oil crisis.[22] Contraction and retrenchment were in the air. Shortly to leave the Ministry with the end of the Heath government, Thatcher characteristically brazened it out. She facilitated the publication of *Education: A Framework for Expansion*.[23] As Bell suggests, this White Paper must be a leading contender for having one of the most misleading titles ever attributed to a document.[24] Described by Simon as 'A

Framework for Contraction'[25] and ironically dubbed by Hencke as 'A Framework for Confusion'[26] the White Paper achieved both these ends without seriously expanding anything. In terms of implementing the James Report, plans for the third cycle of education, in-service work were immediately put into cold storage because of 'economic difficulties'.[27] Proposals for the Diploma in Higher Education sank without trace. James Porter, a leading member of the James Committee and the only college principal to implement its recommendations, later claimed that any part of the report which was innovative or expensive was 'cynically rejected'.[28] What was not rejected were James' stern warnings concerning the dangers of monotechnic teacher training. These warnings provided both a rationale and a cover for the widespread closures of small church and municipal colleges being planned by Harding.[29] Systematisation was the totem word, a euphemism for increasing the size of institutions while sentencing to death the old, monotechnic colleges. Faced with absolute demands for increased size, Church authorities considered all kinds of amalgamations, including mergers of their colleges with nearby universities. Early in the negotiations, the Church of England proposed that Bishop Otter College, Chichester, should be amalgamated with the University of Sussex.[30]

News of this proposal acted like a bolt of lightening preceding a sudden storm. Harding was not pleased by the possible entanglement of a college with a university. Having been instrumental in pushing the binary divide whereby 30 polytechnics were set up in 1972,[31] Harding was privately intent on favouring the newly created polytechnics whose docile qualities were in marked contrast to the independence shown by traditional universities. Harding therefore went into attack-dog mode. His rejection of the plan led to an acrimonious exchange of views between the Anglican Church and the DES. over the future of Bishop Otter College. After a series of heated meetings, when civilities were barely preserved, Harding seized the opportunity to set out a policy which was to determine the fate of all church colleges. 'It was accepted', minuted Harding, 'that the Church must contribute proportionately to the national reduction in teacher training numbers, and if it insisted on the stronger colleges retaining their autonomy and independence, this was likely to be at the expense of closing five or six of the weaker colleges'.[32] Uncompromising though the minute was, it failed, intentionally or unintentionally, to spell out the draconian measures Harding had in mind. Readers seeking to find an end date for the existence of church colleges

should focus on 1976. By September of this year, of the original total of 151 voluntary and municipal colleges, only five had 'sneaked through the back door' and merged with universities. 33 had been locked into polytechnics; 63 had been amalgamated into 44 newly created institutes of higher and further education. 21 colleges were earmarked for closure, a very high proportion of which were denominational in origin. By January, 1977 all church authorities were reeling in shock at the magnitude of their defeat, the Church of England being particularly stunned at the severity of the cuts. During 1977, eight Anglican colleges ceased to be church related through merger, four were swallowed up by larger institutions and four colleges closed: St. Peter's, Saltley; Hockerill; Salisbury; and Culham Colleges. Put bluntly, Harding had won a brutal campaign. Observers were not slow to notice the significance of the changes. In 1975 Dent wrote the epitaph of the old teacher training system. 'Thus has ended a system of teacher education which has endured for two centuries … the curriculum and the methods … although progressively altered and improved … remained basically the same. The system had many defects, but it was not without its virtues. It has been deliberately destroyed'.[33]

Do people make events or do events make people? A pertinent question at this point in the story because we would not be considering the next phase in education – the Market Phase – without the impact achieved by two people: Margaret Thatcher and Keith Joseph. Apart from the rows she provoked by withdrawing school milk and closing down grammar schools,[34] few people focused much on Thatcher when she was Heath's education minister. This is unfortunate in terms of understanding aspects of Thatcher's behaviour when she became Prime Minister. Her relatively brief tenure as Education Minister increased the list of institutions she classed as 'enemies within'. Apart from higher education, universities in general and Oxford in particular, Thatcher developed an almost pathological distrust of local government. At every twist and turn of her several administrations Thatcher transferred to central government responsibilities which had traditionally been exercised by local government. Particularly crippling for local education authorities was losing control of their colleges and polytechnics. The head of steam being built up by local government immediately after the Second World War was deflated by Thatcher, a process continued by Blair who inherited her mania for centralization. Civil servants who had worked for Thatcher at Education tried to alert their colleagues as to what

was coming when she first became Prime Minister after winning the 1979 election. This was only partially successful. While Thatcher had a long memory and nursed grudges, the woman who walked into 10 Downing Street, quoting the prayer of St Francis of Assisi on the doorstep, was a changed person. Her transformation was prompted, in large part, by a close friendship with Keith Joseph. Joseph, the son of a rich London business man, had, as a conventional Tory, risen to become Minister for Housing and then Health under Harold Macmillan. In both roles he spent freely and intervened often, the very model of a good minister. In June, 1974, to the astonishment of all the political classes, he stood up and apologised. What he was apologising for were 30 years of intervention, 30 years of socialism under both Labour and Conservative governments. 'I must take my blame' confessed Joseph, 'for following too many of the fashions'.[35]

Thatcher listened and became at first fascinated and then entranced. Joseph's conversion to free market, small state economics had the force of a religious experience. Joseph argued that Britain by the mid-seventies had a fundamental choice between sticking with a socialist siege economy or breaking out into proper liberal capitalism. In promoting the latter, Joseph set up his Centre for Policy Studies, a centre which provided the intellectual foundations for Thatcherism. Because of his subsequently dismal performances as Minister for Industry and then Education in Thatcher administrations, it is easy to forget just how influential and charismatic he was at this stage in his career. As Marr notes, in 1974 he was at the peak of his intellectual powers, 'he was the rain maker, the storm bringer, the Old Testament prophet denouncing his tribe'.[36] While Thatcher at first kept a distance, not least because both Macmillan and Heath thought Joseph was bad news, she found herself progressively agreeing with his diagnosis of Britain's ills. An umbilical cord of ideological certainty sprang up between them, shared convictions which led to markets and the market place becoming the dominant motif of successive Thatcher administrations. When Sir William Armstrong, Head of the Civil Service during the Thatcher years, was asked what it was like working for the Prime Minister, he smiled. 'It was simple', he said, 'our job was to create markets'.[37]

So the remnants of the church colleges and other teacher training institutions entered the new market place of higher education. It proved to be an exceptionally

uncomfortable place in which to do business.[38] Joseph, on taking up his position as Secretary of State for Education in 1981, startled his officials by asking the question, 'How do you close a university?'[39] He further alarmed them by asserting that 50 per cent of British children received no benefit from attending school.[40] All this was bad news for anyone working in the field of education. Thatcher and Joseph had made up their minds that the expansion of higher education and schooling had gone too far and had to be reversed. Teachers, instead of being drones in the economy, had to do a better job. Teacher trainers had to produce fewer but better teachers. All this sounded vaguely reasonable when Joseph was in his 'think tank' mode, but such policies, when pursued with Thatcherite zeal, produced unprecedented conflict. There is a saying, visible on some Royal Navy ships, 'Flogging will continue until morale improves'. Working in schools and colleges during the Joseph era was like going in for a daily flogging. Roared on by the tabloid press, Thatcher and Joseph took it in turns to present teachers as the enemy of the people. Teacher trainers were routinely castigated as a bunch of left wing cranks who didn't know their job.[41] Although, when leaving his post in 1986, Joseph warned his successor, Kenneth Baker, not to pick a fight with teachers, he left behind a corrosive legacy.[42] Whatever Joseph's words, Baker was shrewd enough to know just how popular teacher bashing was. Teacher trainers were an even softer target. The logical consequences of the Thatcher and Joseph approach to education came home to roost for teacher trainers in 1989 and 1990. First the Hillgate Group in 1989[43] and then Shelia Lawlor in 1990[44] condemned teacher training as unnecessary, intellectually inadequate and subversive. The only qualities required for successful teaching, it was claimed, were the acquisition of knowledge and the ability to transmit it to others. Teacher education, they argued, should be replaced by school-based training with no input from higher education.[45] In short, staff working in teacher training in both the colleges of education and university departments were given notice to quit. So seductive was the technical rational vision of teacher training, that no one stopped to examine what a desperately impoverished model it was. Student teachers were to learn their craft through apprenticeship in classrooms, observing teachers. School-based training on its own would be enough to equip trainees with the competencies necessary to do the job. Such sentiments chimed perfectly with John Major's 'back to basics' agenda when he surprisingly became Margaret Thatcher's successor, and, even more surprisingly, went on to win the 1992 election.

For such a simple training model, it was remarkable how many bureaucracies were needed to police its operation. One of the paradoxes of the Thatcher and Joseph legacy was that the free market was never allowed to operate as a free market. The Teacher Training Agency (TTA) was set up in 1994 and worked with the Office for Standards in Education (OfSTED) to monitor and inspect the quality of training. Light touch inspection it was not. Many higher education training providers found OfSTED inspectors camped on their premises for weeks on end. Schools got off more lightly because every effort was made by the Major administration to encourage school-based initial teacher training. While it was loudly claimed that school-based training facilitated mature students entering teaching,[46] it also helped that it was cheap and kept discredited higher education providers out of the process. Major liked to keep things simple. With origins of living in an overcrowded flat in Brixton and having left school at 16, Major shared with Thatcher an antipathy towards higher education.[47] Academics had an awkward habit of making the simple complicated. Major was therefore happy to preside over an education market, albeit one which was skewed in favour of schools and against higher education. From 1992 to 1997 competition and exclusivity replaced collaboration and inclusivity in teacher training. Customers bought products, different courses, differently priced. Providers competed for customers. The role of the TTA was to stoke up market competition by transferring money and students to 'high quality' providers, those deemed to be delivering competent teachers. Despite a series of HMI reports identifying school-based training programmes as being generally weak, money and training places continued to be transferred onto these routes and away from higher education institutions. Not only did Major like to keep things simple, he was as astute as his mentor in rigging markets when required.

The Excellence Phase started when the Major government lost the 1997 election, mainly because the majority of British people had become tired of Conservatism as interpreted by Thatcher. Tired of the sleaze and divisions over Europe which they associated with Major's faltering administration, most people were looking for a change. Tony Blair and New Labour swept to power with a huge majority. The election pop song for New Labour was *Things Can Only Get Better* and many staff working in higher education had hopes that things would be better. Blair's mantra of

'Education, Education, Education', suggested that at last a government had come into power that was serious about education, knowledge and a knowledge based economy. Blair and his Cabinet colleagues were certainly serious about everything educational. Gone forever were the days when a civil servant could tell an education minister that no one was interested in schooling and teacher training. When Blair commissioned Lord Dearing in 1998 to examine the structure and functions of higher education, it was expected that major reforms would follow. In particular everyone working in higher education hoped that the role of the market would diminish, and the dominant modes of competition, accountability and quality control would be replaced by professional dialogue and consultation.[48] Such hopes were soon dashed when it became apparent that Blairism was Thatcherism with a smile. In his first 1997 White Paper on education policy, *Excellence in Schools*, Blair set out his stall by widening and extending Conservative reforms for schools and teacher training, not changing their direction. The market in higher education was endorsed. Competition was intensified by standards being ratcheted up. Above all else the language of *Excellence in Schools* was alarmingly Thatcherite. New Labour code meant that whenever the word 'shall' was inserted into a sentence, everyone understood that it meant 'you will'. Every paragraph was riddled with words such as benchmarks, targets, standards, performance management and rigorous inspection. In terms of the latter the document flatly averted, 'All training provision will continue to be subject to rigorous inspection. We will ensure that firm action is taken where training fails to match up to the standards we have laid down'.[49] There was a collective shudder from everyone working in the teacher training field; it was clearly more of the same.

In fairness to Blair, too much was riding on his educational reform programme to leave anything to chance. As Furlong argues, Blair was committed to modernization and to transforming teaching into a twenty-first century profession.[50] The Prime Minister and his senior ministers were convinced that education was the key to overcoming economic and social disadvantage. By investing in human capital, they saw a way of steering Britain into the forefront of global competitiveness.[51] This was the New Labour dream. Sadly, some dreams turn into nightmares. Blair and his ministers developed a style of government dominated by a bossy prescriptiveness which intensified over the course of his three administrations. In education, a New Labour mania for target setting [52] not only set training standards in stone, but through

additional literacy and numeracy strategies instructed teachers (in minute detail) what to teach, how to teach it and how long to devote to it.[53] As teacher trainers scrambled to make sense of the literacy and numeracy initiatives, they were, like teachers, harassed and confused by more and more centrally-driven initiatives. When academics complained on behalf of teachers regarding the 'initiative overload' they were slapped down by officials at the Department for Education and Employment (DFEE) reminding them of their lowly place in the new educational pecking order. 'Teacher training' said a DFEE spokesman 'is firmly rooted in classrooms and therefore trainee teachers learn best by observing good and experienced teachers at work'.[54] In code this meant, 'watch and do'. As Galton memorably described it at the time, teacher training had been reduced to a superior form of dog training. 'Run. Fetch. Sit. Bark. Deliver'.[55] Reductionism, taken to extremes, is dangerous. At first the product (teacher training) becomes absurd, it then becomes worthless, and finally, like the Emperor's new clothes, it disappears completely.

Quo vadis? Is teacher training, like the church colleges, about to disappear? Probably not. However, the conditionality of this response depends on current models of teacher training being reformed. Reformation is likely, not least because current orthodoxies are breaking down. During the 1980s and 1990s historians of the new right re-wrote post-war British history.[56] Their thesis was predominantly Thatcherite.[57] Britain's international and domestic decline was caused, they argued, by Conservative and Labour Governments pursuing socialist policies. Too much attention, in their estimation, was paid to extending expensive welfare systems, thereby sapping Britain's economic vitality. Too much bargaining power had been ceded to trade unions, who, according to the new right, proceeded to abuse their rights and privileges. However, just as the country had reached rock bottom in the 1970s a saviour came to the rescue: Margaret Thatcher. As the new Saint George, Thatcher slew the trade unionist dragon. She reversed national decline by resolutely adhering to the principles of markets and monetarism espoused and championed by her mentor, Keith Joseph.[58] This thesis not only has a degree of truth, it also carried with it a polemical punch which captivated Thatcher's political heirs. Tony Blair and New Labour embraced the Thatcherite analysis, lock, stock and market barrel. This is all about to change. The monetarist market solution to everything is not going to survive

the 2008 financial crisis.[59] Images of bankers scrambling to beg the state to rescue them from their self-induced mess is shattering the myth of market omnipotence.

If financial systems are changing, will new settlements change relationships between the state and religious bodies? On the 4th of April, 2008, Tony Blair issued a clarion call for religion to be rescued from extremism and irrelevance.[60] In his speech, Blair put the case for religion being able to advance humanity and end global poverty.[61] Significantly, his remarks were not addressed to traditional churches. Rather his speech signalled the launch of the Tony Blair Faith Foundation. This move confirmed a trend which had become apparent during his premiership. When Alistair Campbell, Blair's Press Secretary declared, 'We don't do God',[62] what he meant was, we don't do God in the usual way. What emerged during the New Labour years was a peculiar kind of civic religion[63] epitomised in the funeral of Princess Diana. Here, traditional religion was infused by popular culture and the cult of celebrity, of which Blair was a major exponent.[64] The result was the marginalisation of the churches, a marginalisation caught by George Carey at the time of his inauguration as Archbishop of Canterbury. Of the Church of England, he wrote 'I see it as an elderly lady who mutters away to herself in a corner, ignored most of the time'.[65] Ignoring traditional religion became a New Labour habit because there were so many new religious voices clamouring for attention. Multiculturalism came to Britain as something of an agreed norm. It is only recently that second thoughts are becoming apparent.[66]

It is time for second thoughts all round, not just for relationships between the state and religion but for some reassessment of the impact of market driven models in higher education. Current approaches in education are absurdly reductionist, confusing learning outcomes with education. In schools pupils are set narrowly defined targets. In initial teacher training students (worryingly referred to as trainees) are expected to meet specific and limited standards. This approach, as argued by Bell and others,[67] conceptualises teaching as a set of mechanistic practices which can be used by teacher technicians, once they have acquired standards of efficiency by following training apprenticeships. While there are self evidently sets of craft skills in teaching, good teachers do far more than reach into their skill tool box to pick out the right monkey wrench. Teaching is not predominantly a technical or instrumental activity.[68] Rather teaching consists of a series of negotiations between teachers and taught in contexts

which are complex and frequently unpredictable.[69] Competencies and standards, necessary though they are, are insufficient to equip trainees with the knowledge and theoretical understandings to enable them to make complex judgements. As teacher training students acquire a myriad of competences, only rarely is the question asked, competent for what?[70]

The church colleges (now mostly transformed into universities) have a unique opportunity to reach beyond the sterility of competences to address the current values deficit in teacher education. Dean Inge declared that the true 'aim of education is knowledge not of facts but of values'.[71] Building on new work in the fields of moral and ethical leadership,[72] church related institutions have a chance to practice what they preach. By pursuing collegiate models of governance, where democratic inclusion encourages co-operation, staff in these institutions have the means of re-working ideas concerning the meaning of vocation in the twenty-first century. They also have opportunities for vigorously promoting what I would tentatively describe as a theology of kindness. Eleanor Roosevelt claimed, 'The basis of all good human behaviour is kindness'. If this is true in general, it is particularly relevant for students preparing for teaching. During the inter-war period, Lord Eustace Percy sneered at the propensity of staff working in training colleges to care for students and children as opposed to teaching them.[73] It is a charge now frequently levelled and re-worked by the Gradgrinds of the new right.[74] Such a charge should be vigorously contested. Part of the distinctive mission of re-formed church colleges, I would argue, is to re-affirm and re-interpret Christian values. One such value is that proper caring and the demonstration of loving kindness in the teaching of young children, invariably precedes any worthwhile learning.[75] The teacher training legacy of the inter-war period is an unhappy one. The institutional struggle for survival, so evident between 1914 and 1945, should be honoured by surviving church related institutions re-establishing in their values the distinctiveness lost by their predecessors. As well as identifying kindness as the basis for good human behaviour, Eleanor Roosevelt went on to say, 'It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness'. The churches and their institutions should have the courage to light candles in the darkness of an enveloping secularist gloom.

Endnotes

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[10] Jenkins, *op. cit.*, p. 208.
[11] Shaw was referring to the well known habit of Lloyd George to indulge in hymn singing as an alternative to attending chapel.
[12] Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party (1922), *The Education and Training of Teachers*, LB 1725, pp. 1–22, Labour Party Archive.
[13] *Ibid.*, p. 3.
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 11.
[15] Tropp, A. (1957), *The School Teachers: The Growth of the Teaching Professions in England and Wales from 1800 to the Present Day*, Heinemann: London, pp. 193–199.
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[17] Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
[18] Lofthouse, M.T. (1982), 'Teacher Training: The Church Colleges, 1890-1944', PhD thesis, University of Leicester, vol. 2, p. 279.
[19] *Ibid.*, p. 281.
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[21] PRO Ed. 24/1926, National Union of Teachers (1926), *Memorandum of the Executive of the National Union of Teachers on the Departmental Committee on the Training of Teachers for Public Elementary Schools*.
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[23] Board of Education (1920), *Annual Report*, p. 61.
[24] Church of England (1918), Minutes of the Board of Supervision, 1st of October. Church of England Archive, Church House, Westminster.
[25] *Ibid.*, p. 2.
[26] Graves and Hodge, *op. cit.*, pp. 302–303.
[27] Gilbert, B.B. (1980), *Britain Since 1918*, (2nd edition), Batsford: London, p. 32.
[28] *The Times*, *The Daily Mail*, *The Daily Herald*, 2nd of April, 1921.
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[30] Graves and Hodge, *op. cit*, p. 35.
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[33] PRO Ed. 24/1926.
[34] PRO Ed. 115/65 1925.
[35] PRO Ed. 86/57.
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[37] Lofthouse, *op. cit.*, p. 283.
[38] Lofthouse, *op. cit.*, p. 487.
[39] Lofthouse, *op. cit.*, p. 281.
[40] Graves and Hodge, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

[41] Foster, H., article in *The Spreadeagle,* 1973, p. 15, quoted in McGregor, G.P. (1991), *A Church College for the 21st Century?: 150 Years of Ripon and York St. John,* William Sessions: York, p. 116.
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[43] Baldwin Papers, *Baldwin to Queen Mary,* May, 1937, quoted in Middlemas, K. and Barnes, J. (1969), *Baldwin, A Biography*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson: London, p. 1078.

Chapter Three

[1] Stanley Baldwin, Prime Minister, May, 1923–January, 1924, November, 1924–June, 1929, June, 1935–May, 1937.
[2] Mowat, C.L. (1955), *Britain Between the Wars 1918-1940*, Methuen: London, p. 139.
[3] Grigg, P.J., *Prejudice and Judgement*, p. 38 quoted in Mowat *op. cit.*, p. 140.
[4] Young, G.M. (1952), *Stanley Baldwin*, Rupert Hart-Davis: London, pp. 40–42.
[5] Bonar Law stubbornly refused to offer a recommendation to the King as to who should succeed him. However, his private secretary, Sir Ronald Waterhouse, twice gave Lord Stamfordham the misleading impression that Bonar Law supported Baldwin and not Lord Curzon. Mowat *op. cit.*, p. 162.
[6] House of Commons Record, 160/5/561:

> No Government in this country to-day which has not faith in the people, hope in the future, love for its fellow men, and which will not work and work and work, will ever bring this country through into better days and better times.

[7] Lloyd George substituted hymn singing for going to chapel. Neville Chamberlain was so upset by the death of his cousin Norman in the First World War he came close to holding outright pacifist beliefs. Baldwin projected an outward conformity to established religion but suffered inward doubts. Middlemas, K. and Barnes, J. (1969), *Baldwin: A Biography*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson: London.
[8] Simon, B. (1974), *The Politics of Educational Reform 1920-1940*, Lawrence and Wishart: London, p. 69.
[9] Jones T. and Middlemas, K. (1969), *Whitehall Diary, vol. 1, 1916-1925*, quoted in Simon, *op. cit*., p. 84.
[10] PRO Ed. 24/1298. See also Lowndes, G.A.N. (1969), *The Silent Social Revolution*, Oxford University Press: London.
[11] PRO Ed.24/1814.
[12] Board of Education (1925), *Report of the Departmental Committee on the Training of Teachers for Public Elementary Schools*, Command Paper 2409, HMSO: London.
[13] PRO Ed. 24/1814.
PRO Ed. 24/1815.
[14] Percy, E. (1958), *Some Memories*, Eyre and Spottiswoode: London, p. 108. Percy, E. (1930), *Education at the Crossroads*, Evans Brothers: London.
[15] Board of Education, *op. cit.*, p. 34.
[16] Mowat, *op. cit*., p. 197.
[17] PRO Ed. 24/1198.
[18] PRO Ed. 24/1814.
[19] PRO Ed. 24/1815.
[20] Simon, *op. cit*., 'Lord Eustace in the Saddle'.
[21] Reginald McKenna, Chairman of the Midland Bank, called for economy measures which were 'ruthless, relentless, remorseless'. His stand was supported by Lord Inchcape, who, at a meeting held at the Mansion House on 24th of April, 1922, declared that the national economy 'was at death's door and the nation was facing bankruptcy'. Mowat, *op. cit*., pp. 130–131.
[22] *Hansard,* House of Lords, vol. 62, col. 1494 and in Simon, *op. cit.*, p. 101.
[23] *Daily Mail*, 23rd of June, 1927.
[24] PRO Ed. 24/1814.
[25] Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party (1922), *The Education and Training of Teachers*, Labour Party Archive (LB) 1725, pp. 1–22.
[26] *Ibid*., p. 3. See also Tibble, J.W. (1957), 'The Training Colleges and the Three Year Course', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, vol. vi, pp. 3–12.
[27] National Union of Teachers (1923), *The Supply and Training of Teachers*, NUT Archive, Hamilton House London, Form Ed. 14.

[28] Bruce, G.L. (1924), 'Should the Training Colleges be Abolished?', *The Educational Record*, vol. xx, New Series, No 68, November, pp. 381–387.
Bruce, G.L. (1923), 'The Colleges and the Government', *The Educational Record*, vol. xx, New Series, No 66, December, pp. 293–299.
Bruce, G.L. (1926), 'Universities and Training Colleges' *The Educational Record*, vol. xxi, New Series, No 71, December, pp. 557–560.
[29] PRO Ed. 24/1926. National Union of Teachers (1926), *Memorandum of the Executive of the National Union of Teachers on the Departmental Committee on the Training of Teachers for Public Elementary Schools*.
[30] PRO Ed. 24/1926. *Report of the Departmental Committee on the Training of Teachers for Public Elementary Schools*, (1925).
[31] Niblett, W.R., Humphreys, D.W. and Fairhurst, J.R. (1975), *The University Connections*, NFER, pp. 54–80. See also Rose, M. (1981), *A History of King Alfred's College*, *Winchester*, *1840-1980*. Phillimore: London pp. 80–83.
[32] Hyndman, M. (1978), *Schools and Schooling in England and Wales: A Documentary History*, Harper and Row: London, p. 179.
[33] Percy: *op. cit*., p. 108.
[34] PRO Ed. 86/14, Board of Education (1926), Circular 1377, *Revision of the Regulations for the Training of Teachers*; Circular 1383, *Confirmation of the Revised Regulations for the Training of Teachers.*
[35] Middlemas, K. and Barnes, J. *op. cit*., Stannage, T. (1980), *Baldwin Thwarts the Opposition*, Croom Helm: London.
[36] Mowat, *op. cit.*, p. 144.
[37] PRO Ed. 24/1814. Letter from Lord Percy, President of the Board of Education to the Right Honourable Walter E. Guinness.
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[39] PRO Ed. 115/10.
PRO Ed. 115/9.
PRO Ed. 115/27.
PRO Ed. 115/24.
PRO Ed. 24/1814.
[40] Simon, *op. cit*., p. 106.

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[3] Evidence submitted to the Cross Commission, quoted in Shakoor, A. (1964), 'The Training of Teachers in England and Wales 1900-1939', PhD thesis, University of Leicester, pp. 12–30.
[4] Diamond, M.G. (1963), 'The Work of the Catholic Poor School Committee, 1847-1905', MEd thesis, University of Liverpool.
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[8] PRO Ed. 86/56.
[9] PRO Ed. 86/55.
[10] PRO Ed 86/56.
[11] PRO Ed. 86/56.
[12] PRO Ed. 86/55.
[13] Catholic Education Council, *Annual Report*, (1908). Duffy, J. (1886), *Student Life in the Eighties and Nineties, Centenary Record of St. Mary's College, Hammersmith, 1859-1925*, Strawberry Hill College Library Archive, College Papers 1925–1950.
[14] Jenkins, A. (1976), *The Thirties*, William Heinemann: London, pp. 208–209.

[15] Catholic Education Council (1917–1918), *Annual Report*, and *Hammersmith and Wandsworth Record*, 10th of September, 1917.
[16] PRO Ed. 86/55.
Hornsby-Smith, M.P. (1978), *Catholic Education: the Unobtrusive Partner*, Sheed and Ward: London, pp. 86–96.
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[18] Pritchard, F.C. (1951), *The Story of Westminster College, 1851-1951*, Epworth Press: London.
[19] Spencer, F.H. (1938), *An Inspector's Testament*, English Universities Press: London, pp. 119–154.
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[26] *Ibid*.
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[30] Church of England Central Board of Finance (1929): *Report on the Church of England Training Colleges for Teachers*, Church of England Archives, Church House, Westminster.
[31] *Ibid.*, pp. 49–51.
[32] National Society, 'Reorganization of Elementary Schools and the Raising of the School Age', *Annual Report*, 1928–1929, pp. 10–18, National Society Archives, Church House, Westminster.
[33] *Ibid:* 'The Training Colleges and the Need for More Teachers', pp. 19–21.
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[3] Graves and Hodge, *op. cit.*, p. 269.
[4] Graves and Hodge, *op. cit.*, p. 274.
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[6] *The Times* (1934), March–April, Letters to the Editor.
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[13] Gilbert, *op. cit.*, p. 71.
[14] Weir, L.M. (1938) *The Tragedy of Ramsay MacDonald*, Secker and Warburg: London.
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[18] Ponsonby, L. (1931), 'The National Government', *Contemporary Review*, 140, pp. 417–418.
[19] Weir, *op. cit.*, p. 382.
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[21] Boothby, R. (1947) *I Fight to Live*, Gollancz: London, p. 93.

[22] Halifax, E. (1957), *Fullness of Days*, Collins: London. Jenkins, R. (1974), *Nine Men of Power*, Hamish Hamilton: London, p. 140.
[23] PRO Ed. 86/37
[24] Montgomery Hyde, H. (1973), *Baldwin the Unexpected Prime Minister*, Hart-Davies and MacGibbon, p. 287.
[25] Simon, B. (1974), *The Politics of Educational Reform 1920-1940*, Lawrence and Wishart: London, pp. 171–178.
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 172.
[27] Holmes succeeded Pelham as Permanent Secretary in 1937, while Wood, as Principal Private Secretary to Presidents of the Board, was to have great influence over R.A. Butler in the drafting and publication of the McNair Report.
[28] PRO Ed. 78/61
[29] PRO Ed. 86/60
[30] PRO Ed. 86/60
[31] Wesleyan Education Committee (1931–1932), *Annual Report, Westminster College*, Report of the Principal, pp. 47–49.
[32] PRO Ed. 86/60. See Dr Workman's petition to the President of the Board of Education and Wesleyan Education Committee (1933–1934), *Annual Report*, pp. 18–30.
[33] *Ibid.*
[34] PRO Ed. 86/60. Private minute to the President of the Board of Education.
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] *Ibid.*
[37] PRO Ed. 86/60. Letter from Lord Grey to Lord Irwin (Viscount Halifax), 23rd of July, 1932.
[38] *Ibid.*
[39] PRO Ed. 86/60. The Anglican Deputation meeting Halifax on 3rd of August, 1932, included Earl Grey, Canon Partridge, Sir Walter Buchanan Riddell, R. Holland and R.G. Mayor.
[40] Although Halifax was popular with the Royal Family, like Eustace Percy, he did not always have much support form the tabloid press. Robert Bruce Lockhart, gossip columnist for the Beaverbrook Press, wrote in his diary on 8th of June, 1931: 'Irwin (Halifax) suffers from religious mania and is an Anglo-Catholic of a very advanced and ardent type'. Young, K. (ed.), (1973), *The Diaries of Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart, vol. 1, 1915-1938*, Macmillan: London, p. 170.
[41] PRO Ed. 24/1934.
[42] *Ibid.*
[43] PRO Ed. 86/60. Letters from the Board of Education to the Board of Supervision, August–December, 1932.
[44] PRO Ed. 86/80. Minute No. 880 A/14A, 2nd of December, 1932.
[45] Bradbury, J.L. (1975), *Chester College and the Training of Teachers*, Chester College: Chester, p. 203.
[46] PRO Ed. 86/80.
[47] PRO Ed. 86/80. Church of England Training Colleges (1933), *Concentration to Meet Cut in Numbers of Students*, Statement by the Board of Supervision, pp. 1–10.
[48] Board of Supervision, *Annual Report*, 1933, National Society Archives, Church House, Westminster.
[49] Church of England (1933), The Closing of Church Training Colleges by the Board of Supervision, *Appeal to the Members of the Church Assembly by the Principal of Chester College, Canon R.A. Thomas*, 30 January, pp. 1–8, Church of England Archives, Church House, Westminster. For further contextual information, see Bradbury, *op. cit.*, pp. 198–206 and PRO Ed. 115/4 (1935–1936), *Board of Education Inspection Report on the Chester Diocesan Training College*.
[50] *The Times* (1933) 30 January.
[51] Church of England Church Assembly (1933), *Minutes of the Proceedings*, p. 24, Church of England Archives, Church House, Westminster.
[52] *Ibid.*
[53] *Ibid.*, and *Church of England Training Colleges for Teachers*, Report of the Committee of Enquiry, p. 7, Church of England Archives, Church House, Westminster.
[54] Such accusations were not new. Accusations of frivolity and idleness in Anglican Colleges date back to 1896. See *Report of the Church Inspector of Training Colleges to the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, National Society, Annual Report, 1896.*
[55] National Society (1931–1932), *Annual Report*, p. 30, National Society Archives, Church House, Westminster.
[56] Bacon, F. (1624), *Apophthegms*, 36.

[57] Church Assembly (1929), Bishop of Durham, *Interim Report of the Central Board of Finance*, (CAF 77), pp. 512–517, Church of England Archives, Church House, Westminster.
[58] PRO Ed. 22/164.
[59] *Oral Evidence*, Miss T. Bazeley, Principal of Bishop Otter College, Chichester. University of Chichester, Miscellaneous Staff Archive; Bishop Otter College.
[60] Jenkins, *op. cit.*, p. 219.
[61] PRO Ed. 22/164.
[62] Private diary of a Mother Superior of a Catholic college: entry for 28th of December, 1932.

Chapter Six

[1] PRO Ed. 86/107.
[2] PRO Ed. 86/56., Ed. 86/56., Ed. 115/32., Ed. 115/127., Ed. 115/52.
[3] PRO Ed. 86/107.
[4] Catholic Education Council, *Annual Reports 1931-36.*
[5] The sequence began with investigations by the Burnham Committee in 1926–1927; enquiries by the Mayor Committee followed in 1928–1929 and by L.C. Knights' private enquiry in 1932.
[6] Miss T. Bazeley, Principal of Bishop Otter College, Private Diary. University of Chichester, Miscellaneous Staff Archive; Bishop Otter College.
[7] Church of England (1933): *Church of England Training Colleges for Teachers, Committee of Enquiry,* chaired by the Bishop of Peterborough. Church of England Archives, Church House, Westminster.
[8] Letter from Bishop of Peterborough to Dr M.B. Furse, Bishop of St Albans, 17th of March, 1934. Church of England Archives, Church House, Westminster.
[9] Church of England (1933), Board of Supervision for Church of England Training Colleges, *Committee of Enquiry.* Interview with representatives of College of St Mark and St John Chelsea, 8th of July. Church of England Archives, Church House, Westminster.
[10] *Ibid:* pp. 67–69.
[11] Church Assembly (1936), *Report of Proceedings,* vol. xvii, No 3, p. 474, Dr M.B. Furse, Bishop of St Albans. Church of England Archives, Church House, Westminster.
[12] Oral Evidence: student who attended St Mark and St John College, Chelsea, 1934–1936.
[13] Church of England (1933), Board of Supervision for Church Training Colleges, *Committee of Enquiry,* confidential interview with representatives of St Mark and St John College, Chelsea, 8th of July, p. 7. Church of England Archives, Church House, Westminster.
[14] *Ibid.* and oral evidence.
[15] Knights, L.C. (1932), 'Will Training Colleges Bear Scrutiny?', *Scrutiny,* vol. 1. No 3, December, pp. 247–263.
[16] *Ibid.*, p. 247.
[17] *Ibid.,* p. 248.
[18] *Ibid.,* p. 247–263.
[19] Letter to L.C. Knights from Mary, dated 3 January, 1933.
[20] Letter to L.C. Knights from Caroline, dated 28th of December, 1932.
[21] Letter to L.C. Knights from P.C.W., dated 17 January 1932. See also McGregor, G.P. (1991), *A Church College for the 21st Century?: 150 Years of Ripon and York St. John,* William Sessions: York, p. 116.
[22] As one example, see the impact achieved by the Rev. Dr J.W. Welch on St. John's College, York, 1935–1939, in McGregor, *op. cit.*, pp. 125–152.
[23] For pastoral qualities the leadership of Harold Astbury at Chester College, 1935–1953, is one example of many principals who sustained hope and energy during difficult times. See Bradbury J.L. (1975), *Chester College and the Training of Teachers 1839-1975*, Chester College: Chester, pp. 207–219.
[24] Board of Education (1931–1932), *Annual Report*, *The Training of Teachers*, p. 47.
[25] Board of Education, Internal Minutes 880 A/14a, 880 A/47. PRO Ed. 24/1929, Ed. 24/1934, Ed. 86/60 and Ed. 24/1935.
[26] Board of Supervision (1937), *The Church Training Colleges for Teachers: Memorandum by the Board of Supervision on the Policy of Concentration*, *including specific recommendations as to the closure of certain colleges*. Paper CA 590, Church of England Archives, Church House, Westminster.
[27] PRO Ed. 86/81. Conference with Representatives of Voluntary and Local Education Authority Training Colleges with regard to Fee Policy, 14th of December, 1933.

[28] PRO Ed. 86/81.
[29] PRO Ed. 81/9, Ed. 82/10, Ed. 86/61. Catholic Education Council (1933). *Annual Report*, Catholic Response to the Board of Education regarding reductions in student numbers.
[30] PRO Ed. 24/1936, Ed. 86/61, Ed. 86/61.
[31] The sharpest falls in church membership were in the dissenting and nonconformist sects; membership of the Church of England fell steadily throughout the inter-war years; the Roman Catholic church recorded a modest increase in converts during the 1920s but these gains were lost during the 1930s.
[32] PRO Ed. 86/80.
[33] Church of England, *National Society, 1934*. Comment by J.H. Simpson, Principal, St Mark and St John College, London, concerning the common pool arrangements. Church of England Archives, Church House, Westminster.
[34] Church of England, *Church Assembly (1933), Minutes of Proceedings* and Bishop of Chichester, *Diocesan Letter*, 24th of March, 1933. Church of England Archives, Church House, Westminster.
[35] PRO Ed. 86/80. *Board of Supervision Minute Book* (1933–1934), vol. II.
[36] PRO Ed. 86/80 and Naylor, L. (1953) *Culham: Church of England Training College for Schoolmasters 1853-1953*, Abbey Press, pp. 98–113.
[37] Church of England, Church Assembly 1937, Paper CA 590, Church of England Archives, Church House, Westminster.
[38] Church of England, *The Church Training Colleges for Teachers: Memorandum by the Board of Supervision on the Policy of Concentration*, *including specific recommendations as to the closure of certain colleges*. Paper CA 590, Church of England Archives, Church House, Westminster.
[39] *Ibid.*, pp. 1–10.
[40] Members of the committee were Sir Edmund Phipps, Mr. R.G. Mayor, Canon Barker, Mr. Hursey and Mr. R. Holland.
[41] PRO Ed. 87/107.
[42] *Ibid.*
[43] Phipps to Canon Barker, 2nd of December, 1936, National Society Archives, Church House, Westminster, and PRO Ed. 87/107.
[44] National Society (1936–1937), *Annual Report: Reports of Proceedings*, *Church Assembly (1936-37)*, National Society Archives, Church House, Westminster. Board of Supervision, Minute Book, vol. ii: February and March. *Confidential Correspondence*, Board of Supervision, Archives, 1936–1937, Church House, Westminster.
[45] Church Assembly (1936), *National Society,* Archbishop of Canterbury, p. 489. Church of England Archives, Church House, Westminster.
[46] *Comments by the Archdeacon of Lewes, the Venerable F.H.S. Smythe*, Paper CA 590, Church of England Archives, Church House, Westminster. See also *The Times,* 18th of November, 1937.
[47] PRO Ed. 24/1935.
[48] Halifax, E. (1957), *Fullness of Days*, Collins: London, pp. 230–234.

Chapter Seven

[1] Jenkins, R. (1974), *Nine Men of Power,* Hamish Hamilton: London, p. 140.
[2] Feiling, K. (1970), *The Life of Neville Chamberlain,* Macmillan: London, p. 9.
[3] *Ibid.,* p. 10.
[4] *Ibid.,* p. 30.
[5] *Ibid.,* p. 30.
[6] *Ibid.,* p. 78.
[7] Tawney, R.H. (1937), 'Thoughts on the New Prime Minister', *The Times*, 30th of May.
[8] Macleod, I. (1961), *Neville Chamberlain,* Frederick Muller: London.
[9] Feiling, *op. cit.*, pp. 303–319.
[10] PRO Ed. 86/178.
[11] Tibble, J.W. (1957), 'The Training Colleges and the Three-Year Course'*, British Journal of Educational Studies,* vol. vi, No 1, November, pp. 3–12.
[12] PRO Ed. 86/178.
[13] Supply of Teachers: Candidates for Admission to Training Colleges: Quality of Applicants, 1937, R. 476 (21/70), (1938–1939), PRO Ed. 86/178.
[14] National Society and Board of Supervision, (1938), Minute Book, vol. iii, March. Church of England Archives, Church House, Westminster.

[15] National Union of Teachers (1939), *The Training of Teachers and Grants to Intending Teachers,* Report of the Committee of Investigation appointed by the Executive of the National Union of Teachers. NUT Archive, Hamilton House London.
[16] Joint Standing Committee of the Training College Association and Council of Principals (1939), *The Training of Teachers, The Length of the Course,* pp. 67–70.
[17] His Majesty's Inspectorate (1939), Training College Curricula: Suggestions by a body of HMI prepared for the Board of Education. PRO Ed. 86/178.
[18] Board of Supervision (1938), Minute Book, vol. iii, March, p. 36. Church of England Archives, Church House, Westminster.
[19] PRO Ed. 86/178.
[20] *Ibid.* and PRO Ed. 86/179.
[21] PRO Ed. 86/107.
[22] *Ibid.*
[23] Simon, B. (1974), *The Politics of Educational Reform 1920-1940,* Lawrence and Wishart: London, pp. 295–333.
[24] Fisher, F.H. (1938), *An Inspector's Testament,* English Universities Press: London, p. 313.
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