

extending this letter to about twice its present length. I've run out of crepe paper, and you've been patient enough as it is. Anyway, I think those are the lights of my home station looming through the rain. Yes, they are. Good night, good hunting and best wishes,
from CHRISTOPHER CORNFORD

P.S.—Next day. Looking over this in the morning light I'm struck by how grouchy it all sounds. No doubt if I were to re-visit the exhibition I'd see all sorts of good things I missed first time. You know how it is with critics. They're like the schoolmasters and sergeant-majors we all remember of old: once get their dander up, and nothing's right for them. Examining my catalogue I find annotations of approval opposite Arthur Pollen's Crucifix, Patrick Reyntien's all-too-minuscule contribution of stained glass, Joseph Cribb's Madonna in oak, and several other items.

But I don't take back a word I said about Catholic art in general. As to that, we've just got to keep on griping—and keep on trying.—C.F.C.

EDUCATIONAL SURVEY

The Anderson Report on Grants to Students

A CHILD who passes his eleven-plus examination can learn Latin free of charge till he is eighteen. A child who does not pass this test can still learn Latin till he is eighteen, if his father will pay for him to go to an independent or direct grant school. If a candidate cannot pass a university entrance examination in Latin, not even the offer of a fee of a thousand pounds a year can secure a university place for him.

When parents make great sacrifices in order that their children shall learn a particular subject, be educated in the religious tradition of the family, whether it be Jewish, Catholic or Quaker, or have the opportunity of being taught in small classes, they are often accused of 'contracting out' of their social obligations. There are at least two menacing assumptions behind this question-begging stock phrase which need to be brought into the open. Recently a weekly columnist wrote, 'Influential people buy their children out of the public system.' Since each university is autonomous, the question of contract is forced into some curious acrobatics where the payment of students' fees is concerned. The passing of an examination at eleven entitles a child to a free grammar-school education, whether the parents be rich or poor. The passing of a university entrance examination at present entitles a young man or woman to a free university education only if the parents are relatively poor. The family problems involved in this situation have been

faced in the report of the committee on grants to students which met under the chairmanship of Sir Colin Anderson. Eleven of the committee were in favour of the abolition of the parents' means test. Four wished the means test to be retained, but in a modified form. One member, Professor Brinley Thomas of Cardiff, made two reservations. He disagreed with the committee's recommendation to abolish State scholarships, and would consent to a modified means test for parents only on condition that at the same time sixth form bursaries were introduced in the maintained schools. The reasons which he gave for his objection to the abolition of the means test can be summed up in his own words: 'Relieved of most of the cost of private education, parents in the private sector will have more to spend on private schooling; the private sector will expand and will attract more of the best teachers.'

In espousing the cause of sixth form maintenance grants, Professor Brinley Thomas has drawn attention to the fact that many potential candidates for the university are lost at this stage. If the parents have little sympathy with further education and complain that a great boy of sixteen could already be earning five pounds a week or more instead of eating hearty meals at his parents' expense, the emotional strain on the son can be severe. When he sees his own contemporaries in unskilled jobs buying motor-bicycles and gramophone records, he needs not only tenacity of purpose but skill in dealing with parental objections; the onus already falls on him, and the very depth of his filial piety (an increasingly rare virtue) may lead him to abandon all hope of a university education. The present arrangements for maintenance grants at this stage are certainly inadequate. The question is not at all simple. Loss of filial piety is the root of many other losses, and it is a delicate matter for the State to come between father and son. Students when agitating for larger grants or when talking informally to a tutor about a family situation will often say, 'I want to be independent'. More than one tutor has been moved to reply that we all take in each other's washing and that larger grants will still make them dependent on the taxpayers whom they see all around them, stokers, cleaners, cooks, omnibus-drivers, not to mention their own professor. This reminder, for obvious reasons, is not likely to make much impact. Dependence on a few million taxpayers involves no immediate emotional complications; the taxpayer, so often quoted as a figure of offended majesty, takes his place with other humorous lay-figures, such as correspondents in *The Times* who sign themselves as 'Olim' or 'Senex' or 'O Tempora, O Mores'. At the moment, seventy-five per cent of the parents make a contribution to the expenses of their children's education at the university. The modified scale suggested by the minority group of four within the Anderson Committee would mean that only forty per cent of the parents (on the basis of current salary scales) would be required to make a contribution. The minority group did in fact refer to this question of 'independence' which has been constantly reiterated by the National Union of Students: 'many students, now that personal independence is claimed at an increasingly early age, resent on principle a continued dependence on their parents'. This group, however, asserted that it

was neither wise nor necessary to meet this claim for independence by making university education completely free.

We may well take pride in the fact that, once a student has been selected by a university, poverty need no longer prevent anyone from accepting a place. Yet those who are responsible for the welfare of undergraduates, and not least college registrars who frequently have occasion to correspond with local authorities about grants, are increasingly asking themselves how they can help certain students to be more responsible stewards of public money. Many a student in his first term, and particularly a student coming from the provinces to live in London lodgings, is intoxicated by the apparent munificence of the first instalment of his grant. Even if his tastes are more sober and fastidious than those of his contemporaries who have been earning for three or four years, he can find himself in serious financial difficulties without knowing exactly how he got there. The effects of the earlier onset of puberty in schoolchildren, of the economic exploitation of the new teenage market, and of the earlier age of marriage in the population at large, have not been sufficiently taken into account by those who are still thinking in terms of the university graduate who went to the Lakes for a reading party in the Long Vacation, prepared for a profession, saved up in order to 'found a family', and married in his later twenties. Women students of a past generation were quite accustomed to wearing one threadbare coat and skirt, but also took it for granted that they would buy a number of books. If they married at all, they were not likely to do so until after having spent some years in a post; a number of them looked after old parents. Lately, the necessity for students to buy their own books was actually cited as a grievance in one of the Sunday newspapers, while the cost of a permanent wave was quite seriously put down on the list of her necessary expenses by a student wishing for a larger grant. Women undergraduates of our time see the typist, the shop-assistant, the factory-girl marrying at eighteen; some of them say quite candidly that they think of twenty-five as the end of youth, and that the need to have a good time now is an overwhelming consideration. Young men, with equal candour, have been known to say that they must compete for a bride quickly, since there are now more men than women in their age-group. The number of students marrying during an undergraduate or postgraduate course appears to be increasing. Some of these have children; the wife in this case may obtain permission to defer graduation for a year, but she sometimes drops out of her course altogether. Other students, in informing their tutors of their proposed marriage, imply or explicitly state that they intend to wait three or four years before starting a family. The stresses of this particular situation fall naturally more heavily on the female partner. In dealing with the question of married students, the Report recommends, among other things, that an award-holder shall not be regarded as dependent on another award-holder, and that award-holders eligible for grants for their dependants should be over twenty-five, or people who have regularly supported themselves out of their earnings for three years. The principle underlying undergraduate marriages, however, cannot be adequately discussed in such a report, since it involves a whole complex

of comparatively new assumptions. In one discussion on marrying on a grant, a student observed that if undergraduates were forbidden to marry while still supported by the taxpayer, they would only live together. The implication appeared to be that the onus was on the State. Whilst this is clearly a minority opinion, the fact that such a statement can be seriously made is a symptom not to be neglected.

In the end, the groan of the taxpayer may be heard again. Assuming that the university population reaches 135,000 within the next decade, it is estimated that the cost to the public would rise from £229 millions to £338 millions if the means test were abolished. By then, Norwich and Brighton may have been succeeded by yet another university, beginning as a circle of wattle huts in Avalon.

M. A. WILEMAN

FRENCH OPINION

THE Algerian war has left so deep a wound in French life that it is rarely realized in this country that the end of the war would be by no means the end of the story. The problems of conscience created by a revolutionary war are scarcely going to be resolved by a particular armistice, and a recent issue of *Informations Catholiques Internationales* provided concrete evidence of the effect of the war on many of the young Frenchmen who have served in it. An enquiry conducted by priests of the Mission de France, themselves concerned with the pastoral care of soldiers serving in Algeria, underlined the appeal of the Cardinals and Archbishops of France last October for a recognition of the absolute rights of conscience in refusing to co-operate in positive evil. And the 'reflections' of a young Catholic, on his return to France after two years in Algeria, under the title 'A Clear Teaching to Deaf Ears', provides impressive evidence of how little effect even official ecclesiastical condemnation of torture and other excesses of repression can have when 'many no longer reason in terms of "Catholics" but in terms of "Catholics of the Left" or "Catholics of the Right", as though it were a question of two Churches anathematizing each other, and who only select from the Church's teaching what happens to coincide with their own principles'. It is significant that a recent number of Jacques Soustelle's *Vérités sur l'Algérie* publishes a letter from an officer serving in Algeria which attributes the Declaration of the French Bishops to the propaganda of 'progressive' priests, and that the outcome will be an anti-clericalism worse than any France has ever known.

Esprit would probably be regarded by French 'integrists' as a principal source of the 'progressivist' heresy. Its emphasis nowadays is perhaps more sharply political than when it was founded by Emmanuel Mounier in 1932 to reflect 'personalism and the struggle against established disorder'. The