# The History of Post-war Religious Education, with Particular Reference to the Relationship between Religious and Moral Education. A Study in Pluralism.

Volume One.

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## NOTA

1. Abbreviations used in the text are to be found in their complete forms in Appendix 4, pp. 377f.

2. All books mentioned in the references and bibliography are first-edition London texts, unless otherwise stated.

3. The references aim to reproduce the exact wording of the publication. Hence an author's surname will sometimes be followed by initials only, sometimes by a forename and initials. But where a title contains no capitals, except (usually) for the first word, the customary procedure of including capitals is followed.

4. There is a general preference in the text for lower case letters, as in broad terms such as 'science' and 'education'. Where such terms are used to denote school, college or University academic subjects, capitals are used. Where 'Syllabus' refers to an Agreed Syllabus a capital would be given.

5. There is also a preference for the avoidance of the hyphen. Some nouns are consistently used as adjectives, especially 'school', and two adjectives would only unusually be hyphenated.

6. Words of foreign origin are underlined, unless they are deemed to have passed sufficiently into the language as to make this unnecessary. '_Questionnaire_' is underlined as a word of foreign origin, not for purposes of emphasis.

7. The term '_ibid._' is used to refer to the immediately preceding reference. '_Op. Cit._' refers to the reference not immediately preceding but contained in the same set of chapter references.

SUMMARY

The History of Post-war Religious Education, with Particular Reference to the Relationship between Religious and Moral Education. A Study in Pluralism.

Norman Arthur Richards.

The study opens with an examination of the theory and practice of Religious and Moral Education in the forties. Special attention is given to the view, reaching back into the nineteenth century, that Religious Education and Moral Education were to be equated.

From this base in monism the subsequent course of RME into increasing complexity, differentiation and plurality is analysed. Particular attention is given to the emergence of ME as an autonomous exercise, and to the relationship of RE both to a secular rational educational philosophy and to a multi-faith society. Advocacy of these positions began in the forties, and reached a convincingly argued case in the seventies. The major curriculum-development schemes in RE and ME in the seventies were said to operate on 'complementarity' as the best way of viewing the relationship between the two areas. But the teaching material implied that complementarity meant parallel practice rather than interaction. It will be argued in this thesis that such a position may be an over-reaction against the former view of equation between RE and ME. There may be a better way of seeing the relationship so as to allow for mutually beneficial intersection.

This argument is not advanced primarily on empirical grounds, but a research-scheme in 1983 among Sheffield, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire teachers and headteachers gave encouragement to pursue the notion of an intersecting RE/ME, with possible benefits to Personal and Social Education.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION: Incipient Pluralism

### 1.1. OPENING ASSUMPTIONS

i. This study will begin with three assumptions. One, the 'religious difficulty', customarily viewed as two-sided, has a third aspect in the relationship between RE and ME. Two, RE and ME intersect by reason of the nature of both. Three, the mere fact of plurality of religious and moral systems does not in itself constitute pluralism. Evidence will then be presented in a historical format to show that these notions are more than assumptions, as the course of post-war RME is charted, from early recommendations for monism to later proposals for pluralism. The criteria upon which selection from the quite considerable historical data is made are as follows. One, what light do the sources throw upon the nature of the relationship between RE and ME? Two, what can be ascertained about the implications for RME from the changing social and political conditions of the period? Three, what evidence is there for changing attitudes among young people to moral values, and how would this effect the relationship between RE and ME? Four, in what way might the study have something positive and useful to say in the present decade? Although this investigation is not intended as a study in moral philosophy, it is nevertheless aware of the strictures of the naturalistic fallacy and recognises that to examine what has taken place in the course of post-war RME may incur some ought/is problems and difficulties. It is, however, intended as a historiographical study, focusing on England, and concentrating on the relationship between RE and ME.

ii. Of the three assumptions in the previous paragraph the first two have immediately recognisable connections, but the third may not relate so clearly to the others. Its prime function is contextual clarification to help towards coherence in presenting the historical data and towards greater sharpness in selecting and analysing those data. The coming study will set out the following case. In the forties the view of ME as synonymous with RE rested on a philosophical rationale as well as upon favourable social circumstances. But this rationale omitted to examine the implications for an equated RE and ME if pluralism and secularism were to gain ascendancy. Also, it was not appreciated that to appeal to democracy as an important element in RME's justification was to employ an argument which in the end could tell against equation. As changes in society and in educational theory forced re-appraisal and adaptation upon RME, so pressure mounted for a separation of Moral Education from Religious Education. Total severance was advocated by very few. Even so, the practical outcome of separation could be total severance. It will be maintained that the curriculum-development in RE and ME during the seventies by the Schools Council went too far in the direction of severance, thereby running counter to the Council's own view of the nature of the two areas. It will be argued that the term used to describe the relationship - that of 'complementarity' - might need replacing with a stronger word, such as 'intersection'. This might then help to retain the possible advantages that might come from inter-relationship. It might also give justifiable grounds for religio-moral units properly to take their place in P.S.E. courses.

iii. 'Intersection' will thus be used to draw attention to aspects of the RE/ME relationship which could become neglected in the process of establishing an autonomous ME. It is meant to suggest that a separated RE and ME need not necessarily be antagonistic

towards each other, and that to interpret separation as absolute severance might lead to impoverishment of both RE and ME. More positively, it is meant to suggest also that where RE and ME meet it is in the interests of both for interaction to occur. Chance encounters or momentary crossings do not form a satisfactorily planned educational exercise, even were the overlap between RE and ME to be no more than an investigation of similarities and differences between religious and secular codes of behaviour. 'Intersection' would denote a relationship in which an autonomous RE and ME would engage with each other at the deeper levels of belief and motivation, perhaps in mutual criticism but also in mutual support.

iv. Two further terms need preliminary definition. The 'naturalistic fallacy' will be taken to mean the belief that an 'ought' cannot be derived solely from an 'is', for to do so may be to confuse fact with value. 'Pluralism' refers to the belief that plurality is desirable, not just that it exists. In this sense pluralism can be traced back at least as far as the 1870 Education Act, which was a compromise between religious and secular viewpoints, and between different perspectives within the religious viewpoint.

## 1.2. NINETEENTH-CENTURY LEGACIES

### 1.2.1. The Religious Difficulty

i. There was logic in the Church of England's claim to privilege in education on the grounds of establishment, of historical precedent and of actual school provision, even when this claim included an insistence upon the right to instruct the nation's children in Anglican religious teaching, without the State presuming to interfere although being expected to pay the bills (1). But the size and nature of Nonconformity, the realities of power, the development of

the concept of 'undenominational' RE and the country's steady progress towards full political democracy were considerations making such thinking simplistic. Perhaps the crucial factor which made the Anglican case untenable by 1870 was the growing conviction that the national and international situation made the extension of elementary education to all a matter of urgency. Social deprivation at home and economic and military competition from abroad were powerful persuaders (2). It seems an open question as to whether religious rivalry stimulated educational provision, in the face of over-long laissez-faire Government policies, or whether the policies were over-long because of sectarian rivalry and the fear of Anglican clerical control of any proposed national educational system. It seems to be the case that not all school places were taken up, and that there were large areas of the country where schools were needed but not provided, so suggesting the need for an inexpensive, even free, secular provision of schooling. It is probably also the case that the intensity of feeling aroused by the religious difficulty viewed in its content-aspect, as to which doctrines should be taught in schools, had reached a peak with the high point of the Voluntaryist Movement, and that in the late sixties there was a new intention abroad not to let disagreement about religion prevent the countering of educational deficiencies.

ii. The pluralism of the 1870 Education Act was of a very limited kind. It arose neither from a desire to separate out Moral Education as a non-religious exercise, nor from a disgust at the prospect of children being subjected to compulsory religious teaching. For the religious diversity

was firmly enclosed in the framework of Judaeo-Christian belief and value, with a heavy bias towards Protestantism, and the secular option was little more than an expedient to facilitate the passing of the Bill. Few authorities took it up (3). Underlying the Act was the characteristically Victorian belief, seemingly forming part of the national consciousness, that education was to be built on a religious base, and that Religious Education and Moral Education were to be equated (4). This is attributable to the long-standing role of the church, both generally in the nation's life and particularly in education, and to specific ways in which churchmen often accepted inconvenience and sacrifice in fostering the cause of RE (5). It seems unlikely that the English public generally saw sectarian rivalry as a source of damage to their children, or as an undermining of Moral Education, for clerical leadership was unpopular with schoolteachers and administrators, rather than with parents (6). It may be noted that for the greater part of the century parents were prepared to pay fees for elementary education, some being ready in addition to make further financial contributions to the Voluntary school societies. The educational pluralism of the 1870 secular option seems to have stemmed from the simple recognition that a living cannot be made by piety alone.

iii. Forster himself made light of the religious difficulty (7). But neither the 'permissive sectarianism' which he first advocated, nor the opposite solution of purely secular schools, seemed a means of settling the religious difficulty, in the light of the electorate's evaluation of RE as desirable. Forster was prepared for the pluralistic measure of supporting all the then current forms of RE with public

money, even though Gladstone, and apparently a majority of the Cabinet, was prepared for denying any form of RE access to public money (8). England, however, was to receive a dual system, whereby denominational RE was safeguarded in denominational schools, regulated by foundation-formularies, and undenominational RE was accorded a legal right in Board schools, but regulated by the Cowper-Temple clause. The timetable conscience-clause and withdrawal-rights were made applicable to all schools, and RE was exempted from Government inspection. A new dimension was added to the religious difficulty, therefore, in that although the problem of RE teaching content had been solved, at any rate superficially (for what exactly was 'undenominational' RE?), an administrative problem had appeared as to how two near separate systems could be brought to comparability of standards and provision. Although the RE/ME relationship was not yet perceived as a problem, it might be argued that the nineteenth-century disposition to equate the two left a legacy of tension for the twentieth century.

## 1.2.2. The Moral Difficulty

i. Forster's aim was that elementary schools should produce literate, numerate, Christian citizens, and presumably he expected this of schools which provided no direct Religious Instruction. Induction of children into a unitary morality was another characteristically Victorian preoccupation, the morality envisaged being related to social stratification. Granted that the prevailing morality between 1870 and 1902 was that of the middle and upper classes, then Christianity could convincingly be seen as base, sanction, authorisation and maintenance. The contribution that religion made to

the support of the social structures may have been a strong reason for equating RE and ME. The 1902 Education Act made no attempt to establish an autonomous ME, even though a demand had been made for secular Moral Education (9). As it was there was strong controversy over religion at the time of the passing of the Act, and this would have been probably intensified were an attempt to have been made to legalise secular ME. But, despite the strength of the Nonconformists, Balfour's success in providing rate-aid for Voluntary schools, while assuming State control of secular teaching in all schools, betokened the growing strength of feeling in Parliament that the secular benefits of a more united and more efficient educational system were more important considerations than nineteenth-century religiosity. For the Voluntary schools were unable to match the expansion of the School Board system during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. But where did a secularising education stand in relation to a religiously based RE?

ii. In 1897 a movement was formed which was called the Moral Instruction League, changing its name to the Moral Education League in 1909. The League was not sympathetic to the use of the Bible in Moral Education (10). Until the outbreak of the First World War it mounted an attempt to have introduced into all London Board schools systematic secular Moral and Civic Education (11). The high point of success was reached in the 1904 and 1906 Education Code, which endorsed the League's general principles about education and in particular registered approval for the League's position on Moral Education, giving support to

the recommendation that Moral Instruction form an important part of every elementary school curriculum. But little attention in practice was paid to this valuation. In 1909 the League members came to admit that a tactical error had been made in attacking the supernatural side of Bible-teaching, and with the wider support engendered by this change of mind some success was achieved in persuading LEAs to provide Moral Instruction, either alongside or in conjunction with Religious Instruction. This influence was short-lived, and by the 1920s the League had disappeared.

iii. The significance of the League to this present study is that, despite their reasoned argument and demonstrable practice (12) that ME and RE were separable, without a favourable climate of opinion in the country generally, secular Moral Education was unlikely to become a feature of English schools. Moral Educators were, apparently, constantly faced with the assertion from the nineteenth century that a religious basis was necessary to their task (13). Declining church attendance did not necessarily signify that the country was abandoning this particular assumption, and it may be noted that an early ecumenical gesture was the 1905 protest, by the Archbishops and the Free Church leaders, under stimulus from the League's anti-religious propaganda, urging that Christian moral teaching be given to children. In the 1940s this ecumenical initiative had strengthened, and there was no diminution of the view among legislators that ME and RE were to be equated. It was not until the 1960s and 1970s that this belief took some hard enough blows to allow a theoretical separation at least, and it would seem that even this may not have come about were it not for the social changes in the direction of secularism and pluralism

which were effected during the post-war period, as will be seen later.

## 1.3. STATUTORY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### 1.3.1. The Inter-war Years

i. During the twenties and thirties churchmen of all parties were coming to identify secular materialism as their real enemy and so were more disposed to mutual alliance than to internecine warfare. There was a growing desire to provide a Christian education for all, rather than to spend resources and energy in denominational wrangling. Anglicans became increasingly ready to consider relinquishing the dual system in return for 'facilities', and a practice was developing of basing religious teaching upon an Agreed Syllabus, the 1936 Education Act endorsing this procedure. But the growing interest on the part of the State in the benefits of secular education and the steady pressure by Government to raise standards, particularly in the secondary sector, threw into relief the inability of the Voluntary schools to finance the greater demands that were being made on them. Although the 1939-45 War added impetus to the demand for educational reconstruction, the country was moving in that direction anyway. Yet despite greater _rapprochement_ between the churches, and between churches and local authorities, and despite the secularising tendencies of the twentieth century, the religious difficulty remained. Butler's analysis of the religious problem showed his belief that it went deep (14), and his extended consultations revealed his belief in the gravity of the problem, even though Murphy has suggested that his difficulties have been exaggerated. For the War had

crystallised two points. First, and this was clear even at the outbreak of hostilities, the 1870 and 1902 framework was being outgrown by the schools, of which a large proportion remained church schools. Second, the value-clash with totalitarian nations was turning attention to the believed generating points of democracy's own ethic, with the view gaining currency that democracy's values derived, both logically and experientially, from Christianity (15).

ii. Although ME, as a self-entity, had apparently withered with the disappearance of the Moral Education League in the 1920s, the idea of Civic Education, without overt anti-religious bias, took root in the inter-war years to blossom briefly in the second half of the 1940s. The Association for Education in Citizenship was founded in 1934 (16), and this drew upon a tradition of education for citizenship stretching back to the Victorian desire to achieve social control through education, the basic element of which was Moral Education (17). The Association's campaign for recognition owed much to Simon (18) and Hubback (19). But despite their energies and publications (20), by the outbreak of war the Association could show only a limited success. In the role of confidential pressure group little had been achieved, even though Simon had been consulted over the Spens Report. As a public pressure group, despite an outburst of conferences, branches, pamphlets and books, and the ten issues of The Citizen, 1936-39, it is doubtful if the impact was anything other than superficial. The War brought curtailment of activities and even smaller membership, but the Association did survive. If the M.E.L. had failed to establish a secular ME partly because of its anti-religious bias, the A.E.C. fared no better with Civic Education,

even when it was neutral towards RE. It would seem that, in the inter-war years, there was little challenge either to the Victorian legacy of equating RE and ME within education, or to the general public's acquiescence in this legacy.

### 1.3.2. Consultation and Debate

i. The central problem of the religious difficulty in 1944 was the apparent hampering effect of the dual system. The growing confidence in Agreed Syllabus RE was reducing the pedagogical problem, but the administrative problem was worsening. This gave the churches a bargaining counter, in that church schools although often sub-standard in accommodation were nevertheless necessary to the State. Purchase by the State was too costly, annexation would have encountered fierce opposition, and the only course therefore seemed to be to assign funds for their improvement and to agree to the churches' demands on the subject of RE. But the sub-standard accommodation of many church schools also gave Butler a bargaining counter, for the threat of annexation was present as a spur to reach agreement. Yet had there been the intensity of dissension on the content-aspect of the religious difficulty as there had been in the previous century, even the threat of annexation might not have been sufficiently powerful a factor to secure the measure of consensus which Butler sought. Also, had the War not given credence to the apparent necessity to christianise British youth through the schools (21), Butler may well have had to face a significant lobby for secular ME and its separation from RE. Butler surely did well to proceed cautiously, for flashpoints of controversy did still exist, as a detailed examination of the course of events leading up to the religious provisions of the 1944 Education Act would indicate.

ii. In June 1941 a Green Book (22) was circulated to appropriate people, having been preceded by two articles in The Times which called for a more explicitly Christian educational system (23). The main recommendations for RE in the Green Book were: strengthened denominational rights to appoint 'reserved' teachers to conduct religious teaching, adoption of the Archbishops' Five Points (24), and the removal of the Cowper-Temple clause's application to Provided secondary schools in conjunction with inspection of Agreed Syllabus teaching. The Anglicans signified their support. Almost everyone else signified disapproval. The Nonconformists did not like the proposed abrogation of the Cowper-Temple clause. The Roman Catholics demanded a scheme which would help perpetuate the denominational characteristics of their schools. The N.U.T. wanted the powers of Voluntary school managers reduced to responsibility for Religious Instruction and to the right of consultation on the appointment of reserved teachers. The T.U.C. wanted the abolition of the dual system and the restriction of all religious teaching to Agreed Syllabuses.

iii. Following a round of deputations and discussions (25) the Green Book proposals were modified. Ramsbotham, President of the Board, held a meeting with the C.E.C. in June 1941 and with the Archbishop of Canterbury in July. A joint Anglican-Nonconformist deputation met Butler and Ede in August. A declaration was signed by 224 members of both Houses, similar to the Five Points, in August and the Commons debated the matter in November, calling for a greater recognition of the essential value of RE in schools. Also in November

The Economist commented on this debate and called for a replacement of the Cowper-Temple clause with 'competent, positive instruction'. In January 1942 a deputation from the Free Churches demanded the application of the Cowper-Temple clause to all schools and made it clear that they wanted an end to the dual system. In the same month the F.C.F.C. passed a resolution calling for the abolition of the dual system. In February the N.U.T. wrote to the Board upholding the Cowper-Temple clause and Agreed Syllabus instruction and objected to sectarian teaching appointments. Also in that month the A.E.C. wrote asking for an end to the dual system, for denominational teaching in former Voluntary schools, with undenominational teaching in all others, and for a banning of religious tests for teachers.

iv. Between February and March 1942 Butler and Ede constructed a new scheme, embodied in a White Memorandum (which is to be distinguished from the later White Paper (26) ). It offered two alternatives to the churches. Either they could hand over their schools to the local authorities, while retaining nominal ownership, or they could satisfy the authorities of their ability to raise 50% of the costs of alterations and improvements, and so retain a measure of actual control. The former option would entail Agreed Syllabus religious teaching, but with provision for denominational instruction, the latter would allow religious teaching according to the trust-deeds. The Cowper-Temple clause was to be extended to all secondary schools and the Five Points were to be implemented. Single-school areas were to be obliged to adopt the first alternative, a requirement which the Anglicans particularly disliked. The C.E.C. generally disapproved of the Memorandum. The Nonconformists

accepted.

v. Temple's response was to defend the church schools strongly to the National Society in June (27), but privately to accept Butler's statistics about the poor state of many church school buildings, and to quote these statistics to the Church Assembly at a strategic juncture in November. Meanwhile he appointed a group from the National Society to draft proposals for the future of the dual system, these proposals forming the basis of the later Voluntary Controlled status, when the church schools were eventually divided into Controlled and Aided institutions. By September 1942 the White Memorandum had been abandoned by the Board, and discussions of a modified plan were proceeding which in turn led to the White Paper of July 1943 (28). Indications of support had been received from the Free Churches as well as from the Anglicans, and from the A.E.C., the N.U.T. and the Cabinet. Butler did not reach agreement with the Catholics. The White Paper received a welcome from almost all sides and formed the basis for the eventual provisions of the Act.

### 1.3.3. Parliamentary Proceedings

i. The Education Bill received its first and second readings in December 1943 and January 1944 respectively. Meanwhile a loan-scheme of 4½% over 30-40 years was worked out. For the benefit of the Nonconformists, provision was made for the holding of a local enquiry if significant opposition were made to a loan for an Aided school in a single-school area. The third reading took place in May and the Royal Assent was secured in August. Throughout the proceedings, despite differences of opinion, a toleration and moderation were maintained by the M.P. s. Cruickshank makes the

interesting comparisons that the Bill occupied the Commons only 19 days, as distinct from the 28 days of the 1870 Bill and the 59 of that of 1902, leaving a day or two to spare at the end of the debate (29). Opposition to the religious clauses was minimal: Gallacher wanted a contracting-in system rather than a contracting-out, but this resulted in no more than his being called the Honourable Member for Moscow (30), and Bevan wanted the churches to have nothing to do with education (31). Hume and Brook wanted to have the words 'Christian' and 'Bible' inserted (32), but this attempt also was unsuccessful. Cannon has drawn attention to the sincerity of religious conviction manifested during the debates (33). The successful passing of the Bill is a tribute to the diplomatic skills of both Temple (34) and Butler (35).

ii. The religious clauses of the 1944 Education Act followed the suggestions made in the Archbishops' Five Points. Under the title 'Religious Education' the school day was to begin, in all schools, with 'collective worship, on the part of all pupils in attendance', unless the LEA (County school) or managers (Voluntary school) considered that the premises made it impracticable for all pupils to assemble for a 'single act of worship' (Section 25, Sub-section 1). Religious Instruction was to be given in all schools (25,2), with parental rights safeguarded (25,4), and with parental wishes for alternative arrangements for Religious Worship and/or Instruction to be catered for (25,2). In the County school, worship was not to be 'distinctive of any particular religious denomination', and instruction was to be in accordance with an Agreed Syllabus adopted for the school or for particular pupils, which would not include 'any catechism

or formulary which is distinctive of any particular denomination' (Section 26). In Controlled schools, Religious Instruction was likewise to be in accordance with an Agreed Syllabus (27,6), but parental wishes were to be honoured if these required the provision of Religious Instruction according to the trust-deed or to the practice of the school before it became Controlled (27,1): 'reserved teachers' were to be appointed for this purpose, if the school's staff exceeded two, the headteacher not being eligible to be a reserved teacher (27,2,3). Reserved teachers were to be appointed by the authority, subject to the managers' or governors' approval (27,4). In Aided schools, Religious Instruction was to be in accordance with the trust-deeds or with the practice of the school before it became Aided, where the deeds made no provision for Religious Instruction. This instruction was to be under the control of the managers or governors (28,1). Parental wishes for Agreed Syllabus instruction in Aided schools were to be honoured (28,1). Agreed Syllabuses were to be drawn up by a Conference, composed of representatives of local religious denominations, of the Church of England (except in Wales and Monmouthshire), of local teaching associations and of the LEAs (5th Schedule, Section 29).

## 1.4. THE RE/ME RELATIONSHIP

i. It seems undeniable that, at the passing of the 1944 Education Act, RE and ME were accorded an interdependence comparable to the Victorian habit of equating the two (36). This was partly due to the particular socio-political conditions of the time, but partly due also to a religio-philosophical argument. The War had been generally seen

as a moral struggle (37) and it was in the synagogues and churches that this view took on its religious expression. With the advent of peace the social usefulness of the native religious line was therefore accepted almost without question. Parliament in particular warmed to this view. Thus, the social and political scene was set in the churches' favour. But, in addition to these favourable socio-political circumstances, a more philosophical case for the inter-dependence of RE and ME was circulating, namely that it was in the nature of democracy that it had been derived from Christianity (38). Temple was a strong advocate of this view (39).

ii. These two issues of course coalesced. So, while there is truth in the claim that the religious clauses of the Act were a piece of horse-trading (40), they were nevertheless part of a wider social scene. Churchill's speech to Parliament may not have indicated much enthusiasm on his part, either for State education or for school religion, but he was touching a supportive body of opinion (41). Murphy has claimed that a candidate for Parliament at that time was far more likely to lose than gain votes if he were hostile to religion (42). Evidence does mount up to suggest that Britain, at the time of the passing of the Act, was well-disposed to the churches and to Christianity (43). Also there seems to have been a 'folk' religion in the country, the primary emphasis of which was upon ethics (44). Temple was perhaps the nearest the country had experienced this century to a 'people's Archbishop'. There seems to have been no moral system available with which the people generally could identify, which could secure that identification

if it could not also qualify to be designated 'Christian'.

iii. While the Act did not mention Christianity by name, it can hardly be denied that the assumptions surrounding it pointed to the view that, as the Bishop of Chichester informed the Lords, Religious Instruction meant instruction in Christianity (45). The refusal of Government to allow any attempt to succeed which would make the Act prescribe specifically Christian intentions may indeed have been part of a general continuation of State policy for twentieth-century administrations to detach themselves from residual establishment-religion (46). The more specific reason, given at the time (47), that the courts should not be burdened with the task of defining what Christianity was, does seem to carry conviction in the light of the historical circumstances surrounding the religious difficulty. But there was another consideration, namely that the Jews would have been at a disadvantage (48). Not only did they form part of the native religious line of Britain, but they had aroused a greater sympathy than ever before because of their manifest contribution to the war-effort, and of their recent sufferings at the hands of the Nazis. While the evidence is not strong that the Jews were treated with great consideration (more often than not, perhaps, they were accorded the status of honorary Christian) they do seem to have been in mind. If so, then the choice of the word 'religious' rather than 'Christian' signified a wider pluralism than had previously obtained. But the religious clauses were basically a product of church initiative, as advantage was taken of a twentieth-century climate of opinion which was for once in the churches' favour, and there was no intention of allowing any more pluralism than was necessary for a viable deal with the State.

One point seems to be beyond doubt, and that is that no philosopher would have been given a hearing, however meticulous his arguments, if he were to maintain that morals and religion were separable, and by implication ME and RE were to be distinguished. Parliament and the people acquiesced, whether out of a sense of fairness in that the churches had lost a lot of their schools, or out of a felt need for an overarching value-system to help win the peace, as there had been need for such to help win the War.

iv. But it also seems beyond doubt that the incipient pluralism of the Act, and the religio-philosophical appeal to democracy were two-edged factors. For it must surely be illogical to argue that the democratising of youth was desirable on religious grounds, and yet to repudiate the democratic principle that a democratic society would accord equal rights to a range of religious and moral belief-systems. In the world of Realpolitik these matters are usually resolved on the basis of who holds the power, and the power-holders of the time were content to settle for monism in morals and religion. Perhaps those with the responsibility of piloting RME at the time were too ready to assume that Parliamentary approval accorded to the religious clauses of the 1944 Act indicated enthusiasm on religious grounds, whereas Parliament's chief concern was the improvement of educational provision. If so, they have to stand charged with an inadequate historical perspective, rendering them only partially able to read the times and to prepare in some way for future change.

## 1.5. SUMMARY

i. The introductory ground-clearance for this study has attempted to show the long historical antecedents of the view that RE and ME were to be equated. This was partly because of the dominant role of the churches in English education and partly because this role was welcome to the public. While there were in existence alternate viewpoints on the RE/ME relationship, the two major challenges in the period 1870-1944 to the traditional viewpoint were unsuccessful in establishing themselves. The M.E.L., perhaps because of its hostility to RE, and the A.E.C., although neutral to RE, were not able to establish secular Moral Education or democratic Civics Education (respectively) in the State schools. Also, the provision of Board schools by the 1870 Education Act did not result in any widespread refusal to allow RE to operate in English schools, even though the Act had made this eventuality a possibility. The Second World War, encouraging the public to expect of the churches a strong moral lead, and the standing of Archbishop Temple as something of a 'people's Archbishop' were social factors which linked with Parliament's customary tendency to see in religion an influence for social control. The religious clauses of the 1944 Education Act, while being a political deal between Government and churches, were part of a wider social nexus which perpetuated the view that RE and ME were not only organically connected, but that that connection had valuable benefits to confer on the strengthening of democratic values. Actual church attendance statistics are not reliable guides to the nature of the country's acceptance of the view that RE and ME were to be equated.

ii. The religious clauses of the 1944 Education Act extended somewhat the pluralism of 1870 by adding to the categories of schools. They maintained the distinction between denominational and undenominational RE, but adopted the more pluralistic approach to the latter by envisaging substantial doctrinal content and by delivering agreement upon doctrine into the hands of Anglicans, Nonconformists, LEAs and teachers, by means of the Agreed Syllabus procedures. By preferring the term 'Religious Education' to 'Christian Education' the Act implied a pluralism which was not intended at the time, but which could justify later extension of RE content into World Religions, and even justify the according of Aided status to schools of non-Christian religions. Yet this pluralism was firmly kept within a monistic framework, in that the assumption was that, in the Maintained school, religious content would be Protestant Christianity, the Bible serving both as text-book and as the source of moral content.

iii. The study is now in a position to chart the course of RME from this forties' monism to the pluralism of the eighties. The fundamental question that will be asked during this exercise is this. What can be learned about the nature of RE and of ME, not only to ascertain how the relationship between the two has been viewed, but how a contemporary understanding of this relationship may be obtained, which does justice to both the religious and the secular in the context of pluralism?

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be given as the first or last lesson of the day.

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28. See: reference 26.

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31. Hansard, Commons, 397, column 1086.

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## CHAPTER TWO

## ECCLESIASTICAL MONISM: The Forties

### INTRODUCTION

i. This chapter will suggest that, although many at the time thought that a new period of advance and expansion was opening up for RME following the 1944 Education Act, the forties were in fact but part of the conclusion of the old era. This can partly be seen in the way the apologia for RME placed such reliance upon the concept of a Christian society, and in the absence from that apologia of any anticipation of social change which might render such reliance something of a liability. Even at the time it was not difficult to dismiss the whole notion of a Christian society as a cosmetic (1), even though Temple's influence on the country had been appreciable and had made towards engendering a national Christian self-consciousness (2). Nonetheless, it was still possible to take the view of the 1943 Youth Advisory Council's Report that a Christian civilisation was not one in which Christian belief was professed by all members, but one in which Christian belief set the tone for society as a whole. There was a sufficiently credible *prima facie* link between RME and the setting of society's 'tone' for this view to carry weight, especially with Parliament, at the time of the passing of the 1944 Education Act.

ii. To appeal to the 'is' of society is of course highly debateable as validly furnishing grounds for values. So if only in fairness it is necessary to point out that RME

possessed a developing philosophical rationale, in the tradition of Christian Platonism. Leeson and Temple will be examined for their contribution to this rationale to illustrate the sort of religio-moral principles to which they believed the 'is' of society must be brought to subscribe. Leeson attached importance to the concept of a Christian society and Temple saw democracy as derivative from Christianity. It is therefore of some interest to see what if anything such men could say about religious and moral plurality, and whether a Christian society could approach such plurality from the standpoint of plural<u>ism</u>.

iii. Particular attention will be paid to how RME theorists analysed the relationship between RE and ME, and it will be shown that the two were seen as in the closest of partnerships. It may be doubted if any thought was given to how ME was to be conducted if society were to disavow the desirability of close links between the two areas.

iv. In an endeavour to illustrate practice as well as principle, an indication will be given of the actualities of the school situation. For RME theorists did seem to posit some rather sweeping designs, without apparently asking hard questions as to whether there were sufficient resources of personnel and money to achieve these aims. It would seem necessary, therefore, to probe the classroom-realities of the time, to see whether the grand scheme of the theorists was realistically attuned to the actual situation. A look at an authority which was scrupulous in its duties of Agreed Syllabus production will also be included, as illustration of what could happen, given good-will, but not of what necessarily did happen generally.

## 2.1. THE CHURCHES' VIEWS ON RELIGIOUS AND MORAL EDUCATION

### 2.1.1. Christian Platonism

i. While the debate about the 1944 Education Act was taking place, Spencer Leeson delivered his Bampton Lectures which were published in book-form four years later (3). Basic to his thesis was the claim that the Platonic view of goodness had been personalised in the Christian conception of God, with the further claim that all human beings, as the children of God, were of equal value, to be redeemed from sin and brought to perfection by divine graces in the fellowship of the church. Nonconformists could concur. Education in this viewpoint was a proper task for Christian schools, and, therefore, if British schools were deemed to be Christian, a proper task for the Maintained as well as the Voluntary systems. Although Leeson was writing in the first instance for Anglicans, by his grounding of education on a particular view of Man he was able to come to shared belief not only with Free Churchmen, but also with non-Christians who saw individuality and personal development as educationally desirable. Leeson's highly realistic view of human nature, coupled with his vision of individual personal significance in the context of community, were relevant to the years of disciplined realism which were forced upon the nation, as it strove for economic recovery and social reconstruction. But it would have to be said that Leeson saw matters through the eyes of a public school ecclesiastic, and, though his book has been described as a 'fine' statement (4), he may have read too much into the Education Act when he hailed it as a declaration that Britain was a Christian society (5).

ii. Temple was akin to Leesen. Although he never wrote a dissertation on education, there can be no doubting his concern for this matter (6). His philosophy of education was of a piece with his theological outlook: holistic (7), grounded in Christian theism, and laying stress upon personality and personal relationships (8). He saw the crucial merit of democracy not to reside in the benefits of majority rule as in the construction of a socio-political situation which favoured personal development in all, by bringing people to share in responsible government (9). He not only regarded democracy as a Christian product, but also believed that the real meaning of personality had been safeguarded by democracy but revealed through Christianity, there being no word in Greek or Latin for personality. His view of revelation was dynamic (10), the experience of divine self-communication being more important than doctrinal construction. Hence, Man's full personal development could be reached only on a <u>continuum</u> between the temporal and the eternal (11), this involving him in a moral process, by which self-centredness was re-placed by God-centredness (12). Temple accepted the moral duality of Man's nature (13). So, while Man must learn to think for himself, and while his social environment must be conducive to his development of all his God-given powers, his supreme goal is that of eternal life which is a gift from God (14). It may be surmised, then, why Temple appeared to lay such stress upon redemption-theories as motivation to morality (15), and it may be noted how his views correspond to the <u>Year Book</u> articles to be considered shortly, in section 2.1.3.

iii. It is relevant to enquire into Temple's attitude to pluralism. His detestation of atomism (16) seemed to be held in tension with a deep acceptance of tolerance (17). But this seems to have been no more a tension than might be found in anyone who was concerned that democracy be prevented from running out into anarchy. He welcomed the scientific study of non-Christian religions, seeing this as a means by which the duty of reverence for other men's beliefs became necessary (18). But his conclusion about the relations between the religions was not pluralist. Although he recognised that no one tradition would command the adherence of everyone (19), he nevertheless advanced the 'shocking' proposal that unity was to be found in the Christian revelation (20), the implication being of a hierarchical ordering of the religions as part of the hierarchical ordering of the universe. School RE of the forties was in general agreement with this viewpoint, there being few, if any, pressures for RE theorists to enquire into the repercussions of such an outlook in a situation of racial diversity.

iv. Enough has been said of these two writers to indicate that RE in the forties could draw upon some sort of philosophical rationale for its justification, and that this rationale could be acceptable to a wider circle of people than regular churchgoers. Christian Platonism advocated the moral importance of education in promoting the common good, while maintaining its distinctive belief that social, emotional and intellectual training, though desirable, were inadequate to bring about social justice, unless divine help were sought and obtained. The position developed by Leeson and Temple was to encounter vigorous alternatives in due course. But a significant point emerges in that, while

any analysis of how the religious clauses of the 1944 Education Act came to be approved must give due allowance to social factors, it would seem facile to concentrate upon these factors as the paramount reasons for the country's acceptance of the religious provisions. Certainly it would be possible to argue that the religious clauses were a disguised imposition strategically drawn up by the churches at a time when the more repugnant aspects of that imposition would not be so socially recognisable. Yet, even so, the clauses would still have been the part-product of lengthy historical processes and would still have been able to derive legitimation from Christian Platonism. A truer view would seem to be that the country and Parliament had been brought to approval by argument and tradition, as well as by the particular socio-political circumstances brought on by the Second World War, and by the need for a deal with the churches to facilitate educational advance.

## 2.1.2. The Agreed Syllabuses

i. Although the Syllabuses were formed by bodies more widely representative than the churches, it seems fair to describe them as primarily ecclesiastical documents (21). But it may be a little unfair to describe them as meetimg only the needs of churchmen. For the word 'need' denotes a very uncertain notion when considered in its social, as distinct from its biological, aspects. An understanding of it in this category will inevitably vary with fashions in socio-political theory. The Syllabuses assumed that children were in principle religious which meant that in Britain for practical purposes they were

Christian, as was society. They could therefore be expected to respond to RE, and, given the right teaching and atmosphere, would come to love and study the Bible as the Syllabus-compilers apparently did. This would lead them to accept its message and take their places in a church congregation. Such a view was challengeable on psychological grounds, for 'need' expressed in these terms might be no more than a projection upon children of adult preferences. It was also challengeable on practical grounds, in view of the heavy demands that the Syllabuses made upon teachers of RE, many of whom were lacking in theological training, or, for that matter, in any form of training specifically related to RE teaching. Again, and ironically, it might also be challengeable on scriptural grounds (22). However, teachers were to be represented on the Syllabus-forming bodies, and though the prestigious scholarship that went into a Syllabus like that of Cambridge and the necessity to reach unanimity might have combined to reduce disagreement, teacher-associations and local authorities did have the chance to speak up for actual children.

ii. Hull has made available some salient facts about the history of the Agreed Syllabuses (23). While not being able to point to any one document as the first Syllabus of modern times, he singled out Cambridge (1924) as influential, although later than the West Riding (24). The Cambridge (1949) Syllabus is briefly appraised later (25), of particular note being the consideration given to the viewpoints, relevant to this thesis and found in its Introduction, that Christianity is the root and ground of democracy, and that morality is such that of their natures the two areas of morality and

religion are inseparably connected. A comparison of that Syllabus with those of Sunderland (1944), Surrey (1945) and the West Riding (1947) would illustrate and corroborate Hull's claim that the philosophy of RE, from about this time onwards, resided in the propositions that the school was a Christian community, that RE was intended as a means of bringing about Christian discipleship, that RE could only therefore be given by Christians, and that in assembly the school was engaged in the worship of God (26).

iii. The question that obtrudes, therefore, is whether the churches were being realistic in having such confessional aims. Three points may be made in reply. First, such aims could hardly have evolved without a wider social endorsement than that confined to church-goers. Second, RE was not the only educational area to be invested with large aspirations. In the immediate post-war era a great deal of euphoric rhetoric was generated about the social benefits which a reconstructed educational system was to bring. Third, although Leeson and Temple may be regarded as definitive, the advocacy of RE as Christian education was taken up by educationists (27) as well as churchmen, especially by no less a protagonist than Professor Jeffreys (28). It is not only valid to regard the term Christian education as a tradition (29), but also to see it as without a serious rival. The aim of RE, as the churches saw it to be, had to be ambitious, for what was contemplated was education _sub specie aeternitatis_, interpreted not in the narrow sense as life-denying, but in the broad sense as both life-affirming and heaven-affirming. The schools were seen as part of God's redeeming purpose in society as the Kingdom of God

was brought about on a national scale. This vision, although lofty and utopian, was nevertheless maintained in conjunction with a realistic belief that society was far-gone in secularisation, and that children were growing up surrounded by influences which militated against their acceptance of Christianity. It is probably safe to presume that this vision became a source of inspiration and hope to teachers generally, at a time when some such vision was needed rather urgently. Otherwise it is difficult to explain why serious attacks were not made upon Christian education, and alternative views were not pressed, at least in the forties. Essentially it was a call to build, with the hope that something worthwhile would be achieved.

iv. Yet when all such allowances have been made the criticism would still stand that the churches made a dubious assumption in seeing the country's children as Christian, if only in principle. This assumption led to the presentation of Christianity in a 'believing community' manner, rather than in the 'witnessing' manner seemingly enjoined by the New Testament, and such an approach could arouse hostilities and resentments. It also could foster the ignoring of psychological findings about child-development, and could make it probable that little attention would be paid to the problem as to how Moral Education was to be effectively conducted among children for whom the religious dynamic for a religiously based ME to succeed was at best meaningless, at worst ridiculous.

## 2.1.3. The Year Book of Education, 1951

i. This publication examined ME on a world-scale (30), and grew out of a concern that Moral Education should be positive

and effective. The editors brought together religious and secular viewpoints in a volume of nearly seven hundred pages and more than forty contributors. It was forward-looking in its acceptance of pluralism, and in its search for an ME that would be broader than a religiously based approach. But it is noticeable that the religious writers did not appear to be aware of the problem as to how their theories might be applied to a secular, plural situation.

ii. The editors attempted to narrow the gap between secularists and religious believers, by maintaining that the necessity for a universally valid and acceptable moral code was recognised by all religious and secular philosophers (31). This was surely a little too complacent in the face of relativism, even though endeavouring to show how a meeting point might exist between 'revelation' and 'reason', especially in the 'do as you would be done by' of the Sermon on the Mount. Was it also a little superficial, in that the point may reside not in any correspondence between religious and secular moral principles, but in the way such principles are translated into action? The religious writers were united in believing in the need for 'grace' to facilitate moral behaviour, and this assumption might be more of a stumbling block to secularists than the assumption of revelation. Dewar, for instance, was unambiguous in asserting that the attainment of Christian standards is possible only by the 'supernatural assistance' of God (32).

iii. Dewar, as an Anglican, and Yeaxlee, writing for the Nonconformists (33), are those contributors most immediately relevant to forties' RE in England. Dewar

links with D'Arcy, a Roman Catholic (34), especially in D'Arcy's stress upon grace, and upon the 'underground connections' between Christian doctrine and Christian morals that could, it is averred, be severed only at the expense of the latter. But there is a suggestion in D'Arcy that a rapprochement between secular and religious viewpoints might be realistically implemented by mutual appeal to reason. Yeaxlee's article, while being a most impressive sketch of the historical background to the uniquely English situation by which educational provision grew out of church provision, is rather thin as a statement of Free Church teaching about ME (35). However, the Free Churches did not see 'undenominational' teaching as undoctrinal teaching, provided that explicitly Anglican tenets were debarred, and it may be assumed that the unanimity given by the Syllabus Conferences indicated a strong measure of concurrence about doctrine between Anglicans and Free Churchmen during the forties (36). The statements about sin, grace, salvation, moral knowledge, absolute standards, personalism and inwardness, as expounded in the various religious articles, would have been endorsed by Free Churchmen as comparable to the 'undenominational' Bible-teaching for which they were such strong proponents. In particular, all would have been united on the claim that ME depended for its content, dynamic and authority upon RE.

iv. A feature of the Year Book which calls for comment is the paucity of the material from Britain from which might be built up a proposal for secular Moral Education. Farrington might have been expected to develop the concept of secular ME, but he does little more than nominate

History as a basis for such an ME (37). That a British psychologist was a contributor was an indicator of things to come, but Rickman's article is so Freudian (38) that its significance for the secular ME which was on the way may be questioned, in view of the absence of Freudian theory from the seventies' ME curriculum-development (39). Loeb, similarly, anticipated the role that sociologists might be called upon to play in developing the concept of ME, but he was writing from America. None of these writers seemed particularly sure as to how ME should be conceptualised, structured and implemented, whereas the religious writers appeared quite sure of themselves on these points. Yet Piddington was to sound a warning to the latter group about the difficulties of inducting children of advanced industrial societies into a single moral content (40). The very certainty which the religious writers showed on what they believed to be moral content perhaps made the secular writers appear inadequate. For a clearly delineated body of agreed moral knowledge means that, at least, ME leaves children in no doubt as to what is considered right and what wrong. If this fixed content has to be surrendered then ME risks appearing a somewhat nebulous and ineffective exercise. Yet, on the other hand, a certainty which is unable to handle change and moral diversity may be, in the end, ineffective in both fact and appearance.

v. Bearing in mind that the Year Book articles were not official church statements, they can be taken as indicators of the central elements of the churches' approach to ME in the forties. But they are also indicators, by the same token, of the central areas of objection which might be raised against a religious-Christian base to ME. The perfectionism, necessitating a reliance upon 'grace', the appeal to authority and the difficulty of applying high-level generalities not to simple but

to complex, and perhaps novel moral dilemmas might appear a denigration of personal freedom. Statements about original sin and human accountability to God, however moderate, might cause impatience in an increasingly anthropocentric society. Declining belief in God would seem to reduce the force of divine sanction. Gains in epistemological status by empirically based knowledge would be at the expense of 'knowledge' purporting to come from a body of traditional wisdom, the validation of which could only be problematic on empirical criteria. On the other hand, though, there were aspects of Christian RME which had survival-value beyond the forties. The valuing of individuality in community and the importance of inner motivation towards moral behaviour were notions capable of secularisation while retaining a religious appearance. Also, the personalisation of morality by which rule-keeping became secondary to a believed relationship with God, was congenial to subsequent emphases upon personal relationships and situational approaches, aimed at perceiving other people's needs and feelings. In addition, those writers who were most to advocate the use of reason in moral judgements and behaviours were usually ready to acknowledge the affinities of this stance with the moral universals of Christianity. In such ways the churches' concept of ME was to some extent equipped to cope with the changes of outlook and consciousness which were on the way. But in so far as the churches felt obliged to insist that RE and ME were coterminous, then the way ahead was fraught with very grave obstacles. In the forties, almost all the signs were that the churches would so insist.

## 2.2. ACTUALITIES AND REALITIES

### 2.2.1. Religious Pluralism

i. Although the topic of World Religions was not totally ignored in forties' RE, the typical approach was that adopted by the Durham Syllabus, begun in 1938, published in 1946. The course on the Comparative Study of World Religions was a simplified, and at times slightly misleading (41) study for sixth-formers, which, while seeking out the goodness in non-Christian faiths, interpreted religious phenomena as unitary under a christological criterion. As early as 1943, Hilliard had called for the inclusion in RE of the 'history of the other great living religions of mankind' (42), giving as his reasons that there was a growing interest among boys and girls as well as adults in these matters, that theologians' attitudes to other religions were changing and that there was a new self-consciousness among the non-Christian religions themselves. It was also 'generally agreed', he claimed, that education must foster understanding of eastern peoples. But he, too, restricted his suggestions to sixth-formers, and advocated only a historical approach. Robinson confined himself even further, addressing himself mainly to teachers but allowing that it might be possible to take up the study of World Religions in special classes among sixth-formers, this being 'probably the utmost that can ever be allotted to express teaching about it' (43). A small survey was conducted in an emergency training college among 350 male students, asking if they would prefer sympathetic teaching of the tenets of the main world religions, rather than the usual concentration on Christianity (44). There were 280 replies, the average age of those replying being 33 years. 44% replied Yes, 44% replied No, 12% were undecided. Some

evidence is forthcoming of an interest among pupils and teachers in the study of World Religions (45).

ii. Another voice was raised on the topic of World Religions, this time from the Rationalist Press Association. The following appeared in the advertisement columns of the T.E.S. under the title 'The Aims of Education'.

> 'It is generally agreed that the aim of education is to bring out the best in the individual by encouraging him to think intelligently, and to act wisely in making full use of his natural gifts. As a rule the subjects in schools do much to further this aim, but there is one exception and that is Religion.
>
> There is no real reason for this exception. Religion of one kind or another has always occupied the minds of good and thoughtful people in every country and has influenced the whole story of civilization. The simple truths of these religions are therefore well worth teaching to children, who can thereby gain a wealth of knowledge that has accumulated through the ages, and which they can think over.
>
> This instruction will be most beneficial if each child, in his own way, is allowed to glean from these varied sources certain ideas and values which may help and inspire him as they have helped and inspired others.
>
> In that way Religion can be as educational as any subject' (46).

This is a moderate statement, and it is tempting to read Huxley between the lines (47). It is a very early advocacy of what later came to be dubbed the 'supermarket' approach to multi-faith RE, although it should be noted that the grounds of its advocacy are those of the benefits to the individual child, rather than of fairness to the religions. There is a central point of divergence here from the prevailing church theory of education, which was a theory of the individual in community, rather than a theory of child-centredness, or even a theory of instruction. But the R.P.A. were making a plea for individualism, without apparently having considered just what was meant by the 'simple truths'

of religion. For there could be few organisations more aware of the debateable nature of the 'truths' of religion than the R.P.A. and in later decades the R.P.A could be expected to argue that an RE which 'taught the simple truths of religions' was one which might damage the integrity and individiduality of the child.

iii. But this statement does anticipate later pluralism, in its realisation of the possible human significance of religion and the importance of acquainting schoolchildren with a wide range of religious phenonmena. Perhaps therefore the remark about the 'simple truths' was an indication that pluralists had to tread carefully at the time and give due allowance to the supposed benefits of inducting into religion. But pluralism was being given a voice, if not official recognition (48).

iv. As something of a footnote to this section, it is interesting to compare a review of Pike's Faiths in Many Lands with a review of Storr's Many Creeds, One Cross. Pike's was described as 'a dangerous book' because of the allegedly reduced stature given to Christianity. But Storr was 'a sound guide' because his standpoint was that of Christian interpretation (49).

## 2.2.2. Moral Pluralism

i. There was no strong and orchestrated pressure for secular ME, even though there was some activity from the Secular Education League (50). It is possible however that some RE was in fact secular ME with sufficient reference to the Bible to make it appear Religious Education. While it cannot

be ascertained how far Freeman's position was implemented, he nevertheless published the view that the Christian ethic was able to stand on its own, separated from Christian theological speculations, and might carry greater credibility if it were to do so (51). Also, school courses which adopted a secular philosophical rather than a religious approach to human problems might have multiplied (52). There was among RE personnel an awareness of the conflict of standards between those for which the school was striving and those found in the world outside (53). Also, a religious morality seemed, at that time, to be unavoidably committed to absolute standards. While Lord Samuel believed that many people not attached to religion were coming to see the unfortunate social effects of the decline of faith (54), and while the Prime Minister might believe that a re-affirmation of absolute moral standards was urgently needed (55), there seemed to be in process that rejection of absolutes which was to become such an important feature in the later history of RME.

ii. The plea for moral pluralism by the C.A.C.E. is doubly interesting in that such a body should consider RME as a proper part of its involvement and that it should recommend a somewhat different position from the Agreed Syllabuses. It maintained that children be given the opportunity to appraise <u>each</u> thread of the nation's tradition, in the context of intellectual freedom (56). Of these threads, the Christian, the classical and the scientific, it was science which for many people had 'eclipsed both the Christian and the classical lights' (57), the report urged. Yeaxlee objected to the proposed tripartite base to morals. He wrote an editorial complaining that the Government had not kept control of C.A.C.E.,

and predicting that the chapter of the C.A.C.E.'s report dealing with 'The Moral Factor' would die the death of the weak and futile in the face of the 'virility, the breadth, the spirit of conviction and the realism, educational and otherwise, manifest in the new London syllabus, the revised Surrey, Middlesex and Lancaster, to mention only the most recent' (58). But the challenge from science was to increase, and so long as it seemed credible that science could generate human values, the former absolutes of religion could with apparent safety be nudged to the museum. The report noted that a 'greatly increased moral perplexity and confusion' was a characteristic feature of the times, but no programme was suggested as to how this confusion could be counteracted.

iii. It was during the period 1945-50 that the A.E.C. achieved its greatest success, only to disappear in the fifties. Although during the War Norwood had specifically rejected the idea of explicit and direct education for citizenship, McNair did recommend it as a separate and compulsory subject for student teachers. However, the Association was not consulted over the production of the White Paper, Educational Reconstruction. After the War Attlee became a vice-president of the Association, and Wilkinson, Minister of Education, had shown interest by accepting an invitation to speak at the 1946 A.G.M., and by setting some of her staff to look into the matter of Citizenship as a school subject. The Association was ready with recommendations (59) but encountered no more recognition than a footnote on page 42 of the Ministry's Pamphlet 16, Citizens Growing Up, 1949. Although the pamphlet spoke of a growing feeling in the country that education in

citizenship was necessary, and acknowledged its indebtedness to A.E.C. publications, it is doubtful if the Association made much of a mark on either the Ministry or the schools. It reached a peak in 1950, diminishing to its closure in October 1957. Its membership had never reached more than four hundred.

iv. Whitmarsh has drawn attention to a 1948 Thesis, which concluded that, after research in 219 schools, there was found broad agreement about the desirability of Citizenship as a subject, but that in practice it was rarely offered (60). While Whitmarsh produced an admirable study of the Association, it is an omission that he showed no interest in any possible relationship there may have been between Citizenship Education and RE. For it seems very likely that the lukewarmness shown to the Association can be partly accounted for by RE's having won to itself the accredited place as curriculum-vehicle for education in democracy, in partnership with History. Even had Simon and Hubback remained vigorous campaigners into the fifties, it would seem unlikely that RE's place would have been taken over by the newcomer. There might have been a future for the A.E.C. were it to have linked up with the Association for Education in World Citizenship, though this would probably have turned out to be absorption into a larger body. Yet the inauguration of the A.E.W.C. was itself an indication of a trend away from parochialism in education towards the pluralism of a world-context. RME was to become involved in this very trend, which was to become a factor both in the re-definition of aims and in the appreciation of how RE and ME related to each other.

2.2.3. Classroom-RE

i. So far attention has largely been placed upon theoretical issues, particularly upon the religio-moral theories underlying RME immediately subsequent to the passing of the 1944 Education Act. It is also part of this study to look at the actual working of the Act in the authorities. Of special interest is the question whether the teaching body as a whole was prepared to follow the lead given by the churches. Anglicanism had again been accorded privilege, but this was now a shared privilege with the Nonconformists. It was also exercised in a manner rather removed from that revealed in the celebrated 1837 clerical remark to Wilderspin (61). If co-operation was now the keynote (62), to what extent did this work out at grassroot-level?

ii. The correspondent to The Times in 1940 suggested that there was a reluctance on the part of the teaching profession to christianise youth (63). The Mass Observation Poll of 1944 seemed to substantiate this viewpoint, for, although a figure of 90% was arrived at in this survey to indicate teachers in favour of State school RE, this poll also indicated a strong reaction against the dual system, and against denominational teaching, with a corresponding preference for teaching the subject of The Comparative Study of Religion (64). Something may perhaps be surmised from the choice of topic upon which Mr. John Maud, Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Education, spoke at a meeting of the Institute of Christian Education, in King's College, London, in December 1945. His address was on how

a Christian should operate in an educational *milieu* not explicitly Christian (65). A suggestive comparison might be drawn between the inaugural speech of Sir Walter Moberly, as President of the I.C.E., in April 1946, when he talked optimistically of the religious base now avowed in education (66), and his address to the I.C.E., in January 1949, during the Conference of Educational Associations, also held at King's. On that occasion he spoke on the subject 'How far can our Education be Christian?' (67). In 1946 he spoke of overseas' observers being able to hope that England might yet become a Christian community fulfilling a world-mission. In 1949 he referred to the many teachers perplexed as to whether it was justifiable to give Christian teaching in the schools, when society no longer shared a common belief in Christianity. The N.U.T. affirmed in July 1945 the 'necessity' for each child in the country to become familiar with the Bible, and the 'need' for moral and spiritual training to be based on the principles and standards of Christianity (68). But this was in a joint production of the churches, the teachers and the local authorities, in the manner of the Agreed Syllabuses, and may therefore reflect primarily RE teacher-opinion, and early opinion at that, rather than signify any wider readiness by teachers generally to support its provisions in a positive manner.

iii. It is very probable that, while there may have been little widespread enthusiasm for explicitly religious Christianity, implicitly Christian assumptions were tolerated, if not actually welcomed. A series of articles in the *T.E.S.* opened by specifying that the Christian assumption, that Man was a created being with a potential as a child of God, would be basic to the argument (69). No disapproval was registered

in the correspondence-columns, and there were no articles counter-attacking. How far this acquiescence may have contained an element of the merely polite is impossible to say, but at least there was acquiescence. The Curtis Report (70) may be a pointer to the nature of this acquiescence, however. For, while making an acknowledgement of the religious inspiration that sustained much child-care work, it nevertheless omitted any suggested scheme for Religious Education for deprived children, and went so far as to allege an occasional link between low standards of caring and of education and a concern for the religious training of both staff and children. There was a call by six members of the committee for an improved and strengthened emphasis upon RE. But this might have been a microcosm of the general situation: a minority trying to take the majority further than they really wished to go.

iv. An examination of the reporting of RE during the period 1945-50 would strengthen the belief that there was a serious gap between the hopeful words of the Syllabuses and the actuality of the schools' situation. Basic to this reporting was the refrain that, for many children and young people, the only contact they would have with the church and its teaching was through school RE, and this contact was so beset with disadvantages as to make it unreliable in bringing pupils to an intelligent acceptance of Christianity. The reporting is not all gloomy(71), but gloom is to be encountered. Both the National Association of Boys' Clubs and of Girls' Clubs spoke of widespread ignorance of the Bible and of Christianity among adolescents leaving school (72). The Secretary of the Schools Council of the Student Christian Movement, after reporting intellectual curiosity about Christianity among

sixth-formers, went on to say that 'The complacent statement, that people may find it difficult to believe in Christianity but will always love Jesus, is certainly untrue in the sixth form' (73). Yeaxlee bemoaned in 1950 that the startling fact was that far fewer children than people realised possessed Bibles of their own, and in far fewer homes than most liked to think no copy was to be found (74). Two extended quotations from this period indicate the disquiet that some felt about the situation, and point to weaknesses brought on in a system that depended upon statute for its maintenance.

> 'One thing is certain. If the Scripture lessons are unrelated to anything else in school life they will achieve very little. Criticisms of such lessons were produced lately by a group of girls in their School Certificate year - a specially good group, likely to secure distinguished results. They said: "It seems as if the Scripture lessons were thrown in for decency's sake; nobody seems to think they really count for anything." This is difficult to refute. In most secondary schools examination subjects have anything from three to five periods per week, Scripture one; hours of preparation are expected for other subjects, little or none for Scripture. Rehearsals for shows, the measuring of feet, the collection of subscriptions, and other such projects are pushed into the Scripture period so as not to "waste time".
>
> In some schools the same attitude is reflected in the conduct of morning prayers. On days when prayers are offered Bible readings are cut out, long hymns are abridged by the omission of verses, and so on. It is the same in the library. The science, sociology, fiction and other sections will be regularly enlarged, new books of high quality and recent publication being bought, while the religious section is either non-existent or miserably out of date. It is often recognised that Scripture is a suitable subject for duds who can't cope with School Certificate maths, but not at all the thing for good candidates' (75).

While this quotation might be criticised as coming from a limited school experience, as well as being impressionistic, the next excerpt, while being also impressionistic, comes nevertheless from a writer able to lay claim to a certain width of school experience.

> 'Judged by almost any standards the Scripture teaching in our schools in the last thirty or forty years has not been a success. The blunt truth has to be stated that Scripture was the Cinderella of the curriculum and that, with some outstanding exceptions, it was badly taught. Thousands of boys and girls left school little better than pagans, in spite of the fact that most of them had supposedly received religious instruction every morning of their school lives.... It is now more than four years since the Act became law, yet in many primary schools the religious instruction period is still the first period of the morning with consequent serious inroads into the time available. In such schools all the staff, of necessity, teach the subject whatever their beliefs may be. The existence of the extended conscience clause seems not to be commonly known and to be rarely implemented. Agreed Syllabuses are being produced in no more than a slow trickle, though printing difficulties rather than indifference may be the explanation in this case. Authorities are slow to adopt existing syllabuses, and many schools are still using totally inadequate syllabuses as the basis for whatever religious instruction is given. Moreover few authorities have considered the setting up of a religious advisory council sufficiently important to warrant the trouble of convening one' (76).

It seems that RE could draw to itself fine-sounding speeches, but was often not accorded the expertise and resources which would give it the chance to make headway (77).

v. Although it was not until the fifties that a major, systematic project was in a position to report upon the actualities of statutory RE, a piece of small-scale research emerged in the forties which is of interest for the conclusions drawn, these being anticipatory of some later sixties' research. Sandhurst held discussions with nearly five thousand men about the evidences for Christianity (78), concluding that they had encountered an 'extraordinary' lack of integration or correlation between religion and life, a statement significantly resembling Goldman's criticisms in the sixties (79). When he applied a <u>questionnaire</u> about school RE to a company of Boy-soldiers, he found that 22 described RE as 'useless', 10 as making use of objectionable methods, and only 8 as 'fairly good', and 9 as 'excellent'. Sandhurst believed that the apparent indifference towards

Christianity was superficial, to be accounted for by ignorance rather than by hostility, and to be remedied by better teaching. Again, he was anticipatory of the sixties.

vi. Another piece of research to come out of the forties threw light upon the attitudes of parents and schoolchildren towards religion, with some investigation of attitudes to RE. It also paid some attention towards teachers' attitudes, but this was a very small part of the scheme and not, unfortunately for this study, dealing with the relationship between RE and ME. Moreton circulated a questionnaire to 1400 people in 1944, receiving replies from 258 males and 156 females, of various occupations, of probably above-average intelligence, and of ages ranging from 17 to 77 (80). He found that, although the great majority seldom or never attended church, their attitude to religion was distinctly less unfavourable than their attitude to church. Most of them advocated undenominational teaching of religion in schools, with a marked preference being shown to the teaching of many religions. Replies from adolescents were similar to those from adults, but not tending to be so favourable to religion.

vii. It is interesting to note that Moreton suggested that 'loss of faith' might be accounted for by the failure of schools and churches to make allowance for the psychological development of children so encouraging a 'fixation' at an immature emotional or intellectual level. This was to be one of Goldman's major contentions, as will be seen later (81). A further point of interest is that Moreton also suggested that RE might benefit from an investigation of those schools which could be counted to be successful in their religious

teaching - a suggestion to be picked up later by both Loukes (82) and Alves (83). He sounded a caution against literalist Bible-teaching, finding very little belief in the literal inspiration of the Bible, and prophesying that the majority of those taught a 'fundamentalist doctrine' would in due course throw the whole away.

viii. A further piece of evidence should be noted, in the form of the Ministry of Education's 1948 Report (84). This statement was realistic, in that it was frank about the infringements that could be made upon RE, mentioning the encroachments of administration, registration and the drying of wet clothes, upon the first period of the day. However, the report was also optimistic, in that it spoke of advance in Religious Instruction, albeit 'patchy', and mentioned the encouraging responses which had been made by the training colleges. The general conclusion reached was that a start had in fact been madein realising the aims of the 1944 Education Act, but that there was still more to be done.

2.2.4. In-service Training

i. The production of good RE teachers, qualified with more than good intentions, was a major problem for many years (85). This problem was appreciated by the Ministry. As early as 1941 the Board of Education had encouraged the provision of courses in Religious Knowledge for teachers (86). In the immediate post-war years in-service courses were mounted for teachers of RE by University Institutes of Education, by LEAs, by churches and by the N.U.T. But perhaps it was the Institute of Christian Education which responded with the greatest sustained resolve to the challenge of in-service training (87).

ii. The idea of the I.C.E. originated mainly in the mind of Canon Tissington Tatlow in the early thirties, although a request in 1925 by some British teachers in India for a body to unite like-minded members of the profession had spurred the Student Christian Movement to consider the matter. The idea took shape at a conference on Christian Education in 1931 and was enthusiastically pursued by Temple when he was Archbishop of York. He chaired an exploratory committee from 1932-35, and became the first president upon the I.C.E.'s inauguration in October 1935 in Westminster School Hall. An already existing Association of Religious Knowledge Teachers was absorbed into the venture. Tatlow became the honorary director, with headquarters in London.

iii. The work of the Institute was diverse. There was an advisory service from the London office, which also housed a library. Local associations throughout the country were affiliated to the central body, there being 8 in 1939, and 35 in 1945. Committees for library, research, literature and overseas' concerns met regularly. One of the Institute's publications, a pamphlet called Suggestions for a Syllabus of Religious Instruction, was consulted by a number of Syllabus-compilers, and was explicitly acknowledged by Gloucester. The Welsh association produced a Syllabus which was adopted by most Welsh LEAs. The Institute was linked both to the British Council of Churches and to the Student Christian Movement, contributing several columns of information to each issue of that movement's magazine Religion in Education. Tatlow endeavoured to keep the Institute's contribution to RE before the attention of the educational public. Eventually the I.C.E. was to merge with the S.C.M. in 1956 to become the Christian Education Movement, a body still active today.

iv. Tatlow regularly organised RE courses for teachers. They formed a regular pattern, closely geared to the teaching of Agreed Syllabus RE. A typical course would be built around a series of main lectures by distinguished church scholars on biblical topics, with one or two methods-related lectures by lay-people, and discussion-groups led by a mix of clerics and lay-persons. Sometimes the courses carried joint sponsorship with the Board/Ministry of Education, twelve such being held between 1942 and 1949. Courses were also organised for training-college staff, for teachers during school hours, at the request of their LEAs, and for personnel involved in Syllabus-making.

### 2.2.5. An Example of Syllabus-making (88)

i. An authority which can fairly be described as one which took seriously its legal responsibilities was that of Derbyshire. The following account of how it formed its RE Syllabus will throw light upon issues wider than those of that county. This is not being put forward as a typical account of Syllabus-making. It is an indication of the mechanics of RE at the time in an authority which was at pains to make the procedures yield useful results for the schools.

ii. At a special meeting of the Derbyshire Religious Instruction Sub-committee in January 1939 it was resolved to recommend the revised Cambridge Syllabus for use in the county's Provided and Non-provided schools. This led to a fairly widespread, but by no means universal, adoption of this Syllabus throughout the county. When in 1944 the Derbyshire Director of Education, Mr. W.G.Briggs, was faced with the task of calling a Conference to agree upon an R.I.

Syllabus in compliance with the Fifth Schedule of the Education Act, he could have expected the Cambridge Syllabus to have been known and generally approved of throughout his constituency, to the extent of its being acceptable at least as a temporary measure. He therefore proposed this Syllabus as an interim-arrangement to last until the Act's deadline, 1.4.45. The organisation could then be set up for unhurried arrangements leading to a Derbyshire Syllabus. Briggs' anxiety to avoid the hasty arrangements that might lead to an unsatisfactory final production, stemmed from the fact that the machinery for Syllabus-formation envisaged by the Act was an innovation for Derbyshire, unlike the position in the West Riding and in Surrey.

iii. Briggs' first task, as he saw it, was to consult with the county's grammar school headteachers about a point which might have escaped the Ministry, namely that pre-war Syllabuses did not cater very fully for post-certificate pupils, so necessitating the immediate production of suitable material for this age-group by the April deadline. Briggs, actually, doubted if this were possible, and was counting on there being enough material in the Cambridge Syllabus as a temporary expedient for the sixth-form, availing himself of Section 114, Sub-section 4, which allowed the adoption of a Syllabus already in operation, without Conference approval, provided that the full Conference procedure had been followed by 1.4.47. He wrote to his opposite numbers in Cambridge (H. Morris), in the West Riding (A.L. Binns) and in Surrey (R. Beloe) asking each what he was going to do about the post-certificate problem. Morris replied that the point had escaped him but that the machinery was available to produce such material with relative ease. Binns replied to say that no decision had yet been

made on post-certificate work but that there had been much discussion with secondary headteachers. Beloe's letter (presumably he replied) has been lost.

iv. Briggs then wrote to his divisional education officers, asking for information about Syllabus-use in their areas. Chesterfield and Glossop reported extensive use of the Cambridge Syllabus, Buxton reported that this Syllabus had been adopted by the committee but that it was used in only a few schools, while Ilkeston reported objections to the Cambridge Syllabus, each head constructing his or her own. Scorer of Ilkeston drew attention to the newly produced Sunderland Syllabus, in which he had shared in the planning and writing, and pronounced it better for the 'average' teacher than that of Cambridge. Briggs called Scorer to meet him for a discussion, the latter agreeing to return to his committee to ask for a resolution in favour of Cambridge. But the committee in the event adopted Sunderland's Syllabus, and Briggs had to accept this decision.

v. There is an interesting letter dated 20.3.45 from the Heanor and District Free Church Federal Council, in which information was supplied to Briggs about a sub-committee that had been formed specifically in anticipation of the setting-up of a County Syllabus Conference, and in which a 'readiness to assist the Education Authority in that part of the act that pertains to the Committee' was intimated. Briggs replied courteously a week later. Such prodding, if prodding were intended, was quite unnecessary in his case. The first Conference meeting was held in January 1946 in which a sub-committee was formed with the double brief: 'to consider the aims of religious education in schools and in the light of those aims to consider various syllabuses of religious instruction

including the <u>National Basic Outline of Religious Instruction</u>'. Minutes 3060 and 3061 (27.3.47) accepted the recommendation that the Cambridge Syllabus continue for another year (the Sunderland Syllabus in Ilkeston), supplemented by approved material for pupils over 15, and that Conference be authorised to continue in office with a view to recommending a substitution for the Cambridge Syllabus as soon as possible. Minute 3062 accepted a previous recommendation (30.4.46) that a Standing Advisory Council be formed.

vi. The Council was composed of 3 representatives from the authority, 3 from the diocese, 3 from the F.C.F.C., and 6 from the teachers' associations (4 nominated by the Derbyshire Association of Teachers and 2 by the Joint Four Secondary Associations). It became known as S.A.C.R.E.D. (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education in Derbyshire), and met in unbroken succession through to 23.9.62, with meetings each year except 1950, and with the customary cluster of sub-committees. The following Syllabus material was adopted, 1.3.48.

1. The primary section of the Surrey Syllabus.
2. Some sections of the secondary Surrey material, <u>viz</u>.,
   Course 2 for first-year pupils,
   Course 3 for second-year pupils,
   Course 5(a) (i) and parts of (b) and (c) of Course 1 for third-year pupils.
3. The Derbyshire Supplement, for pupils of over-15 years, for pupils of the fourth-year and thereafter.
4. The bibliography from the Surrey Syllabus.
5. The following sections from the Surrey Syllabus were also issued as Aids to Teachers.
   Course 1(a) (i),
   Part IV,
   Appendices II and III.

vii. The foregoing paragraphs illustrate something of the

variety, inter-dependence and co-operation that existed in the Agreed Syllabus scene. It cannot, however, be claimed that the punctilliousness shown by Briggs in complying with his legal obligations was to have been found as a norm in LEAs generally. Where there was more than a nominal acceptance of responsibility by an authority, then there was never any doubt that the churches and the teachers would amicably work together with resolve to produce a Syllabus which they believed served the needs of their particular areas. This creative response to the Education Act was not restricted to Syllabus-formation, it should be noted, for Derbyshire was also active in the production of additional documents as aids for both primary and secondary teachers. In this further output the I.C.E. gave welcome aid, Yeaxlee himself being in touch with the Director of Education, and the minutes of S.A.C.R.E.D.(28.9.54) recording a resolution to pay an annual honorarium of ten guineas to the I.C.E. 'in view of the great help given by the Institute towards the teaching of religious knowledge in Derbyshire schools'. The council also promoted the mounting of regular in-service courses in RE for Derbyshire teachers.

viii. As a closing comment to this section, and one which relates directly to the central theme of this study, it is interesting to note that Derbyshire believed itself to be operating an RE which was fully in tandem with socio-moral education. The statement of aim which came to be included in the eventual Syllabus, saw the socio-moral and the religious as complementary to each other (89). The complementarity intended was not defined, but the implication was that it involved interaction rather than independent, parallel exercises.

## 2.3. THE RE/ME RELATIONSHIP

i. The central feature of the forties' view of the RE/ME relationship was that morals were the product of religion and that a decline in religion could only be a prelude to a decline in morality. Various writers were to claim that Christian morality could exist only as a concomitant of Christian faith (90). Such a view was justified if arguing from the premises of Christian Platonism. But there may also have been other more pragmatic reasons why such a view might have seemed particularly appropriate to maintain at the time. For it must have appeared good sense to urge the indispensability of the Christian religion to the concept of Christian citizenship when the latter concept carried general approval. At least therefore it might have been a tactical weakness for the churches to have allowed morality its autonomy, at a time when few people might have been expected to see the point of such a move, or even to have agreed were they to have seen the point. Hence RME, undifferentiated and inter-dependent, might have appeared the more viable alternative to an autonomous RE and an autonomous ME because of the practical benefits each gave the other, quite apart from more philosophical considerations. But to equate RE and ME was to make RME vulnerable on two counts. First, if moral behaviour were not in the event forthcoming, the churches could be indicted for believed moral decay. Second, to place 'indispensable grace' at the centre of the religio-moral theories underlying RME was to invest with great importance a very debateable notion. The 'good' atheist and the 'bad' religious believer both cast doubt upon the idea and suggested the theories to be unsound. Perhaps the experience of 'grace'

could be unconscious, undergone by people without their realising that it was taking place. Nonetheless if the concepts necessary to the experience were to fade from public consciousness, this could only contribute further to a loss of confidence in the theories underlying the experience. The first point may be illustrated at its simplest by a correspondent to the T.E.S. who asked why, after fifteen years of RE, the juvenile delinquency-rate was going up (91). The second point may be illustrated by the concern shown by some theologians that the concept of God was dying off for large numbers of people (92).

ii. The chief advantage of an undifferentiated RME, enclosed in the context of Christianity, was that the decision as to which moral content was to be adopted had been made in favour of clear moral rules, in the Ten Commandments, and of *agapē*, in the Sermon on the Mount. This not only possessed the benefit of tradition, so making it fairly readily identifiable to the general public, but also took into account both the idea of external absolutes and the idea of inner attitudes and dispositions. It is not a satisfactory situation for ME if a school has no agreed moral content upon which to operate, but it is also unsatisfactory if ME consists of no more than a rigid and uncompassionate application of external rules. Yet there is a corresponding disadvantage in that *agapē* makes heavy demands both upon the maturity of an individual's moral judgement and upon the energy he can summon up to meet its requirements in action. It seems to be the case that the moral dimension of a religion such as Christianity cannot function fully, perhaps not even partially, without there being some organic link with the other dimensions

of the faith. Even if the writers of the forties who made this point had their eyes on tactical advantages, they would nevertheless seem to have been right to contend for an organic link between religious moralities and religious belief-systems. Perhaps they were not sufficiently aware, however, that because secular moralities are also reared upon belief-systems it may be desirable for these belief-systems to be examined as part of both RE and ME. In the process RE and ME would then justifiably relate in the area of the beliefs that may underlie behaviour. While the point was appreciated that morality rests upon belief no less than does religion, the forties required a simple choice to be made between Christian belief and all other belief-systems. So long as this choice were made in favour of Christianity then ME was dealing with Christian behaviour and RE and ME could be equated. If the choice were not made in favour of Christianity, however, the alternative to an equated RE/ME was not necessarily total severance. Perhaps greater attention could have been directed to developing this latter point of view.

iii. The editors of the Year Book did indicate that common ground might exist between religious and secular moralities. But it took another fifteen to twenty years before this common ground was claimed as a basis for a joint Christian/Humanist approach to ME. When, after another five to ten years, curriculum-material appeared for an autonomous ME the existence of overlap between religious and secular moralities seemed not to be taken into account in the production of the material. This point will be

developed in chapter 5. For the idea of overlap, while not making any necessary claims that religion and morality are in relationship, does imply that interaction might take place without this being contrary to the nature of either religion or morality. If such interaction be beneficial then it would seem unsatisfactory to prevent its being realised, especially if RE and ME were to have closer links than those resulting merely from overlap. This is one of the reasons why this present study will pursue the idea of an 'intersection' between RE and ME. The necessity to leave behind the forties' synthesis of RE and ME may not necessitate a total severance between the two areas.

## 2.4. SUMMARY

i. Well before the 1939-45 War had been won by the Allies, Britain was beginning to look forward to the social betterment which was believed would come in the new era to be ushered in by victory. With the advent of Labour to power and the implementation of collectivist policies, the new era seemed to be beginning. A new chapter also seemed to be opening up for RME, with the work of decades apparently coming to fruition. The religious difficulty had been resolved, upon agreement among the churches on the content of religious teaching, integration of Voluntary schools in a single State system, and widespread concurrence in the view that RE and ME were to be equated. But any sense in which RME was entering a new era of Christian opportunity was largely illusory. The reality was that the churches had negotiated a twenty-year or so conclusion to the theory of Christian education, with its particular expression in Christian schools and a monistic Christian RE.

ii. The churches' stake in the schools had previously depended upon two major factors. The first was ideological, in that a particular educational theory, which saw Christianity as base, context and goal, held sway from about the mid-thirties onwards with no serious rival (93). The second was pragmatic, the churches owning numbers of schools which the State was obliged to use or to replace. The combination of these two factors meant that the churches had to be at least considered, and at times consulted on matters of educational planning. Or, to put the issue at a more cynical level, the churches could expect consideration so long as a 'religious difficulty' of some sort were perpetuated. The resolution of the religious difficulty in 1944 was really the end of the line for the churches, unless they could hold educationists to the concept of Christian education as the dominant educational theory. For the mix of a shrinking church presence and of a general agreement on RE meant that the churches were likely to be consulted only out of courtesy by a secularising state. The religious difficulty was indeed going to surface again, but not in the form of disagreements between Anglicanism and Nonconformity. The disagreements would be between religious and secular education, which were to affect the three aspects: of teaching content in whether to include World Religions, of administration in whether to allow non-Christian Aided schools, and of the RE/ME relationship in the advocacy of a humanistic base to ME.

iii. The chief ingredients of the churches' views of education in the forties were, this being the Protestant version, as follows: the believed organic connection between democracy and Christianity, especially in the area

of individual and personal development; the inseparability of Christian ethics from Christian theology, especially in the area of motivation towards moral behaviour; the viewing of religious 'need' as, first, a cognitive need for a biblical religious conceptual framework, and, second, as an affective participation in a worshipping congregation; the integration of all school subjects and activities under Christian principles, with the creation of a Christian atmosphere in school life; the teaching of Religious Instruction in the classroom to be complemented by experience of Christian worship in assembly; and the fostering of as close as possible links between home, school and church. This was to be all part of a grand design whereby the nation was to become a truly Christian community, and the Kingdom of God was to be realised. The times were conducive to such views, in that the churches had heightened the prevailing national feeling that the War at base was a moral struggle, by concretising it as a battle for the survival of Christian civilisation. The years of recovery, 1945-49, held plenty of reminders that Britain was still fighting for its life. That genuine and to an extent successful attempts were made to implement the principles named above seems certain, especially at the diocesan end of the spectrum. But that there was indifference, disregard, ineptitude and some hostility at the other end, also seems certain.

iv. While the question of moral and religious pluralism was not a burning issue in the forties, there were expressions of disquiet about the presence of competing belief-systems and of alternative moral systems to that of Christianity, and of unease about the subsequent moral

confusion which appeared to be coming in their wake. But the churches felt strong enough to put aside any suggestion that further pluralism additional to that already allowed in the 1944 Education Act should be given a foothold. As Yeaxlee put the matter, the Syllabuses of a Christian society would be unhesitatingly Christian (94). This meant a unitary ethic based upon Christianity, into which children could be inducted and, it was to be hoped, given a clear sense of right and wrong. It also meant an imposed christological interpretation upon all religious phenomena. But there were social forces at work, of which some Christian educationists were aware, which carried an implicit, sometimes a direct, challenge to the concept of a Christian society (95). There were also changes in the political power-base to English society. It might now more readily be believed that religion could become a device to buttress an unjust social order. Nevertheless, although social change was perceived to be occurring, the response of those conducting forties' RME was more likely than not to be to resist rather than to adapt. They seemed prepared to proceed as if social change were not very significant to their work. But the twentieth-century forces of secularism, materialism and pluralism were eventually going to assert their ascendancy.

v. It may be said that the churches were successful in promoting their views about RE and about the relationship between RE and ME. Evidence for this judgement may be found in the scarcity of alternative theoretical stances on education to those of Leeson, Temple and Jeffreys, in the line of Christian Platonism. It may also be found in the

public as well as the Parliamentary approval given to the religious clauses of the Act which, it has been maintained in these first two chapters of this study, signified something more profound than a 'horse-trade'. It seems valid to regard the 1944 settlement as extending a welcome to the churches to become, or rather to continue to be, a vital part of the educational process. Merely to interpret the settlement as a deal between church and State by which the church's presence was to be suffered as the price for educational peace, is to ignore the historical antecedents of the churches' position as contributor to education in this country. That there was a deal is undeniable. But that Agreed Syllabus RE had developed substantially between the Wars, and that the inclusion of Christian worship in the school assembly was a settled feature of Maintained schools by 1944 (96) also cannot be denied. The War did intensify the country's felt need for a belief-system such as Christianity to foster national unity (97), and to see this as to be achieved partly through an educational system integrated by Christianity (98). But this was intensification, it should be stressed, not sudden discovery, of a feeling going back at least to Forster, and behind him to Victorian England. The churches might almost be termed too successful, for in some quarters RE took on the aura of a panacea (99), which was to be a later embarrassment. There were very few people, apparently, who with Laski saw the churches to be bankrupt at that time (100). There seems to have been no one of note in church related RE who did not see the 1944 settlement as the start of a major advance, even though the signs were there that this advance would be short-lived.

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17. Baker. Op. Cit., p. 230 (citing The Universality of Christ p. 22).

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# CHAPTER THREE

## NOT FOR TURNING: The Fifties

### INTRODUCTION

i. The main aim of this chapter is to analyse the social factors which were to undermine the concept of a Christian society in Britain, and to identify the strategies open to RME to aid its continuance in the schools despite changing social circumstances. The former has been given some attention in the literature (1), but the focus has been mainly upon immigration, science and education. A more comprehensive and more complex analysis will be attempted here, and attention will also be given to some important factors which supported the maintenance of the status quo. Of these latter factors perhaps the most relevant is the evidence for values-continuity between the generations. However, it must be emphasised that, while this evidence manifested itself to researchers it could become obscured at the level of the general public, if attention were concentrated upon superficial appearances of discontinuity engendered by a highly visible minority of troublesome young people.

ii. Perhaps Musgrove may have been over-stating the position when he talked of the 'sheer efficiency' by which values-transmission was conducted (2). But it does seem that the moral agencies of home, school and church made some headway in the fifties. It is a matter of simple fact that research in RME concentrated upon the effectivenss or otherwise of Agreed Syllabus RE, and paid scarcely any

attention to the relationship between RE and ME. It is also true to say that researchers into young people's moral standards and, more particularly, moral motivation similarly paid little attention to the role of school RME in this area. Hence, hard evidence to prove the view that RME made a useful contribution to the perpetuation of traditional morality in the fifties is difficult to procure. Yet it may be a valid surmise that religiously based ME worked towards and contributed to the strengthening of traditional values, and that rejection of the rituals, ceremonies and theological propositions of the Christian church did not inevitably lead to the rejection of Christian morality. A working definition of morality should be advanced at this stage, and Wootton's summary of fifties' values seems adequate to the point. She gave an outline as follows: hard work, sobriety, ambition, cleanliness, order, social advancement, property-ownership, conquest of the material environment and family-life (3). While such a summary would never survive a rigorous examination as to its correspondence to the Christian New Testament ethic, in general terms there is an identification, and it has its uses as an investigatory tool for this chapter. It may be presumed that these were the values which the public held to be 'traditional', and for which they were expecting a strengthening from RE. The central question that was to be posed was whether such values were best arrived at through a religious medium, or whether the religious medium might bring about a rejection of the values.

iii. RME was generally stable, socially acceptable and even at times buoyant during the fifties. There was no concerted effort either to have it changed or to have it abolished, as was to appear in the sixties, and the legal provisions of the 1944 Education Act were not seriously challenged on the grounds of their unfairness to children of non-Christian parents. But signs of future trauma and difficulty were already becoming visible.

There were, for example, expressions of concern by churchmen about the 'decline of moral and ethical standards' (4). There were warnings by educationists such as Professor Basil Fletcher of Bristol University that there could be damaging results for secular education if the looked-for integrating and democratic influence of Christian education were unable to take effect (5). There was anxiety that communication-problems were seriously hampering RE, to the extent that Birmingham University commissioned Yeaxlee to head a project enquiring into this area (6). Something might perhaps be inferred from the use of the word 're-instate' to describe the aim of the campaign by the B.C.C. and the B.F.B.S. in 1953-54 as being to re-instate the Bible in the nation's life (7). Loukes accepted that doubt existed among adolescents about RME (8), and Daines speculated that an appreciable amount of sixth-form RE teaching might be lacking in intelligence (9). Cox advocated more sophistication in the handling of biblical material so as to avoid a mechanical use of the Agreed Syllabuses (10). The difficulties presented in secondary modern school RE teaching came to be discussed (11).

iv. It is possible to speak about Religious and Moral Education as a composite curriculum-area throughout this decade and to be able to continue to do so to about the mid-sixties. But the alleged organic connection between the two which was so stressed in the forties underwent investigation and challenge. There was little likelihood that the connection would be overthrown in the fifties. But the religio-moral theories of the forties suffered a weakening in the fifties as the pressures to pluralism, shortly to be analysed in this study, made their impression on the course of RME.

## 3.1. PRESSURES TO MONISM

### 3.1.1. Educational

1. For education generally, the fifties began in October 1951. For RE, the forties just continued. In October, Churchill headed his first peacetime Government. He appointed a non-Cabinet minister, Florence Horsbrugh, aged 60, to take charge of education. She immediately operated a 5% reduction, and, although there was some subsequent growth in the economy of about 2% (12), school building proceeded very slowly, class-sizes remained high, technical education developed at a very slow rate, County colleges never had the chance to prove themselves, and the McNair proposals for teacher-training to become a three-year course were not officially implemented until 1960 (13). Also, teachers' salaries were eroded with consequent status-erosion, and the profession moved towards strike-action. The Government did not evince much interest in education, as might be illustrated from the fact that Eccles, in five years, could bring the Cabinet to discuss only one educational issue - the threat posed by the Oxford ring-road to a University open space (14). Eccles (1954-57, 1959-62) and Lloyd (1957-59) followed tripartite policies with the backing of their party. The Labour party brought comprehensive education to the fore in their political platform. Such a position could be argued from socialist first principles (15) and was therefore a very valid political objective, even though it may have had uses in other ways (16). As material standards of living steadily

rose during the decade, so educational opportunity, seen as a gateway to the 'good life', became an ever more important consideration as an election issue (17). It also gained in importance as it came to be seen as a crucial means of developing the nation's pool of talent, to ensure that high material standards of living would be maintained into the future as Britain held her own in a competitive world (18). However, the cluster of reports at the end of the decade (19) underlined the fact that money was not being made available for social and educational provision for youth in comparable proportion to the unprecedented affluence of the country generally.

ii. The continued application of the 1944 Education Act's religious clauses went forward, despite financial constraints. The (albeit slow) production of new Agreed Syllabuses was maintained (20). Religious Knowledge courses were expanded in the training colleges, spreading into the supplementary year (21), and in-service training proceeded (22). Experiments in church/school liaison took place (23). The number of pupils taking and succeeding in G.C.E. Religious Knowledge examinations increased steadily, even if not proportionately to the increase in the school population (24). Production of teaching aids and resource-material for RE was gathering momentum, even though this material did not include much on non-Christian religions (25). Perhaps the shortage of money for curricular experiments helped to establish RE as a satisfactory, even as the most appropriate, base in the curriculum for moral training. Leeson (26) and others (27) pursued their theorising about Christian education, without this concept seeming too unrealistic to be viable. But the concept of a Christian society was already being challenged

as the precursors of the social change which was to gather force in the sixties became visible.

### 3.1.2. Ecclesiastical

i. The ecclesiastical scene in the fifties was on the surface fairly tranquil, but signs of future theological, and attendant ethical change were present. The peace between State and church brought by the 1944 Education Act helped this tranquillity. Though misgivings were sometimes expressed about the worth of school religious teaching (28), the churches, when they gave thought to the matter, seemed ready to accept the arrangements stipulated by the Act as part of their ministry to the country (29). The provisions for worship particularly appealed to the churches (30). Reference could continue to be made to an English 'Christian tradition' (31), and Leeson could claim in 1955 that there was an even stronger disposition to strengthen Christian education than in 1944 (32). The early years of the decade gave some improving statistics about increasing numbers of confirmations, of larger congregations and of bigger Sunday schools (33). The mid-decade crusades of Billy Graham drew large numbers and, at least on the surface, seemed highly successful, even though doubts were expressed by some churchmen about their real value. In 1959 State grants were increased for Aided schools (34).

ii. That some clergy were ready for some change of outlook on moral issues can be seen in the 1954 report on homosexuality, which recommended the removal of legal penalties against consenting adults, and in the 1957 Lambeth Conference's acceptance of birth-control. When the 1957 Wolfenden Report followed the church's lead on the topic of homosexuality, the Church of England's Moral Welfare Council approved it. But on most issues there was a strong reluctance to change. The

1958 Lambeth Conference upheld the indissolubility of marriage and the refusal to re-marry divorced persons in church, and affirmed the importance of the family, claiming a sacramental relationship between good housing and good homes. Gambling and drug-taking for pleasure received a firm condemnation at this conference, also. Communism was condemned in 1953 (35), the time of the Berlin blockade and the cold war, with Fisher openly dissociating himself from Hewlett Johnson. The 1948 Lambeth Report, The Doctrine of Man, with its censure of humanism and advocacy of the doctrine of original sin held sway in the fifties, there being no call for an accommodation to humanism as there was to be in the sixties, even though the terminology 'the new morality' had already appeared. Any readiness to abandon absolute moral standards was deplored, with no suggestion that the church adjust to any such trend by itself departing from the absolutes. Indeed, such a course might have seemed shocking to many people who themselves were not regular church-goers. It has been said that the sense of national unity between 1940 and 1960 had never been so great, even in Victorian times (36). Certainly the churches could not be accused of disturbing this tranquillity. Disestablishment was a non-issue; Barnes was an aberration; Neill hardly more than a straw in the wind.

### 3.1.3. Values-continuity

i. The model upon which the religio-moral theories of the forties were constructed could be termed the creation-redemption model, in which social disorder, though real, is not the fundamental reality. The basis for this model is the immanent operation of divine grace. There seems to be a corresponding sociological model. This would be that of structural functionalism, in which social conflict, though

dysfunctional, is not the fundamental reality. The basis of this model is the organic unity of society which ensures that each constituent part contributes to the continuance of the whole. Both models require a distinction between the apparent and the real. In the case of the former a low level of church attendance cannot be taken to indicate a non-Christian society. In the case of the latter an increasing rate of juvenile delinquency cannot be taken to indicate discontinuity of values between the generations (37). There can be no doubt of the growth of delinquency during the fifties, nor of the publicity given to this trend, nor of the public unease aroused by it, nor of the tendency to interpret it as a mark of a wider refusal by youth to accept traditional values (38). Nonetheless, the few empirical studies into the moral views of young people conducted in the fifties do seem to bear out the structural functional model of values-continuity (39), and to fit the general homogeneity of the nation at that time (40). If the response of the upholder of the Agreed Syllabus tradition to unsuccesful RE was to say that this seeming lack of success would be overcome by more of the same but better, then the response of the functionalist to apparent values-rejection on the part of young people is to say that they are not really as bad as they look.

## 3.2. PRESSURES TO PLURALISM

### 3.2.1. Technological

i. The whole of this coming section will be an abstract from what is appreciated to be highly complex social data, in an attempt to analyse without, it is hoped, being simplistic, those crucial forces which were to clarify whether the concept of a Christian society could be held in conjunction with that of a pluralistic

society. It will be suggested that a democratic society implementing a policy of full employment must expect the growth of diverse belief- and value-systems, and that any overarching value-system must be able to enclose such diversity in an appropriate framework.

ii. It seems undeniable that modernisation, industrialisation and economic growth were related concerns of Britain in the fifties and sixties. Although the relative inferiority of Britain's economy to that of Germany and the U.S.A. had been appreciated by some since the start of the century, the nation as a whole did not perceive the importance of modernising and building up industry until forced to by the near bankruptcy of the late forties (41). Economic growth had come to depend on the newer industries, such as aircraft-, car-, plastic and electronic engineering, which had all received a stimulus from the war, and which were to demonstrate the link between investment in scientific research with industrial advance (42). Science could hardly but gain in importance as a school subject (43), with the likely spread of scientism. LEAs' attempts to secure money from the Ministry for technical education were successful, especially after 1955 (44). Lloyd was the first science graduate to become Minister of Education (in 1957).

iii. It would be wrong to suggest that any shift towards a more scientific orientation of education marked a corresponding denigration of RE among educational policy-makers. For the liberal tradition was strong in English education (45), with its tendency to see that those educated in the Humanities were well-represented in positions of power. This did not mean that they were automatically supportive of RE, but it may well have helped towards the maintenance of the status quo in the

fifties. There was no indication in this decade that educational decision-makers at a high level had any hostile designs upon the place accorded to RE by law. Bantock, writing in 1963, claimed that the 'humanising of the technical is one of our most pressing educational problems'(46). While those with an education in the Humanities predominated in positions of power, it would seem unlikely that the severely vocational criterion of economic usefulness would be applied in any blanket-fashion to the curriculum. However, the crucial importance of technological expertise to an industrial economy was coming to be acknowledged, with inevitable pressure on the schools to make appropriate provision. Parents and pupils were not slow to question the advisability of pursuing studies which appeared to offer little or no contribution to the making of a 'good' living in an industrial society, or which appeared to advocate values which might actually be at odds with a secular and materialistic definition of the 'good'.

### 3.2.2 Changes in Community

i. Industrialisation, with its attendant urbanisation (47), encouraged social changes in the nature of work and occupation, and of community. Hummel and Nagle believed they had identified some key-features of an urban, industrialised society when they said that 'life in an urban milieu, shaped by anonymity and mobility and dominated by pragmatism and profanity, is characterised by considerable social and physical movement, freedom of ethical choice, and rapid change' (48). Wilson's appraisal of the fifties led him to claim that new forms of work-organisation jeopardised family-life, and new geographic mobility destroyed community-life (49). 'Big city' morality, he believed, came to be increasingly reflected in the media,

with a corresponding 'corrosive' influence in local communities. He picked out aspects of the times which seemed to him to be well-substantiated.

> 'The anonymity; impersonality; the spirit of calculating the consequences of action; the acceptance of money values as the final criterion of achievement; the emphasis upon role rather than upon personality; and ultimately the manipulation of personal sentiments and the 'prostitution' of attitudes of genuine human concern - are all well documented phenomena of metropolitan life' (50).

Shipman drew attention to the complex, differentiated nature of urban societies and particularly to the way they forced upon individuals an unco-ordinated array of value-systems, in which changing situations could be inadequately served by accumulated wisdom (51).

ii. Such statements point to what appear to be demonstrable aspects of the fifties, both of which are of some importance to this study. First, an increasing uncertainty if not confusion came to surround the area of morality. It was becoming clearer that some moral dilemmas might be too complex to be resolved by a simple appeal to 'the Christian ethic', especially in view of the fact that churchmen could sincerely disagree with each other on the rights and wrongs of a practice such as homosexuality. Also, Christianity as a religio-moral system was ceasing to commend itself apparently to the younger generation who were seemingly seeking for something less dependent upon a set of fixed rules, and more related to the flux and dynamism of flexible personal relationships. There seemed to be no satisfactory answers to the question as to what gave morality its content or its authority. The assertion that morality could have no other base than religion seemed either not to make sense - for there

were many people living 'good' lives who had discontinued any connection with religion, or could be made sense of only if religion were defined as Christian behaviour. There was also concern that the schools were not adequately discharging their responsibilities as moral educators, especially as RE might not be making the sort of impact that was expected of it in 1944.

iii. Linked with this confusion about morality went a decreasing tendency to regard the church as the major, if not sole, source of moral guidance. It seems the case that church influence had never been strong in industrial towns (52). For example, Lloyd has pointed to the failure of the Church of England to secure a response from the working classes of industrialised centres (53), and Wickham has been prepared to estimate as 'immense' the numbers of people of all ages who broke their association with the church following a move of house (54). Lloyd also frankly stated that success-stories of the church in new housing estates have been 'extremely rare' (55). While it might be said that subscription to a church ethic may be given, while association with church religious activities is completely with-held, yet if the church shows itself to be unable to speak with a united voice on moral dilemmas, then such subscription is likely to weaken and even become meaningless. In such circumstances, the churches might well have been fortunate to be regarded even as an option in the diverse moral situation that seemed to be brought on by modern life. The churches certainly had to accept that the areas of conduct open for them to pronounce on with absolute authority had diminished and were diminishing. Also, the emergence of secular organisations, designed to help solve

human problems encountered in modern living, removed any monopoly the church might have hoped for in an area, welfare, traditionally regarded as a proper sphere for its activity. At the end of the decade the Russells were speculating about the difficulty of combining religion in its present forms with industrialisation, pointing out that the welfare of industrialised wage-earners was now more dependent upon human agency and less upon natural causes (56). To the Russells religion was at base a response to the uncertainties of the environment and climate. Improved coping strategies to deal with natural disasters would, therefore, they believed, undercut the motivation towards religion which may have grown out of dread of physical injury or tragedy. Such a viewpoint was especially appropriate in a decade in which control of the natural environment made such impressive advances, and when access to material benefits had been enlarged for many people. While the decade was not marked by any landslide defection from the church, the underlying trend of English Protestant church membership was downward (57).

### 3.2.3. Values-presentation in the Media

i. The growth of television msut be regarded as a very significant feature of the fifties, especially in the influence that this may have exerted over public understanding of social values. By the end of the decade almost every family had a television set (58), and the B.B.C. had undergone a distinct change of outlook. In 1928 its Handbook could claim that the B.B.C. was 'doing its best to prevent any decay of Christianity in a nominally Christian country'. The same Handbook spoke of television as aiming to 'nourish and expand the viewer's range of taste'. However, Reith's

resignation, the war-time necessity to use broadcasting on a mass-scale, the influence of continental commercial broadcasting and the growing desire for openness in post-war society eroded such pristine intentions. The Popular Television Association was formed in July, 1953, and the Act for the creation of the Independent Television Corporation became law in July, 1954. This successful attack on the B.B.C. monopoly pushed the company towards the lowest common denominator of public taste, in competition with a rival whose commercial advertising brought in an income far in excess of that which was available through the licensing system. Audience-ratings became crucial determinants of programme-content and -presentation. The statement by an American writer would seem to apply with equal relevance to Britain, when he said that the media

> 'are built on the theory of a free market of ideas ... (which) ... will not work right unless all viewpoints on a controversial question are freely presented' (59).

ii. It would be both difficult and undesirable to argue against the view that such values-pluralism is democratic gain. Suggestions have been made that the outcome of this laudable theory, however, is that bias becomes more subtle and more difficult to recognise, particularly in the operation of the principle of 'newsworthiness' (60). Wilson writing in the early years of independent television was highly critical of its uneducational approach. He saw I.T.V. as concerned with the novel, the bizarre, the sensational and the fantastic, and claimed that its values were rarely those of the dominant social tradition, frequently being of 'aimless rebellion, deviance and criminality' (61). Recognising the potential of the media to influence and change values, Wilson saw that influence as 'predominantly ... exerted to undermine received custom', and to create 'confusion, particularly among young

people, about standards of behaviour' (62). Perhaps partly on account of Wilson's critique, Fraser's retiring speech on his leaving the post of Director-General of the I.T.A. (24.9.70) could claim that television had developed from a fun-medium to an information-medium, with a third medium, the educational, currently maturing (63). While the term 'educational' carries a variety of possible meanings, it would nevertheless seem that an understanding of what constituted educational television in a democracy would inevitably lead to the notion of the free market of ideas, and to the acceptance of the principles that no beliefs or values should be above fair criticism, and no one religious system be given exclusive rights of advocacy.

iii. It should perhaps be remarked en passant that RE need not look on the television-media as inveterate enemies. Both T.V. companies make school RE programmes, the B.B.C. 'radiovision' and sound broadcasts being by now almost an RE institution. Also, general T.V. programmes can make good discussion-material for the RE lesson, to say nothing of the possibilities of video. The RE teacher can properly direct criticism towards the concealed as well as the patent values at the heart of media-material, and can help form the 'filtering equipment' which children may bring towards the media. It may be borne in mind, too, that, according to McQuail, television can produce learning results equal to those achieved by other methods (64). Moreover, it now seems almost impossible to keep religion out of news-programmes for any length of time. The ideal of world-coverage of news, which the media has taken to itself, serves to illustrate forcibly at times the continued significance of religion to many millions of people. That sometimes this is religion as it ought not to be only underlines the importance of ME remaining in relationship with RE. The corollary might also apply.

3.2.4. Immigration

i. The influx of immigrants after the war, with the heaviest flow occurring in the late fifties and early sixties, can largely be accounted for by industry's need for cheap labour for lowly, unskilled jobs, at a time when working-class aspirations for upward social mobility were never higher nor more realisable. The issue did not become a 'problem' until the late fifties, because the keeping of records of coloured immigrants was not the practice of most local authorities and welfare-agencies, in case this was seen as discriminatory. Most of the immigrants from the New Commonwealth were white, up until the early fifties (65). The Home Office released the following figures in December 1958. The estimated coloured population was 210,000 West Africans, 55,000 Indians and Pakistanis and 15,000 others. But these may have been miscalculations. The first authoritative survey was the 1966 Sample Census, showing 2,478,060 immigrants (5.26%) living in England and Wales, of whom, it was claimed, less than a third were coloured. But this census also has been criticised for alleged under-enumeration (66). The threat of imminent control accelerated the flow of immigrants, which reached a peak in 1961. By this time the 'problem' was discernible, as ethnic tension turned into violence in Nottingham and Notting Hill in 1958 with the possibility that such outbursts would increase and intensify.

ii. Although the impact of immigration on the classroom was to be a feature of the sixties and seventies, the tensions between a christianising RE and a multi-faith classroom were inferable in the fifties. Islam, in particular, could

hardly see education as anything other than the induction of children into the Muslim faith. While there might have been an initial readiness on the part of immigrant parents for their children to be encouraged to undergo all the processes which would make them able to understand the British culture, RE being accepted as one of the processes, they could hardly be expected to make a sudden break from their cultural roots. The host nation might wish to talk about 'integration'. But the incomers were acutely concerned to preserve their own traditions, especially the religious elements, which, in any case, were sometimes inseparably woven into the cultural patterns. From the start the view was implicit that, as the National Muslim Education Council of the United Kingdom was to argue in 1984, a concentration upon Christianity in Agreed Syllabuses was in contravention of the Cowper-Temple clause, which forbade teaching distinctive of any particular religious denomination (67).

### 3.2.5. Romanticism

i. Although the fifties were a time when social change was talked about, anticipated, and even appeared to be taking place, it is doubtful if the 'establishment' (the Church of England, The Times, the courts, the Monarchy, the public schools, Parliament, Oxbridge, the police and the armed services) was so very different than in pre-war years. But change was to come, and this was preceded by an upsurge at the end of the fifties of what might be loosely called romanticism. This phenomenon can perhaps be best epitomised in Jimmy Porter's plea, in John Osborne's Look Back in Anger (1956), for a 'warm, thrilling voice (to) cry out Hallelujah'. 1954 had seen the end of all rationing, and also the lowest figure for convictions for indictable offences in all age-groups for

both sexes, for quite a number of years (68). Although the cold war was continuing, the 1939-45 War had slipped towards the horizon, the rigours and disciplines of the immediate post-war years had eased, and the country was sampling affluence. A new home, a new car, a modern kitchen, a new television set and a first foreign holiday had suddenly become realities for large numbers of people (69). Change seemed in the air. It is very possible that the electoral successes of the Conservatives can partly be accounted for by politicians of that persuasion being able to become identified in the public mind with such change. Parallel changes were occurring in Europe, and, particularly, in America, these being heightened for Britain by the coming of mass-communications. It is possible, as Booker seems to suggest (70), that a tempo was set in motion which fed popular expectations and even illusions of change, thereby creating an impression in society that the country had started to accelerate towards freedom, modernity and fulfilment. Macmillan's 'wind of change' speech in 1960 might well have evoked a responsive feeling in Britain's own 'oppressed', now mobilising for a break with the past and for liberation into independence.

ii. In such a climate, however bubble-like it may appear to <u>déjâ-vu</u>, it was probably to be expected that two sides of romanticism would emerge. On the one hand, a romantic feeling, almost craving, for sensual delight, for physical sensation and for self-indulgence developed in the materialistic ethos engendered by affluence. On the other, there was a corresponding romantic protest against the superficiality of affluent materialism and a search for a 'true' road to self-fulfilment. Perhaps the rock-and-roll fever of 1956 symbolised the former, and Wilson's <u>The Outsider</u> of the same year the latter.

iii. Traditional Agreed Syllabus RE could appear confining and irrelevant against such a background, while absolute moral standards could seem an affront to personal liberty. It may be that there is a deep incompatibility between selfism and Christianity (71), and if school RE, especially in the primary school, seemed as a result to be neglectful of ways in which pupils properly develop in self-awareness, self-confidence and self-esteem, then that might have encouraged antipathy towards it. Romanticism has deep-seated resistances to being forced into any mould other than that of its own choosing. The demand for self-discipline that would be encountered in Bible-based RE could easily be construed as harmful to the self, by a generation coming under the sort of romantic influences that led into self-indulgence. Also, in so far as the RE met with at school seemed to be more concerned with simplistic textual exposition than with a real closing with religious issues of purpose, value, meaning and human potential (with which, of course, the Bible deals), then the romantic protest against affluent materialism might also be turned against such an RE. It, too, might seem not to lead to 'spritual' self-fulfilment. But, perhaps, the basic aversion that romanticism of the sort that is being considered would register against Bible-based RE, would be resentment at the suggestion that true self-fulfilment lay in one direction only, that being the Christian direction.

### 3.2.6. The Youth Phenomenon

i. Leech began his book, Youthquake, with the words 'The 1950s was supremely the decade of the teenager' (72). He went on to suggest that, while much youthful behaviour was highly traditional, there were signs of new stirrings, even of a new consciousness, among young people in the fifties. It will be seen later how

Veness's research indicated that there may have been a great deal of inter-generational continuity in the fifties (73), and that this continuity was broadly within a secularised version of the Protestant ethic. Nevertheless, the Teddy Boy Movement was a fifties' phenomenon, this being seen by Leech, not as the product of economic poverty, but of developing affluence combined with boredom (74). Also, in the last few years of the decade the crime-rate took a steep turn for the worse, with teenage violence becoming an alarming aspect of the mid-fifties onwards. While American sociological theories about sub-cultural delinquent gangs did not seem relevant to England (75), there was a recognition that delinquency was a problem, and that currently employed strategies for its containment were not working (76). Wilson claimed that young people were confused about norms, values, tastes and standards at this time (77). The Ingleby Report also spoke of uncertainty about standards and ideals, on the part of children and parents, concluding from this that it was a matter for surprise that so few young people found themselves in 'real trouble' (78).

ii. Whatever the actual state of youthful attitudes to morals, there can be no doubt that youth itself, as a term to cover adolescence and young adulthood, had become a salient social group by the end of the decade. 1958 brought the formation of C.N.D. and the first Aldermaston march, both events being justifiably labelled as the first entry of British youth on the political scene. In this decade the Young Conservatives became the largest youth-movement in Britain, and the Young Socialists came into being in 1960. Distinctive clothing, hair-styles and, particularly, music came to the fore, although none of these features necessarily signified changes in underlying values, especially when it is borne in mind that teenagers' fashions and

music are, to a large extent, the product of capitalist enterprise. While probably the majority of young people in the fifties were fairly conservative in their moral beliefs, they showed some signs of a desire at least for surface differences, both from their elders and from their immediate predecessors of the forties. There were also signs of deeper resentments and alienations towards traditional religio-moral beliefs and practices, but these were not to become of much social significance until the later years of the sixties. The point of importance for this study is that youth had made a successful bid to be regarded as a distinctive social grouping. How far this became a source of envy to the middle-aged, and how far the middle-aged then were moved to copy youthful life-styles and even to contemplate value-change in the process is a matter for speculation only. What does seem able to be said with a measure of certainty is that the advertisers made much of the supposed benefits of being young. The advertisers also made much of the ideas of 'projecting' and 'image'. Religion was hardly a promising candidate for the 'projection' of a 'youthful image'. Experiments in presenting aspects of the Christian message in rock-and-roll format hardly made for staple fare in school RE. 'Fuddy-duddy' seemed to be a label quite heavily in use in the late fifties and early sixties.

iii. While it was beneficial in some respects for the school-children themselves to become influential in determining school RE content, this might have over-encouraged a trend towards replacing RE with ME, at least in the fourth- and fifth-forms of secondary schools. This is certainly a possible way of viewing the relationship between RE and ME, that the former is but a preparation for the latter, although it is not the position taken by this thesis. It was never advocated by any

prominent RE writer, but it may have been advocated in many a school situation. At first this policy might be containable within a monistic Christian framework, in that moral dilemmas are raised and discussed with a view to presenting the Christian answer. But in the end pluralism takes over, in that even for those questions where there is a consensus Christian answer, the educational grounds for restricting discussion to this single area seem not very strong if they exist at all. The final conclusion, as often as not, seems to be that moral dilemmas are raised and just discussed, with no consideration being given to any sort of religious perspective on the issues. Were this to happen, then neither Moral nor Religious Education might be taking place. What might be happening is that an easy-going social-affairs type of lesson-strategy might be being adopted under the impression that this is 'what young people of that age want and have to be given'.

### 3.2.7. Educational Method

i. The influence of the Progressive Movement will be given a fuller treatment later (79). It is sufficient at this stage to note three inter-connected aspects which contributed to the growth of pluralism. With origins in Rousseau, Froebel, Pestalozzi, Fellenberg and Kay Shuttleworth, and continuing through Holmes, Dewey and Gesell, the movement advocated heurism, activity, experience, co-operation, individual learning, freedom and informality as the main components of educational method. This entailed, one, the encouragement of pupils to learn by questioning and discovery rather than passive acceptance, two, believing that pupils were disposed to chose the good, and, three, authoritariamism being regarded as potentially very dangerous to self-development.

At each of these points the Agreed Syllabus tradition was in tension with Progressivism, although rapprochement was not impossible. The chief tension lay in the area of authority, for it was customary for religion to make authoritative pronouncements upon doctrine and morals, grounding this practice on an interpretation of 'revelation' through scripture and tradition which just had to be accepted. But a recognition was growing that this view of authority might not only be inconsistent with a contemporary understanding of that term, but also with a moral understanding (80). An educational system which places as central the notion of the rational individual testing everything for himself would seem inevitably to be one that advocated pluralism. Religious and moral plurality would appear to be the logical corollary of the plurality of individuality.

## 3.3. STRATEGIES FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### 3.3.1. Continuance in the Same

i. Although a brief and selective summary, the preceding paragraphs might serve to give some indication of the social situation which formed a background to the RE teacher's work, and of the sort of influences that would be operating on the children and young people he would be endeavouring to interest in RE. The difficulties stemming from youthful ignorance of and lack of upbringing in religion had always exercised RE teachers. Two main strategies suggested themselves to meet this problem. One was to persevere in the traditional guidelines set by the Agreed Syllabuses in the hope that, by patient continuance in what was believed to be well-doing, ignorance would be dispelled and youth would accept Christianity. The other was to work towards a re-statement of Christianity which would forestall

youthful disenchantment with religion, and which would therefore, it was hoped, foster acceptance. It was always assumed, apparently, that given the right approach young people could not fail to want religion.

ii. Blamires may be taken as typical of the continuation of the forties' approach, although he was certainly aware of the gap between the ideals of that approach and the actual young people to whom it was directed. Writing in 1950 (81) he affirmed the objectivity of values, their supernatural sanctions, the inseparability of Christian morality and Christian faith, the necessity for divine grace and the inner-direction towards moral behaviour that comes from a dependence upon God. Yet he accepted that naturalistic presuppositions had permeated the whole fabric of education, as he put it, and lamented that the young were increasingly being conditioned into 'pseudo-scientific materialism', anticipating that an assault would be mounted upon the Christian content of morality, following the current assault which he believed was being mounted upon the religious basis of that morality. His reply to this state of affairs was to call for utterly Christian schools, in which doctrine, morality and practice would form a consistent whole, and in which there would be a good supply of intelligent, converted Christian teachers, doctrinally informed and evangelistic in spirit. But his argument at this point lacked discussion of the crucial topic as to whether this policy could properly or realistically be enjoined upon a State educational system, which he had already declared to be permeated with sub-, if not non-, Christian suppositions. A later decade was going to produce the view that this policy was for the church school and the church school only. That Blamires did not acknowledge this argument is an indication of the strength of the Christian

strand in education which could see State schools doing the same sort of job as church schools, as it could equate ME with RE, without arousing antagonism on this count. Perhaps Blamires' open praise of Progressivism, although he preferred to undergird it philosophically with a Christian belief in the value of individual personality rather than a Rousseauistic belief in the essential goodness of Man, headed off criticism. His unashamed _élitism_, by which he believed that inequalities of intellectual ability were unavoidably accentuated by education so necessitating one form of education for leadership and one for followership, was generally acceptable at the time also.

iii. At the end of the decade the Ministry published a booklet which gave continuing backing to guidelines set by the Agreed Syllabuses (82). It was an optimistic document, lacking the realistic discussion of pupil-reaction which is found in Blamires. One is reminded of an investigation, carried out in the late forties (83), which found that optimism about Agreed Syllabus RE varied in direct propotion to the importance of the position held by the respondent. The Prefatory Note of the publication set the booklet within the developmentalist tradition by drawing attention to the 'change in emphasis in educational thought and practice from the subjects to the child', but there was no hint, in the sections on RE, that this might raise tensions between the subject-centred approach of the Syllabuses and the child-centred approach that was now being recommended in modern primary education. RE was dealt with in a chapter of eight sections, which made the valuable point that the religious provisions of the 1944 Education Act were making obligatory only what was already proven practice. Also, a plea was made that school worship and Agreed Syllabus teaching should be brought to consider the psychological and developmental characteristics

of children. But it was claimed that the withdrawal-clauses were not disadvantageous to the teacher, (a point with which some might have bitterly disagreed (84) ). The main message of the booklet was that Bible-based RE which fostered a Christian way of living was educationally valid and was proceeding satisfactorily.

## 2.3.2. Re-interpretation

i. Writing four years after Blamires, Margaret Isherwood published a book (85), which looked forward to a new synthesis between a re-interpreted Christianity and modern psychology, which was apparently psychoanalysis. Like Blamires she acknowledged what appeared to be the widespread contemporary departure from the Christian faith, but she largely avoided his 'either-or' analysis, and called for a rapprochement between Christian faith and secular thought, on the one hand, and between Christian and non-Christian religious thought, on the other. Whereas Blamires saw dogma as central to religion, Isherwood attached greater importance to inner experience, on the grounds that complete intellectual certainty about the objective truth(s) of religion was unattainable, and that to present religion as a search, rather than as a static creed, was to render a child less vulnerable to the trauma that came from loss of faith. She was interested in consciousness, self-understanding, personal growth and feelings generally, all of which could be blighted, she maintained, by literalism in dogma, by authoritarianism in attitude and by immature emotional need. She can certainly be seen as anticipatory of some of the recommendations for sixties' RE.

ii. In discussing morality she welcomed a change from external sanctions for behaviour, dependent on punishment, to seeing the connection between health and virtue as an adequate and preferable sanction: wholeness and integrity of personality

demanding morality as their price, Man having to follow his entelechy. Virtue, she believed, could be learned only by increasing self-understanding. As this view could be another way of rendering the traditional belief that Man is created a moral being, Isherwood could at this point describe her new 'scientific' sanction for morality as 'essentially the same' as that revealed by Jesus in the story of the healing of the palsied man. She could thus suggest a way in which RE and ME could remain in relationship. But when she showed herself to be satisfied with a very general statement of the moral law, and when she advocated that everyone must do what seems right to himself, even if this should prove objectively wrong in the event, the question does obtrude as to whether Isherwood was saying anything helpful about the actual mechanics of ME teaching in a school situation.

iii. In her discussion of the religions she was to some extent anticipatory of the later recommendations about developing the concept of 'implicit' religion. For her interest was more in the concept of religion than in the phenomena of religions. Her dislike of provincialism and proselytising encouraged her to seek for the highest common factor in religion, rather than to advocate the teaching of World Religions. Religion to her was mystical experience leading to self-knowledge and self-control; undertaking the task of living with the faith that, despite appearances, life is essentially meaningful. The later Durham Report was to pursue this latter point. While it seems that the Agreed Syllabuses viewed RE as something more than doctrinal instruction, Isherwood was going

further than these documents in the direction of generalised religious experience. But she was still urging induction as a proper educational aim. While she could not be accused of aiming at Christian evangelism, to induct into religion might be no less open to the charge of being indoctrinatory.

3.3.3. Progress by Research

a. The I.C.E. Report, 1954

i. The major event of the decade for RE was the research-survey conducted by the I.C.E. into the working of the 1944 Education Act's religious clauses (86). The scheme grew out of a desire to ascertain how far the diverse comments about RE which were becoming prevalent related to the actual position in the schools. Attention was focused upon two geographical areas, Birmingham and Norwich, with subsidiary material from Leeds, Hull, Brighton and London, and from grammar schools on a wider basis again. While the primary aim was said to be fact-finding, the intention included also a desire to help teachers and administrators make the most of the opportunities for RE provided by the Act. There was an appreciable amount of detailed analysis of the resulting statistics, but the recording was not meant to be just a mass of data. It was an attempt to redress on over-pessimistic assessment of the effectiveness of the Act's religious clauses. Lester Smith's 'Foreward' set an optimistic tone.

ii. Nine areas of investigation were identified: organisation of teaching; content of teaching; staffing; sixth-form work; secondary modern schools; corporate worship; equipment; retention of religious knowledge; Standing Advisory Councils. Some points may be picked out from the substantial amount of

material included in the report. There had been little attempt in primary schools to move the RE lesson to any other part of the day than the first item of the first session, but the report was generally satisfied with the amount of RE provision in infants, junior and secondary modern schools, but not in grammar schools. Criticisms of the Agreed Syllabuses voiced by teachers were noted, in that they were said to be too demanding, not suitable for secondary modern schools and not sufficiently helpful to sixth-form teachers, but the report accepted that despite criticisms they served their purpose satisfactorily, and lent some educational standing to the subject. Headteachers were found to show a great deal of interest in the development of RE, and of concern for its excellence and effectiveness. It was claimed that the two-year training-college course gave a better training for RE than did the one-year course in University education departments. The report also noted that it was becoming more usual to find entrants to training colleges, when they aimed to specialise in Religious Knowledge, to have taken an A level in that subject. An extensive concern was reported to exist in the schools for the effective practice of worship, and the conclusion was advanced that any fears that the daily act of worship did more harm than good were unfounded, despite the existence 'here and there' of indifference, carelessness and insincerity. Bible-, textbook- and library-provision were all generally inadequate. Although the retention of Religious Knowledge showed an edge over the retention of History, criticism was made of the failure to understand the nature of religious language, and reference was made to the likelihood of 'a thin moral veneer laid upon ... uncertain knowledge of Christianity instead of a lasting faith' (87).

iii. The two aspects of the report which make it of limited value to this study are that the findings are not related to wider social issues and there is no investigation specifically into the relationship between RE and ME. Anders-Richards was right when he pointed out that the report dealt more with the internal mechanism of the system than with its products, and his 'astonishment' would seem justified when he criticised the report for giving insufficient information about the 'working of the Act in those areas of morality and religion which have been shown to have been at the very heart of the aspirations of those who formed it' (88). He was thinking about the implications for morality of the provision of RE. Yeaxlee's editorials, in Religion in Education, do seem to denote a failure in awareness here. When Margaret Knight's mid-decade broadcasts made their impact (89), they evoked no editorial response from Yeaxlee, his only reaction seeming to be the publication of an article in his magazine describing the separation of religion and ethics as possible, but 'terribly dangerous' (90). This was despite the 1951-52 correspondence in The Times (91), and the disquiet expressed in 1955 by the King George's Jubilee Trust about the influences operating on young people in their formative years (92).

b. The University of Sheffield Enquiry, 1961

i. This survey was on a smaller scale and narrower front than that of the I.C.E. It was begun in 1956 and the findings were published five years later (93). The central question under investigation was that of how far the Agreed Syllabuses helped to achieve their aim, this being seen as the customary equation 'that all men should hear the Gospel, learn to love God in Christ, to serve Him and to enjoy Him for ever' (94). The conclusion

was that they were not achieving their aim, in that pupils' factual knowledge of the Bible was poor, and 'there was little correlation between the factual knowledge gained through religious education and a faith by which to live' (95). In apportioning blame, criticisms were made about the inadequacy of timetable-provision, about the scarcity of trained RE teachers, about the paucity of some LEA provision of in-service training in RE, about the failure of the numbers of students training to be teachers, who took RE at advanced level, to remain in proportion to the rise in student-numbers. But the chief criticisms were levelled at the Syllabuses, mainly because most were schemes of work rather than syllabuses. These Syllabuses allegedly contained artificial division of topics, they were of little help in constructing simplified schemes, they were irrelevant to the lives and experiences of pupils, there was a paucity of material on twentieth-century Christianity and there were tendencies to pietism and 'otherworldliness'(96).

ii. The Sheffield enquiry may not have been as detailed or wide-ranging as the I.C.E. project, but it was crisper and carried a straightforward message. RE was not what it should be, but improvement in Syllabus-making would help to make it what it should be. The sheer amount of the material presented by the I.C.E. project made practical generalisations rather difficult to arrive at and there were no recommendations. Perhaps the only tangible point, when all the discussion and media-interest had subsided, to emerge from the I.C.E. scheme was an increase of pressure upon LEAs to provide more Bibles for schools. The narrower front of the Sheffield enquiry, which focused entirely upon the adequacy or otherwise of the Syllabuses and made a number of recommendations, meant that it could become a more incisive instrument in the cause of reform and renovation.

Although the I.C.E. scheme had called for separate syllabuses for secondary modern schools, it was the Sheffield project which more readily could become part of the move towards Syllabus-revision in the next decade. Both surveys, however, could be said to have contributed to RE's general standing by demonstrating that the 'Cinderella' subject was active in empirical research into the effectiveness of classroom-practice.

## 3.4. STRATEGIES FOR MORAL EDUCATION

### 3.4.1. Values-research

i. Although the dominant assumption in the fifties continued to be that RE and ME were to be equated, this assumption was not without some support as to its effectiveness in practical terms. While Veness's research was not specifically aimed at testing the legitimacy of the assumption, her work did give some indirect evidence that an equated RE/ME was at the very least not destructive of traditional values. She co-ordinated a project during 1956 among 600 girls and 702 boys from modern, technical and grammar schools, the age-range being 13.7 to 17.6. The investigation was into aspirations and expectations and into attitudes to work-status, possessions, living-area, retirement and the like (97).

ii. Much fascinating information was reported, and some generalisation is possible. Veness found a great deal of homogeneity among the replies, and she concluded that 'these young people do seem to be remarkably like us' (98). Though she found much evidence for a desire for excitement, adventure and novelty, she also found her sample not at all conforming to any rebellious stereotype. She may have been too complacent, however, about the incidence of juvenile delinquency and about illegitimacy,

and she did not consider the question as to how far her results revealed a necessary dependence upon 'happy materialism' for their continued perpetuation into the future. At that time the beatnik was still an American phenomenon, and youthful violence seemed to be limitable to the 'Teds'. The warnings from religious sources about the long-term risks of living off diminishing religious capital could apparently safely be ignored. But religious educators would almost certainly have preferred to see a greater element of the religious, both in Veness's summary of societal values and in the responses of the sample. Religious affiliations or sentiments were mentioned by 9 boys (1½%) and 40 girls (7%). While the category for church and social work, as leisure-pursuits, won a high response, this was not very informative because of the two elements being bracketed together. No interest was shown by Veness in any relationship that might exist between religious motivation and moral behaviour. Nonetheless, it does seem a fair comment upon her research that she provides indirect evidence that the schools were making some sort of impact on young people to encourage them to accept traditional values, and that this is also indirect evidence that an equated RE/ME might be contributing to the process.

3.4.2. Religious-motivation Research

i. Hilliard's survey into the place of sanctions derived from religion as inducements to moral behaviour was small and could hardly bear the full interpretation which he placed on it (99). But he did show that religious motivation to morality remained a relevant factor. His scheme was among 220 students training to be teachers, drawn from a University and 3 training colleges and aged between 18 and 22. Most were women, and most were churchgoers. They were asked about their attitudes to and/or

recollections of a) the bearing of religion upon morality, b) the teaching they had received about religious sanctions, c) current views on religious sanctions, d) the effect of Religious Education upon moral ideas, e) current views on the value of RE for children's Moral Education.

ii. Hilliard reported as his most important general conclusion that, although the majority of adolescents expressed considerable dissatisfaction with earlier ideas about divine sanctions, they continued to look to RE and to religion itself to assist them in the development and maintenance of their moral ideas and standards of conduct (100). Such a conclusion is rather more than the restrictive sampling can support, for it seems hardly justifiable to extrapolate from a sample of student-teachers to the majority of adolescents. On the other hand it would have been a justifiable conclusion to draw that a perhaps large number of teachers entering the profession held convictions about there being a link between religion and morality. This could then be taken as evidence that a religiously based ME was not under immediate threat from within the profession itself. The matter of motivation to morality is an important issue, as McPhail was later to declare (101), and, while this would not provide grounds to perpetuate the old ideas of divine sanctions to induce moral behaviour, it would suggest caution before a complete severance between RE and ME is implemented.

### 3.4.3. Re-interpretation

#### a. Hemming

i. James Hemming laid claim to five years' regular contact with young apprentices during the first half of the fifties, finding them interested in religious issues but unable to make sense of

orthodox Christianity (102). He had come to believe that there was a creeping sense of spiritual emptiness abroad, but that this was also accompanied by a movement to 'regenerate the spiritual values and experiences which became neglected during the great upsurge of commercial technology that has produced our civilisation' (103). A majority of young people, he asserted, saw institutionalised religion as life-denying, and he accused R.I. in schools and religious broadcasts of having failed to dispel the confusion and distrust displayed by young people towards morals generally, and to morals based on traditional Christianity in particular. He looked, therefore, to a new interpretation of Christianity that would better serve 'a new order' in society by forming part of a new moral structure.

ii. He had contributed to a discussion stimulated by the Conference of Educational Associations in 1953 in which, during an analysis of the 'quandary' of the current political and social scene, he made the point that social change left former moral principles isolated from actual life, and rendered people confused and insecure, because lacking moral convictions and a sense of direction (104). He saw the school as having a role in the forging of a new moral structure, this being the 'development of a heightened moral maturity in its members', different from and harder than the giving of Religious Instruction and the inculcation of rules. His recommendations were: education in choice; the viewing of moral growth as a process; the development of wonder at the mystery of existence; the provision of a 'sense of high purpose'; and a shift in school atmosphere, relationships and community towards 'easy frankness' so as to assist moral autonomy.

iii. Hemming's recommendations are suggestive as to why he was reluctant to abandon religion from his scheme for a new ME. For

his call for wonder at the mystery of existence and for a sense of high purpose is an admission of belief about the inadequacy of a pragmatic morality which cannot reach down to appropriate philosophical, even metaphysical, belief. This would seem to be a highly relevant point, in that it emphasises that both morals as well as religions rest on belief. While it would be wrong to equate moral belief with religious belief, it seems certain that the different beliefs reside in the same areas, namely in domains such as the nature of Man, the nature of 'ultimacy', the nature of destiny and purpose. Jessop was surely right when he pointed out that behaviour is determined at least partly by one's views about the nature of the universe (105). Hemming's latest book shows the author to be as perceptive of this as he ever was, but seemingly rather gloomier about the implications (106).

b. Hadfield (107)

i. Hadfield delivered the presidential address at the 1953 conference at which Hemming speculated about a new moral structure. Like Hemming he was reluctant to dismiss the contribution that religion might make to morality, but he was rather more insistent that morality should not be based upon religion. He directed his attention towards the sanction of hell and towards the belief that morality should be grounded in a God-concept. Simply, but pertinently, he commented that when belief in hell and in God ceases, a morality dependent upon such convictions ceases to be compelling. He preferred the view that morality is inherent in human nature and that moral principles spring up irrespective of religion,as ground-base for behaviour, and noted with approval the presidential address by Professor A.V. Hill to the British Association in 1952 which

called for a moral base to society, and which put confidence in the recent development of the scientific study of morality. Improved understanding of morality, Hadfield believed, had come with the progress of psychology. The answer to the question 'Why be moral?' was, he believed, simple and lay in the sense of community-obligation engendered by community-living.

ii. Bearing in mind that the presidential address was not intended as an extended study, Hadfield may nevertheless be questioned at several points. First, community-obligations may be compelling only when individuals accept the community to which they are deemed to have obligations. Speaking in coronation-year Hadfield had evidence of a strong national unity in a community which was self-consciously monist and accepting of the socio-political framework in which it was enclosed. But were a community to become pluralistic and the political framework to become suspect to sufficient numbers of people, then community-obligation may operate only as sectional interest. Second, Hadfield did seem at one point to be implying that, provided ideals inspire and co-ordinate the personality, they are desirable for that good psychological reason. Surely, however, no one could have intended such a meaning in a post-nazi age? Third, the problem of 'Which morality?' is barely touched upon. Yet, on the other hand, in Hadfield's insistence that moral development is dynamic, that a society-related ethic is important and that morals are autonomous in relation to religion he was emphasising points which needed to be made at the time, and which were to take on an increasing importance in the following fifteen to twenty years. He serves, with Hemming, as a representative of a middle way between the advocates of the former RE/ME equation and those who would argue for the total severance of the two. A representative of this latter view will be

examined in the coming section.

### 3.4.4. Autonomous Moral Education

i. As early as 1947 the B.B.C. had been ready to allow religious controversy to be broadcast, but usually on the Third Programme. Margaret Knight's achievement was to secure a slot in the Home Service, despite R.C. opposition from within the corporation. The first of her three talks went out in January 1955 which claimed to address itself to the 'ordinary' person who did not know quite what to believe about religion, and who was especially worried about what to say to the children. Her contention was that Moral Education was far too important to be built on religious doctrines to which the climate of opinion was becoming increasingly unfavourable. For, she maintained, there was the risk that 'if the child leaves the Church and casts off religion, he may cast off morals as well' (108). Her proposed solution was to see the ultimate for morality, as far as it was possible to arrive at ultimacy, in the humanist position that everyone is a social being, rather than in the religious position that one should desire to obey God's will, it being 'self-evident' to most people that 'we must not be completely selfish'.

ii. Knight broke through to public attention and the resultant reaction was stormy, even near hysterical in places, although it was short-lived. Courteous statements from Soper and from Matthews, Dean of St. Paul's, and from the Church of England Newspaper helped to calm down the hysteria, and soon the matter dropped from the news. Both the B.B.C. and Mrs. Knight received a volume of letters, the former registering three to two against Knight's views, the latter three to two in favour. The world-

press also showed interest, which rather throws into relief the absence of comment in the publication Religion in Education. This magazine usually kept such issues monitored and analysed, and Yeaxlee could have been expected to have regarded a critique of Knight as a fitting exercise for his editorial column. However, he refrained from direct comment either for or against, while indirectly admitting that to separate morals from religion was possible but dangerous. Perhaps this marks a point at which the typical attitude to RE in the fifties, on the part of the generality of the majority of its supporters, is to be encountered. Statutory RE may be unpopular in some quarters and may not be particularly effective in some schools. Also, the country may appear to be becoming less convinced about the truth and worth of traditional Christian beliefs, the teaching profession perhaps going in the same direction. But RE is not for turning. RE by Agreed Syllabus and an equated RE/ME were to continue to be the way forward.

iii. There may have been weaknesses in Knight's case, especially in the absence of empirical evidence to support her position. But she had made a clear philosophical point. There could be harm resulting from an equation of RE and ME, and this could take the form of a breakdown in moral behaviour. It would seem that no RME theorist at the time could afford to ignore the implications of her broadcasts. In fact most of those people engaged with formulating an ongoing rationale for RE allowed that she was making a valid criticism, but it was a further twenty years or so before curriculum-developers took up the challenge.

## 3.5. THE RE/ME RELATIONSHIP

i. It was in this decade that the RE/ME relationship thus started to become a visible difficulty. There was no emergence of any movement campaigning for secular ME, in the manner of the M.E.L. But individuals were voicing dissatisfaction with the view that morality necessitated a religious base, and they were moved to speak out because they believed there was a weakening credence being given to traditional Christian belief and this would seem inevitably to lead to a weakening assent to the moral principles resting on that belief. As a logical proposition this seemed to have something to commend it, even though there was no empirical research to suggest that this was what was happening. There was, however, prima facie evidence to suggest this to be the case.

ii. The problem that therefore presented itself was that of finding an alternative base to morality, if religion had to be deemed inadequate to the task. The obvious direction in which to turn was towards constructing some sort of societal base. But it may be questioned whether those making this suggestion seemed aware how much reliance they placed on the assumption of a monist society. In the fifties Britain did appear generally homogenous, so that an appeal to social responsibility made sense. But any moves towards social fragmentation might reduce 'social responsibility' to a euphemism for sectional prejudice. While social relationships must be important as data for morality, any morality derived from society would have to take account of pluralism, and of the difficulties of demarcating pluralism from anarchy.

iii. There was a continuing affirmation that morality might benefit by resting upon a philosophical base that posited some belief in cosmic purpose. In a decade in which science was in the ascendant, and in which some confidence could be engendered that it would be a generator of human values in succession to religion, a base in evolution seemed attractive to some. The naturalistic fallacy would have to be taken into account at this point, but additionally it might be asked whether such a base was not in itself unscientific. Hemming's mix of evolution plus wonder, as a stimulus to the imagination for the production of moral behaviour (109), seems to sit rather uncomfortably with the view of evolution as blind and arational, and with science's avowed duty to remove an appeal to mystery from any explanation of physical reality. Also, the social purpose that science seemed to be providing for society was not one that aimed at a broadening, uplifting moral outlook, but at the simple, even humdrum, realisation of materialistic happiness in the here-and-now of mechanical and electrical gadgetry.

iv. In brief, then, while the fifties produced a challenge to the traditional role of RE as the base and medium for Moral Education, popular beliefs take time to change, and the decade did not produce social conditions of sufficient warrant to overturn the general, if vague, public opinion that ME was satisfactorily conducted through RE. But some educationists were coming openly to maintain that the independence of morals and religion had to be championed even against St. James and most headmasters (110). There was as yet no fully worked-out case for a secular ME, and even less of a worked-out programme for such an ME if it

were to be operated. But there was a sharpening of awareness as to how a secular ME of a separating process might look, once it had gained its independence (111). There was also an increasing perception, within the educational system, that schools might be attempting to achieve religiously and morally what society might be coming to believe should not be attempted (112). Moreover, criticisms were appearing about the psychological harm, and, by implication, the moral harm which might result from the current understanding of what constituted RE (113). However, despite such misgivings there was a marked reluctance to depart from 1944 guidelines, if only because of their legal base. But the statutory protection given to RE did not necessarily work in its favour. For provided that the outward trappings of the legal procedures were maintained, it was possible to disregard RME in practice by not according it status and by with-holding resources and timetable allocation. There were many pressing demands additional to the re-structuring of RME to which educationists had to direct their attention. Schooling was becoming ever more important to parents as a gateway for their children to the 'good life', and the nature of the good life came to be increasingly interpreted in materialistic terms.

v. The socio-humanistic factor in motivation to moral behaviour seemed to be gaining in importance as the likely 'sanction' to replace the religious 'sanction'. This would therefore point to the possible desirability of constructing a humanistic base to ME. If transfer from religious to socio-humanistic could be effected without too much trauma there might thus be a possibility for a continuing relationship between RE and ME. But such a position was likely to be transitional, for if the eventual aim was to be socio-humanistic then an intermediate religious step might become unnecessary.

## 3.6. SUMMARY

i. RE did seem to have much in its favour during the fifties. The legal standing meant that the higher echelons of educational administrators had to register ostensible approval, as did headteachers, and there is evidence that such approval was more than merely nominal. Money was allocated to in-service, the Ministry setting a lead, with the I.C.E. providing a useful general supporting agency, with particular contributions to areas such as Agreed Syllabus production, aids to teachers and empirical research into the mechanics of RE teaching. The Student Christian Movement and, in a smaller way and on a narrower front, the Inter-School Christian Fellowship fostered among pupils understanding of and participation in Christianity, as well as offering guidance to RE teachers (114). The religio-moral theories upon which forties' RME had been established continued to be expounded and developed, though with more noticeable, if not very rigorous, dissent. The country continued to appear homogenous, the unity stemming partly from the effectivenss of previous socialisation into a unitary, if class-related ethic, and the reduction of class-antagonisms virtually to nil (115). Although young people became a salient social group, with some apparent rejection of some traditional values, the bulk of them seemed content to assume the basic values of their elders, while insisting on marked but superficial differences of life-style. The notion of a Christian monarch heading a Christian Commonwealth did not seem particularly absurd. The church was stable and generally orthodox, with some churchmen prepared to speak of a revival in religious interest just round the corner (116).

ii. There was, however, another side to the picture. Pressures were beginning to accumulate. Industrialisation and urbanisation were fostering changing patterns of community, of work and of family-life, and were making the proliferation of unco-ordinated value-systems more likely. The church had ceased to be a reference-point for many, this trend seemingly increasing. Complaints were being made that Christian teaching in its traditional expression was ceasing to make sense to large numbers of young people. Materialism seemed able to sustain a nation enjoying full employment and relatively high wages, even in the face of the bomb, of international tensions and of rising crime. But there were signs that such a philosophy might breed its own set of problems, either in an over-abandoned pursuit of sensation and self-indulgence, or in a deliberate rejection of materialistic life-goals without this rejection leading to re-discovery of Christianity. Incoming residents with alternative religions, or with alternative versions of Christianity, were set to challenge the concept of a monolithic society, and the media were to put some of the more powerful elements of their influence on the side of pluralism. Science and technology were gaining in importance and were showing signs of becoming a strong influence on the curriculum as on the wider aspects of national life, in particular on a current understanding of what constituted the 'good life'.

iii. There were, thus, good reasons both for continuing the traditional form of RE as epitomised in the Agreed Syllabuses, and for working towards a re-interpretation of aim, content and method as new social and educational conditions emerged. Two new educational trends had appeared in Progressive education and early moves towards comprehensivisation. The former could no longer be ignored and was fast becoming the new received

orthodoxy in training-college circles. While the latter did not betoken a system inconsistent with RE, there was sufficient evidence of the unsuitability of the Agreed Syllabus in its current form for the secondary modern school to have sent a warning signal to RE personnel that the former grammar school approach to RE would need a re-think for the comprehensive school. Steps were taken to cater for secondary modern schools in a more appropriate way (117), but there does not seem to have been advance-planning in this decade for RE in the comprehensive school. Empirical research into the mechanics and effectiveness of classroom-RE produced the first salvos in the coming battle for the revision of the Agreed Syllabuses. Concern about the apparent confusion among young people generally about morals, to say nothing of rising crime and delinquency, brought the first major challenges to the religio-moral theories which gave a central place to Christianity in ME. But these challenges were not yet at the stage of stimulating a thought-out alternative to religiously based ME. However, the time seemed to becoming ripe to turn to the psychologists for help to this end (118).

iv. Mr. Macmillan's celebrated remark on the fifties might form a fitting conclusion to the analysis which has been presented in the foregoing chapter. He said that Britain had never had it so good. The same might be claimed for RE. But the second part of Mr. Macmillan's remark (usually omitted) was: but how long will it last? The sixties were to test the viability of the view, so confidently predicated of the authorities by the churches (119) that Christianity and education were a unity. The next decade at times seemed to be set to mark the point at which Britain was to bring to an end its centuries' old tradition of RE in schools.

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# CHAPTER FOUR

## RESEARCH AND RE-APPRAISAL: The Sixties

### INTRODUCTION

i. This chapter will examine the major issues in RE and ME during the sixties, concentrating upon research-schemes. The aim is to see how the understanding of these two areas developed, and what the implications of this developed understanding were for the RE/ME relationship. It will be shown that, although RE continued to be regarded as education into Christianity, a greater importance came to be attached to the personal and social concerns of the pupils themselves. The way therefore was open for a continued partnership between RE and ME. In so far as RE dealt with social awareness and ME with society-related moral concern the two would at least overlap. But RE could not devote exclusive attention to the social dimension of religion without truncation, and on occasions anxiety was expressed that truncation might be a prelude for disappearance. For ME, a concentration upon social relationships could lead into relativism and subjectivity, and anxieties were expressed about this also. However, a major ME research-scheme was conducted which, as one of the consequences, provided a safeguard against relativism by constructing a justification for Moral Education which rested upon non-relative principles. These principles were advanced both to help the formation of moral judgement and to aid the implementation of moral behaviour. A further consequence was to show how ME need not depend upon RE for its authority, without at the same time dismissing the possibility of links between the two areas. In this decade there was a discernible separation of RE and ME but mutual respect and co-operation were nonetheless the ideal for this separating process.

ii. This position was not reached without a great deal of heart-searching in RE. In fact, it will be argued in the course of this study, such a position was never really reached. What in fact happened, it will be maintained, was that pressures for the separation of RE and ME led the Schools Council to over-react in the direction of divorcing the two areas, with the probability arising that RE and ME would deny to each other the mutual benefits that would come from inter-relationships. The Schools Council would have to bear the brunt of this criticism as the major curriclum-developer in RE and ME during the seventies. The sixties, however, could not be indicted in this manner, even though the Syllabus-revision which took place in this decade could be charged with encouraging a trend towards divorce by not being sufficiently tuned to the need for specifically ME material.

iii. For RE the sixties opened with unease. While the social data discussed in section 3.2 of the previous chapter were to take time before their full import was to be appreciated, the social directions of the forthcoming decade did not appear as if they were to be particularly favourable to religion and to RE. The propriety of christianising aims for Maintained school RE was open to criticism, sixteen years having elapsed after the 1944 settlement, and the church no longer having to be given the consideration necessary when the religious difficulty had destructive implications. Doubts were being expressed about the appropriateness of the Agreed Syllabuses to the social and educational context in which they operated. In particular, the impressive growth of the Progressive Movement created tensions for any pedagogy originating in and having a continuing kinship with authoritarianism and doctrinal transmission. Also, it was not difficult to draw

impressionistic conclusions from a mix of social appearances and crime-statistics, by which a gloomy picture of youthful rejection of traditional morality could be formed. A similar picture could be painted, with rather more justification, of youthful rejection of traditional religious teaching, at least in its conventional expression. In so far as the belief had previously been articulated, that Christian behaviour was the product of Christian faith, then the argument could be pressed that Christian religious teaching should be indicted for the apparent erosion of moral standards in the country. The simple equation, RE = Bible knowledge = ME, was coming to appear simplistic. Also, immigration had become visible, and although its implications for RE were not to be spelled out until the seventies, these implications were coming to be apparent to some during the previous decade.

iv. There appear to be seven main factors which influenced the course of RME in the sixties. They stem from the simple truism that RE had been operating as a statutory exercise for some sixteen years, and from a simple acceptance that people are interested in the enjoyment of life in the here-and-now. The permeation of RME by these two simple motifs forced a deep-seated self-criticism upon Syllabus-makers, upon those responsible for teacher-training and upon school RE teachers. This made for an eventful decade. The seven factors were as follows. First, there was a continuation of the optimistic, if at times slightly bland, 'official' view that basically all was well with RE, and that the best way forward was more of the same, but striving all the while for betterment. Second, there was a mounting disquiet with the Agreed Syllabus framework, coupled with a groping (though some might describe this as a purposeful advance) towards something that, while not

sweeping away the framework, would be more realistically attuned to the times. Third, and encouraging this disquiet, was the flowering of the Progressive Movement in the primary schools, with something of a knock-on effect in the secondary, which carried an inbuilt challenge to the notion of subject-centred teaching, as distinct from child-centred learning. Fourth, there was a sometimes near despairing expression of confusion about the exact nature of the relationship between religion and morality, and hence between Religious Education and Moral Education. Fifth, this uncertainty merged with alarm that youth, if not generally at least in appreciable numbers, appeared to be becoming a somewhat independent, rather menacing group in society, with adolescents a similar sub-group, more than likely to be at odds with the church and with values derived from the churches' teachings. Sixth, a need was felt for research-guidance into the nature of morality and of moral development, and into ways in which ME could be adequately conceptualised and conducted in modern conditions. Finally, there was a developing attack by a small but highly articulate group of Secular Humanists, who viewed the official interpretation of statutory RE to be educationally and morally harmful, who opposed any tendency to base ME upon RE and who campaigned for the abolition of Christianity-dominated, legally buttressed, Maintained school RE.

v. So much happened in sixties' RME that the forthcoming chapter will inevitably be lengthy and complex. Even with the application of strict selectivity, the data to illustrate the factors mentioned in the previous paragraph, and more importantly from which the conclusions of sections 4.5 and 4.6 are to be drawn, amount to a sizeable body of material. It may therefore be useful to indicate that the chapter will

be addressed to three major themes, if only to emphasise, it is to be hoped justifiably, that the coming material is neither disjunctive, nor unwieldy, and yields to credible marshalling in support of the theme of the study as a whole. First, the refinement and revision of the Agreed Syllabus tradition will be traced at the same time as the implications for this tradition of the changing ideas as to what constitute proper aims for RE are examined. The West Riding Syllabus of 1966 will be taken as representative of the 'new' approach. Second, the challenge posed by Secular Humanism to theology, Christian ethics, and more particularly Christian RE will be investigated as part of a wider social movement towards greater openness and tolerance of plurality in belief- and value-systems. The challenge to a religiously based ME will occupy particular attention. Third, the emergence of ME as an autonomous secular exercise will be analysed, consideration being given to the way in which proponents of this form of ME viewed its relationship to RE.

vi. The sixties are probably best regarded as a period of transition, as far as the literature is concerned, for the re-appraisal and revision of this decade were but a prelude for yet further re-structuring of both RE and ME in the seventies. Practice, however, seems always to lag behind theory, and there were many teachers of RE who resisted moves to reduce biblical content in late-sixties' RE and who then resisted moves towards a multi-faith RE in the seventies. Even in the eighties not every authority has moved from a West Riding form of Agreed Syllabus to a multi-faith type of RE, and there are those RE teachers who are not convinced that the argument, that rejection of religion might lead to rejection of a morality based upon that religion, necessitates

a humanistic base to ME. The sixties might also be called the decade of the secularisation of RE, partly in the tendency that seemed to occur in fourth- and fifth-year secondary RE for it to be replaced by ME, and partly in a tendency to see RE as teaching about, rather than into religion.

## 4.1. THE CULMINATION OF MONISM

### 4.1.1 The Agreed Syllabus Tradition

i. The question of immediate interest is 'How soon did the social, educational and religious data, discussed in the previous chapter, influence the 'official' view of RE?'. The short answer is: not until 1966, with the publication of the West Riding Syllabus. But, it is possible to discern in the early years of the decade a growing acceptance that changes in RE must come about to match changes in society. This was particularly noticeable in the area of aims. While there was no indication of changing aims in the 1960 Bristol Syllabus (1), although that publication was put out as 'a completely new work', there were signs that the churches were coming to accept that former evangelising aims, to which the Bristol Syllabus still was firmly attached, were not now appropriate. The Othen Report of 1960 (2) talked about the County school perhaps quite rightly declining the aim of helping children to fulfil their 'true destiny as children of God' (3). It attempted to view school RE from the point of view of the children receiving it, rather than from the standpoint of what the churches might consider to be in their best evangelistic interests.

ii. The report would seem to have taken note of expressions of

disquiet about the state of RE (4). In the same year of publication, Niblett produced a book (5) which openly rejected the christianising aims for RE which, for example, Murray had advocated, if guardedly, in the fifties (6). For Niblett, 'Enlightenment rather than conversion, understanding rather than discipleship are the aims of the school' (7). This notion was to be taken into the core of the Durham Report of a decade later (8), but Niblett was, at the time, being a little ambivalent, for he also advocated that teachers turn the values of particular school subjects 'to good account' in the 'nurture of belief', and he continued to regard the school as a Christian community, if only in principle. In distinguishing between bringing pupils to the threshold of Christianity and bringing them to accept Christianity, Niblett was making a finer distinction than was general in the Agreed Syllabuses, and was in fact being inconsistent with his own wish to nurture pupils in belief. But this inconsistency is probably best regarded as the most viable social adaptation then possible for RE, if a balance of forces were being sought. Monism was not to be given up without a struggle, but pluralism was not to be denied.

iii. But it was not just in the area of aims that voices of criticism of the Agreed Syllabuses were being raised. The place, function and value of the Bible in school RE became a matter, not just of customary, at times near lyrical (9), assertions of its centrality, but of sober research-projects into its effectiveness. Loukes was early into the field, with an investigation into secondary modern school RE (10), which led him to advocate an approach to older pupils which worked back from personal, adolescent concerns into a biblical understanding of these concerns. It may not be an overstatement to place Loukes as a forerunner of the secondary school Personal Relationships

courses which have multiplied in recent years (11). He can certainly be regarded as the father of 'implicit' RE, which became a recognised category in the early seventies (12). He pioneered a problem-centred, existential form of Religious Education, which enabled him to formulate proposals for a new perspective on RE which were within the framework of the 1944 settlement, although a little removed from the traditional approach. He came to interpret the intention of the 1944 Act, from the public's point of view, to be not that of moral uplift, but that of inviting the churches to enter the human situation and discuss it (13). But perhaps this view was a little too sophisticated to be true, on the evidence earlier examined in this study (14).

iv. Loukes was one of a number of writers and researchers in the early sixties who brought critical attention to bear upon the Agreed Syllabuses. Eventually they succeeded in bringing about quite major change. Acland pressed for an RE whose starting points were the self and society, rather than Christ, God or the Bible (15). Daines advanced research-evidence for what he believed was a situation in which young people with 'something bordering on spiritual hunger' were being failed by incompetent RE teaching (16). Hyde researched the relationship between attitudes to religion and abilities in religious learning (17), and added his voice to the criticisms of the Agreed Syllabuses. The criticisms tabled by the Sheffield enquiry have already been noted (18). But pride of place should perhaps be given to Goldman, whose extensive and sophisticated research maybe did more than that of anyone else to re-shape the Agreed Syllabus tradition. His work will be examined in the next section. Thus, a number of people were agreeing with Loukes so that, by the time of his second enquiry in

1965 (19), he formed part of quite an influential group of people whose insistent pleas were registering with the Syllabus-makers of at least one LEA (20). This second enquiry was more statistical and less impressionistic than the first, and put forward a more rigorous critique of the central issues of aims, Syllabus-making and factors making for effective RE, and a more developed set of proposals for an RE approached through personal concerns and relationships.

4.1.2. Goldman

i. Goldman commented in 1963 that there was an 'interesting agreement' among current researchers that 'religious teaching at all stages should be more pupil-centred and less subject-centred' (21). His own research-interest was in the area of children's capacities to understand religious concepts (22). Although he specifically allowed the importance of the emotional, his interest was primarily in the cognitive, and he acknowledged a dependence upon Piaget (23). A further acknowledgement was that he adopted religious criteria in his research which stemmed from a central-to-liberal Christian theological position (24). By a painstaking survey of 200 children, representative in age, sex, intelligence and religious affiliation, he found corroboration of a Piagetian-style progress through stages in children's thinking about religion, although such thinking was slower in reaching the formal operational stage than thinking in other areas.

ii. Goldman's work focused particular attention upon the validity or otherwise of the Agreed Syllabus material in the infants and junior school. He found the material wanting, not in the sense that it was Christian religious material, but in the sense that, as such, it was unlikely to further the christianising aims

implicit in the Agreed Syllabus documents. Basically, he called for an RE in the primary school which implemented child-centred principles of education, so as to avoid the two cardinal dangers which he believed to reside in a Bible-based approach. These were 'arrested development' and 'damaged motivation'. He considered his research justified his arguing for a move from Bible-centred to child-centred RE, partly because of the problem of 'concretisation' and partly because religious insight was contingent upon a 'long apprenticeship' in experiencing and reflecting upon the life-data upon which religious thinking is based. He therefore contended that life-themes were a better starting point than Bible-stories for a developmental RE (25), going so far as to call RE teachers to face the fact that there may be very little biblical material suitable for primary school-children.

iii. It is not surprising that his work raised something of a storm. Howkins published a monograph accusing Goldman of predisposing children to the received answers, by telling the biblical stories in his own words, by omitting from the accounts some important details, and by his wording and ordering of the questions (26). He also developed Goldman's own admission that his conclusions were related to his liberal theological position, and that his research showed evidence that children brought up in a conservative theological position could score highly in his own tests. Howkins encountered some support (27). Further criticism of Goldman was made by Fleming for his not having operated a longitudinal study, and for apparently advocating the outdated concept of 'age-placement of topics'. But, as Goldman had a major research project behind him, while almost all his critics had not, and as he had maintained a steady stream of publications from as early as 1959 onwards (28), his message

gained ground. By the time he gave his 1966 North of England Education Conference lecture, his own findings had been aired, he could refer to comparable findings in current researchers and could advocate the production of RE Syllabuses 'of a different character' to meet the needs of twentieth-century children (29).

iv. Goldman focused upon a central issue for RE, namely the sort of help most appropriate for children to understand the Bible. His proposal was the rather negative one of delaying the religious use of the Bible until secondary school. This fitted his scheme for a developmental, experiential RE, which in turn fitted the Progressive ethos. But it may have given too little consideration to the view that biblical stories can be understood at different levels, and that to handle a particular story at several points in a child's schooling did not necessarily represent harmful repetition. Also, there may have been more room for consideration as to how children's progress through the stages could be speeded up. This might have been facilitated by breaking down biblical concepts more effectively into validly simplified elements. It is not impossible for thematic RE to be as loose and incoherent as spasmodic biblicism (30), and therefore perhaps as retarding religiously. It may not be unfair to suggest that Goldman's research contributed to the disappearance in some schools of RE as an identifiable and valued element in the curriculum. On the other hand, Goldman's work was constructive and it would be less than fair not to acknowledge that he obliged RE teachers to think more rigorously than previously about the appropriateness of a Bible-based approach in RE for young children. He had taken some typical Agreed Syllabus material and had found this material to be suspect in some of its applications.

4.1.3. The West Riding Syllabus, 1966

i. Pressure for Syllabus-revision had mounted. The Sheffield enquiry had suggested that the Syllabuses had been viewed by teachers as schemes of work rather than syllabuses (31), despite protestations from the compilers that they were not so intended (32), and Cox reiterated that there may have lain a misunderstanding about the nature of syllabuses at the heart of the criticisms of these documents (33). Loukes had dismissed the ostensible recommendation that teachers select, abbreviate and adapt, claiming that teachers had allowed themselves to be bound by Syllabus-material (34). The I.C.E. had doubted the appropriateness of the Syllabuses for the secondary modern school (35). As mainly the product of University ecclesiastical Theology, the Syllabuses were coming to appear too academic, too remote from twentieth-century young people, too unaware of what developmental psychologists were saying about children's needs, and too unabashed about the considerable weight of biblical material deemed suitable for school RE. It may be noted that the assumption, inherent in the Syllabuses, that ME was a concomitant of RE, did not come under strong critical scrutiny in the researchers examined so far. The view of religion as cultural transmission and social control impregnated the Syllabuses, even though attempts were made to head away from an unfeeling mechanistic approach by engaging pupils' sense of awe, wonder and mystery through the school assembly. There was little attempt to come to grips, at this stage, with the validity or otherwise of this view, so that the label 'neo-confessionalist' seems fair to apply to the crop of 'new' Syllabuses in the late sixties, and so that these Syllabuses can be regarded as the culmination of the monistic tradition. The open letter to Religious Advisory Councils in 1965 brought Syllabus-criticism to a head (36).

ii. The West Riding LEA published the first revised Syllabus (37). It may be compared with an article written by Goldman three years earlier (38). It is not difficult to recognise the language of developmentalism in the general articles of the Syllabus (39), which soon became intertwined with the language of Goldmanism (40). The material was laid out thematically, and Loukes' influence is discernible in the recommendations for the 13-year-olds and upwards. Although the biblical material remained quite substantial, its use in the primary school was not put to an understanding of theological concepts, but to provide illustration of general areas of experience relevant to the children, or to be studied for its background by 10-11-year-olds as an introduction to later study as a source of primary religious data. Other LEAs were soon to follow suit, each showing a shift from biblical to thematic material, and a recognition of developmentalism (41). Each however, remained attached to the aim of bringing children and young people to an appreciation of, and if possible an acceptance of the Christian faith. This upset some Humanists who thought that this was improper, and that the new approach might be more effective to this end than the old.

iii. Something of the range of responses to the 'new' Syllabuses displayed by the RE world is indicated in a symposium on the topic in 1969 (42). Some welcomed what seemed to signal the end of biblical-fundamentalist RE. Some wondered whether the new approach failed to get to grips with the Bible. Others suggested that the logic of thematic work led to the removal of the Bible completely from such material. Anxiety occurred as to whether Goldman had, as Godin had maintained (43), tied religious thinking to stages of conceptual thinking, whereas it might be more validly tied to symbolical thinking. Doubts were expressed over whether the new Syllabuses helped teachers to grapple with

the current loss of absolutes and the prevalent emphasis upon meaninglessness, reminiscent of Jeffrey's point, made in 1967, that the failure of RE was because 'spiritual truth, in <u>any</u> guise, is foreign to our present thought-world' (44). Furthermore, it was not long before the new Syllabuses were criticised as being, no less than the old, totally misconceived in principle. While they might meet psychological criteria better, the fundamental philosophical question as to what constituted a valid aim for RE was yet to be finally thrashed out.

### 4.1.4. Further Evidence of Values-continuity

i. Parallel with the anxiety shown by RE researchers and Syllabus-makers about the apparent shortcomings of RE, went a comparable anxiety, displayed on a more general front, about the apparent moral decadence of sixties' young people. But, while research justified anxiety about RE, it did not about alleged moral decay among young people. The tenor of the evidence showed there to be a quite considerable continuity of values between the generations. A substantial investigation by the Eppels (45) suggested that, for a sample of 250 15-18-year-old working people of both sexes, conventional standards and behaviour would characterise the group. Changes in moral codes and sentiments were observed, but these involved 'a shift in emphasis and focus and a re-evaluation of the sanctions for moral conduct than an adoption of a completely new set of principles' (46). Perhaps the basic point to emerge from this survey is that 'the quality of personal relationships is the touchstone for their own and other people's standards' (47) - almost exactly the same conclusion reached by Loukes in a comparable project, published in 1973 (48). The Eppels stood very much in the Veness tradition, but with the suggestive finding that young people were working out

a different outlook on moral sanctions than that of traditional religion.

ii. The Eppels' conclusions were anticipated in a larger project among slightly younger adolescents by Musgrove (49). The broad picture he painted of contemporary youth was that of unadventurous conformity, from a survey of some 350 school-children, aged between 11 and 15, and some 200 aged between 9 and 10. The picture that emerged was not one of bitter generation-conflict, nor of youth as an autonomous cultural group in the process of generating its own alternative value-system, nor of family-life on the verge of breakdown. Adults seemed to show more hostility to adolescents than did adolescents to adults.

iii. Schofield's survey (50), among 780 boys and 761 girls, was an examination of a very narrow section of moral behaviour, that of sexual relationships. His findings are of interest to this study, not so much for the details brought to light about sexual practices, as for the signs of a shift from the church and religion, as moral authorities, without there being a corresponding landslide into an alternative morality. 86% of the boys, and 87% of the girls considered that there was more to sex than just having a good time, with 62% of the girls, but only 35% of the boys, agreeing that sexual intercourse before marriage was wrong. The degree of ambivalence and confusion revealed in some of the findings, however, might suggest that to ground morality upon human relationships cannot but foster uncertainty (51).

iv. Wright concluded from his study of over 2,000 grammar school pupils that there was a great majority with a developed sense of responsibility (52). He believed there to be little

ground for saying that there was a decline in morality, while allowing that the content of morality might be undergoing some change (53). Cox reported similar findings among his sixth-form sample (54).

v. Perhaps the Latey Report fittingly summarises this section (55). It claimed to have 'much evidence' about 'enterprising, responsible and vigorous young people', and indicted the press for giving disproportionate publicity to the small number of vicious, anti-social, young people who were more newsworthy than the thousands leading normal, decent lives. The proposal to lower the age of majority to 18, and its subsequent implementation, indicated a confidence that a relaxation of some of the pressures to keep young people socialised in traditional values would not mark a wholesale departure from those values. The decade had opened with the Albemarle Report, which envisaged 1960 youth as a social grouping to be clearly defined and appropriately socialised. The Latey Report saw youth in a less rigid framework. This would suggest that the socialising process had been deemed so successful that the granting of adult status at an earlier age could not only be made without serious risk, but could be seen as a further strengthening of the value-system which young people generally appeared to have accepted.

vi. But the late sixties and early seventies did produce signs that a discontinuity of values might be forthcoming. If the term 'alienation' is defined in Keniston's words as 'an explicit rejection of what are seen as the dominant values of the surrounding society' (56), then it can be said that alienation was appearing and might increase.

## 4.2. PLURALISM EMERGENT

### 4.2.1. Counter-culture

i. In the sixties, the majority of young people, as has been seen in the previous section, were not propounding a new value-system with its own claim to legitimacy (57). Wilson, on the other hand, never seems to have accepted that the post-war period saw anything other than the growth of a youth-culture (58). Stenhouse, in 1967, believed that he had found a homogenous teenage culture forming a kind of protest against adults (59). American analysts were sounding the alert about counter-culture trends (60), indicating that the prospect of safe, unexciting materialism might prove as unacceptable to some young people, as did the prospect of denied materialistic happiness to others. If the latter were to turn to crime, the former came to turn away from, with deliberate disaffiliation, 'the protestant, clean, decent, self-denying, miserable glorification of work', where work seemed to stultify personal development and individuality.

ii. The 'drop-out' syndrome took a number of forms. There were the hippies, whose claim was to be seeking only love, peace and flower power. They have been described as a religious movement, albeit outside the institutionalised religious framework ((61). But it was not long before drugs became part of the beatnik scene (62), and claims have been made that this extension was also at base a religious activity. This, in turn, gave way to a growth of interest in the eastern forms of spirituality: Zen, yoga, transcendental meditation, Krishna-consciousness, and Sufism making their appeal, with the occult, astrology, spiritualism and witchcraft also increasing in influence.

iii. It is not easy to identify the values of the supposed counter-culture. If there were such a phenomenon then presumably its values were an alternative to the mainstream-culture. It seems that the Protestant ethic, as interpreted in the fifties and sixties can be adequately described as 'the possession of ambition, the recognition of individual responsibility, the cultivation and possession of skills, worldly asceticism, rationality, the accentuation of manners, courtesy and personality, the control of physical and verbal aggression, the pursuit of 'wholesome' recreation and the respect of property' (63). Perhaps consumerism should also be added. Some young people in the sixties disputed these values, and in this sense a counter-culture existed which might be deemed to have denied the Protestant ethic. But their denial might be seen in another light as an attempt to penetrate to the spiritual base of that ethic. For the spiritual yearnings of the hippies could be interpreted as a repudiation of materialism; and other groups, which at the time were labelled 'drop-outs' by some in the mainstream-culture, might have shared with the hippies a desire for a life-style which they could be satisfied was spiritual rather than material.

iv. If it be allowed that a counter-culture existed, composed of groups of people who desired to express their rejection of mainstream-values in specific life-styles, then this must be regarded as a pressure to pluralism. But its influence can probably safely be regarded as slight. There may have been some influence upon schoolchildren, if only by diffusion-effect through the media and pop-scene. But it neither aroused any widespread generational conflict, nor mounted any serious threat to mainstream-values (64).

4.2.2. Secular Humanism

i. The British Humanist Association was formed in May 1963 by the joint efforts of the Ethical Union and the Rationalist Press. It overlapped with the University Humanist Association, formed in December 1959, also with the help of the E.U. and the R.P. The Humanist Teachers Association was formed in 1965. A comparable body to the B.H.A. was the National Secular Society, which had raised again the issue of secular education (65), an issue likely to have strong support from the B.H.A.

ii. It is not easy to arrive at a clear definition of humanism, because of the reluctance of Humanists to see their position as residing in a set of propositions (66). There seems to be a valid division between religious Humanists and secular Humanists (67). In the sixties, however, there seemed a greater readiness by Humanists to use the words 'belief' and 'faith' to denote their position. Their origins, they would insist, lie in ancient Greece, and their greatest subsequent debt is considered to be to science. Blackham has recently committed them to four propositions (68). These are: one, man is not natively depraved; two, the end of life is life itself; three, man is capable, solely by reason and experience, to perfect the good life on earth; four, the first essential of the good life is to free men's minds from the bonds of ignorance and superstition. Ayer declared his belief in social progress to be empirically justified (69). Bibby spelt out the difference between the Humanist and the religious man as one of faith: the latter puts his faith in deity, the former in humanity (70). Blackham further described 'full-blooded' humanism as being more than a plea for rationality, but involving an acceptance of all sides of human nature, and a determination that all resources should be employed on human development (71). This is the

confident, optimistic type of humanism, seemingly typical of those Humanists involved in school RE, but, perhaps, note should be taken of Guiness' claim that there is a 'subterranean stream' of pessimistic humanism, threatening to surface and usurp the dignity of the optimistic ethos. This is the attitude which regards Man as trapped in an absurd situation, in which he can only despair (72).

iii. From this all-too-brief summary of sixties' humanism, it is possible to distinguish three main views towards religion. The first and simplest is the populist view, which links with Utilitarianism, and which allows Man to achieve happiness in his own way, even if from superstitious beliefs and practices, provided these do not bring misery to his fellows (73). Second, there is the militant atheism of someone like Brophy, who urged that if atheism be true, then it must be accepted, even if the result were utter misery for everyone (74). Third, there is the middle way by which a reconstruction of religion is sought, in naturalistic terms, Huxley perhaps being the most distinguished advocate of this attitude (75), Hepburn also appearing to have the same general view, while criticising Huxley's particular solution (76).

iv. Despite different attitudes towards religion, Humanists seem able to agree on their view of school RE, generally according it a valid place in the curriculum, but being unanimous that this place is not defined by the sixties' Agreed Syllabuses. They pressed three main objections. First, instruction in Christian doctrine, to the ignoring or denigrating of other belief-systems, amounts to indoctrination (77). Second, the 1944 Education Act's assumptions about God can no longer justifiably carry Parliamentary authority, or even approval (78). Third, the equation of Religious Education and Moral Education is unnecessary and dangerous (79).

v. The sixties saw involvement by the Humanists in the growing debate about RE (80), their influence mainly being directed towards the extension of content to include 'life-stances' additional to Christianity, and towards the separation of RE and ME. Denominational schools within the State system are deplored, and there is current unease about the possibility that immigrant religious groups be permitted to found their own schools with Aided status.

## 4.2.3. Sixties' Theology and Ethics

i. It seems to be the case that humanism exerted an influence on theology in the sixties. The radicals, as they came to be known, encouraged a willingness to learn from secular thought. It is Norman's judgement that, although they believed they derived their radicalism from their theology, in reality they made biblical theological scholarship correspond to the 'moral canons of contemporary humanism and to the idealism of the 'youth culture' of the period' (81). Two topics, in particular, became foci for debate: a de-emphasis upon divine transcendence, along with a search for ways of expressing divine immanence so as to make it credible to modern Man; a preference for a situation-ethic of personal relationships, rather than an ethic of rules.

ii. Although Robinson's 1963 article (82) opened the immanence/ transcendence debate, there had been previous discussion of the issue among theologians (83). As twentieth-century Man's capacity for technological advance, achieved independently of institutionalised religion, came to be increasingly demonstrated, it became a matter of urgency for theologians to interpret this within credible theological categories (84). Robinson became a populariser of certain suggested interpretations (85), inducing

an instant and large-scale response. His initial impact waned, but a second wave of radicalism, centring on the notion 'God is dead' (and Man seems none the worse), thrust outwards. The earlier storm seemed to have inured the public somewhat and there was a much-reduced reaction from the people. The radicals were calling for the abandonment of traditional language-forms in talking about God, and for a reformation of theology so as to allow full autonomy to secular thought. They made some conquests among academic clerics, but these conquests were not total (86), and secular non-Christian academics in other fields seemed mainly unimpressed (87). Also, while there was much talk about producing new conceptual understandings of Christian teaching about God, in the event the only suggestion which seems to have made any headway is that of God as ground of being, which is not such a novel concept anyway.

iii. It seems clear that radical theology accepted the secularisation theory of society. This interpretation implied more than that the State had taken over areas of church provision, such as education and welfare, in parallel with a decline in public support for religious ceremonies and in ecclesiastical political influence. It implied a change of consciousness, usually expressed in a revolt against metaphysics (88), with the corollaries that the temporal only is meaningful, and that Man is autonomous (89). Some sociologists were saying similar things (90), but it is noticeable that there were both sociologists and theologians who, while allowing the force of the arguments for secularisation as having happened, were hesitant about seeing it as a total phenomenon (91). Opinion polls in the sixties were certainly favourable to both religious belief and to RE (92). Nevertheless, it can scarcely be denied that a trend to secularity was under way, and theologians were therefore

challenged to interpret it theologically. Once grant that Protestantism had the seeds of secularity within itself, then there may have been logic in proclaiming the propriety of dispensing with, or, at least, in de-emphasising the concept of transcendence. Whether this could only be a short-term solution is, however, quite another matter.

iv. With the humanistic shift to a 'this-worldly' theology, went a corresponding shift to a 'people-centred' ethic. Again, Robinson was in the lead (93). 'Situation-ethics' became a term to refer to an approach to morality which rejected a fixed starting point in a set of rules, especially rules based on religious dogma, and advocated instead that each situation be assessed according to the personal needs of the individuals concerned at the time (94). While the 'new moralists' took the full range of ethical issues into their perspective, perhaps it was the issue of sexual relationships that should inevitably capture the public attention (95). The label 'permissive society' was coming into parlance, and , with the current advances in scientific birth control, the strength of the former sanction about the wrongness of producing unwanted children was weakening. There can be little doubt that a legalistic application of rules can blind people to the subtleties that can occur in human problems. Yet it may be questioned whether an approach to a human situation that restricts itself to one principle only (love), and that without a consensus definition, can give the participants anything more than a description of the situation. It may be noted now, as will be seen later (96), that much educational writing, and psychological research, in ME was directed towards a principled rather than a situational morality.

v. The schools could not be expected to escape the repercussions

of the theological debate. It heightened the already growing impression that there was a difference between the morality of the school and that of the working place, and that difficult problems did arise out of the use of Christianity as a vehicle for ME (97). Although there were those who felt that the times needed firm, direct and unambiguous moral teaching (98), the more moderate were facing the implications of there being little possibility of consensus as to what constituted moral rules, and that ME had become everyone's concern. It appears that the overtures made by radical theologians towards Humanists might have helped to form a climate of co-operation between people of diverse views, in conducting school RE. In 1965 a paper was issued by a group of Christians and of members of the B.H.A. which aimed at a centrist position in the interests of united and positive action (99a). In 1969 a further joint statement appeared (99b). This focused mainly upon ME, criticising the Syllabuses for their dearth of appropriate ME material, and calling for an ME which 'can not only stand alone in the time allotted to it but ... can also give added sense and significance to the rest of the curriculum'. Such a statement was common in the forties, but then it referred to Christian RE not to secular ME.

### 4.2.4. Progressive Education (100)

i. For a number of decades an influence had been operating in the schools to loosen disciplinary and pedagogical structures, when these were deemed to be harshly authoritarian, to foster a view of education which advocated a holistic approach to knowledge, and to encourage a view of children as people fundamentally disposed to choose the good. With their stress upon holism the Progressives might seem to fall into a monistic category,

but, in fact, they must be regarded as a pressure towards pluralism. For the knowledge-integration thay sought was not to be found so much in any subject-integration that was intrinsically unifying, but in the integrating powers of the child, who was placed crucially and centrally at the heart of the learning process. Individuality must surely be the most pluralistic of all concepts.

ii. By the Second World War the Progressives had a reasonably uniform set of ideas and practices, amounting almost to a received orthodoxy. Their chief tenet was the sanctity of the child, whose believed needs and interests were the paramount determinants of classroom-activities. From this cardinal doctrine issued a corresponding set of beliefs in development, self-realisation, freedom and independence, in the tradition of Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Froebel, growth being the dominant concern. Authoritarianism became the supreme enemy, so that the ideal classroom-atmosphere was one of relaxation, informality and pupil self-direction, the ideal teaching technique that of heurism, and the ideal approach to knowledge an across-subject, holistic synthesis, deemed to be in keeping with the child's natural outlook before contamination (not too strong a word) by artificial subject-divisions. Although the 1944 Education Act focused upon secondary education, it helped to establish the Progressive tradition by recognising primary education as a stage in its own right, and by underlining the principle that education should be provided to meet the individual needs and capacities of the pupils. 1944-67 saw a sustained penetration by the Progressive creed into the primary schools, as topic-work, projects, integrated days and team-teaching came to feature more and more in this sector.

iii. <u>The Plowden Report</u> saw the meeting of two educational

traditions with Progressivism, with corresponding tensions, and with comparable ambivalences. First, the Agreed Syllabus RE tradition recognised that material should match the age-range of pupils, but two of its basic attitudes had been that children should be brought to an adjustment to the Bible, and that the sanctity of individuality was not violated by induction into a monist ethic. Second, the classical tradition which differentiated knowledge into subject-disciplines, held that such subject-differentiation was neither arbitrary nor harmful, but a logical requirement that stemmed from the very nature of knowledge. These two traditions were therefore both in tension with the Progressive tradition that Plowden represented. The attempts that were being made at the time to bring the Agreed Syllabus tradition more in tune with child-centred theories of learning are reflected in the Plowden Report's recommendations for RE (101). But they were not sufficient to prevent the inclusion of a Note of Reservation (102). This found no place for Theology in the primary school, and doubted the wisdom of tying Moral Education to Theological Education. Yet if the report spoke with two voices on this issue, it also spoke with two voices on the issue of curriculum-content, by insisting that knowledge does not fall into neatly separate compartments, and yet advocating a traditional handling of the differentiated curriculum. No attempt was made to discuss and resolve this dichotomy, so drawing the fire of two educational philosophers from within the 'forms-of-knowledge' camp (103).

iv. Where, then, did Plowden leave RE? In some ways the Peters/Dearden critique of Plowden might have strengthened RE, in having depicted growth as growth in a certain direction, and discovery as discovery of the educationally desirable. Alves has suggested that, in so far as it is qualified autonomy and

qualified freedom that are under consideration, then Temple's and Dearden's educational positions approximate (104). It seems possible to claim that heurism, viewed as a method only, can be incorporated into RE without much difficulty. But there would then seem to be the risk that children using this method might discover little of useful religious significance, even in the light of the valid distinction between the explicit and the implicit in religion. Furthermore, to some people the discovery of something 'of useful religious significance' might appear a dubious acquisition, for religious 'knowledge' sometimes has to be believed on authority and is not easily validated empirically. The more that personal autonomy gains importance as an educational ideal, the more questionable becomes the practice of induction into a given set of moral beliefs and rules. In addition, the principle of child-centredness could hardly be incorporated wholeheartedly into the Agreed Syllabus tradition as it was then understood. However, the fact that Plowden contained its own inconsistencies with a developed Progressivism perhaps helped the immediately post-Goldman Agreed Syllabuses to implement the principle of learning by discovery from appropriate experiences, while remaining in a traditional framework. Also, as the line between discovery-learning and knowledge-impartation can be very fine indeed (105), the didactic method, which was quite an important element in forties-sixties' RME, was not necessarily displaced from the classroom.

### 4.2.5. Social Studies, Humanities and Integrated RE

i. The ideas seems to have grown that schools prepare pupils for an

understanding of the complexities of modern industrialised life. With the progress of the social sciences towards academic respectability in the Universities, there has developed a slow acknowledgement in the schools that these subjects might better equip the young for understanding modern society than the traditional courses in History and Geography (106).

ii. The coming of the post-war period saw major advances in Social Studies teaching, coming in two waves. The first was not very successful, having drawn on the then current fervant feeling that the schools should be to the fore in social reconstruction, but having paid too little attention to the development of a convincing academic rationale for the newcomer. So, though the late forties and early fifties saw official approval for the development of Social Studies (107), by the mid-fifties the advance was losing momentum (108). The second wave, in the early sixties, benefited from the direct support of Crowther and Newsom, and, indirectly, from the child-centred ethos that was leading to Plowden. By the end of the decade, courses dealing with Man in Society featured in many secondary schools, specialist teachers were more numerous, the subject was linked more closely with the social sciences, and a range of Ministry statements, of curriculum-development projects, and of publications helped to ensure further advance and consolidation.

iii. It was not long before some subject-amalgamations incurred by this advance came to be subsumed under the broader title of Humanities (109). The Schools Council responded with speed and pragmatism to a practical situation, and, though early suggestions for RE were that Humanities should be enclosed within the RE lesson, it was no secret that what was contemplated was an eventual integration of RE and other subjects into a new, multi-

disciplinary field of knowledge. This clearly entailed a new rationale for RE, in which it would no longer be regarded as the integrating principle of the curriculum. But such a rationale had to be worked out as RE went along, often under pressure from headteachers demanding near immediate proposals (110). There was, actually, quite a theologically and educationally sophisticated rationale available to RE (111), but the sequence was often, apparently, first integration, and only then the construction of as appropriate a rationale as could be mustered afterwards. Integrated Studies obliged RE to diversify, for biblical material did not always provide sufficient, or even appropriate, content for inter-disciplinary schemes. This, in turn, caused some apprehension among RE teachers that integration meant extinction.

4.2.6. Comprehensive Education

i. It is difficult to place comprehensive education on a monist/pluralist scale, because an insistence upon a single school in a given area is to that extent a denial of pluralism. It is probably fair to say, however, that such monistic imperialism is more a desire for a framework that will enable pluralism really to operate, without its being destroyed in anarchy. The avowedly egalitarian aims of comprehensive education, however, encouraged a restiveness about an educational system which 'engineered' an élitist social system (112), and stimulated a demand for one which fostered an egalitarian outlook. This had implications for an RE which inducted children into a single ethic, especially if this ethic could be seen by some as class-based. If the comprehensive principle were advanced as a means to facilitate the freedom of plurality

then the only induction into an overarching value-system that the principle could tolerate would be that of initiation into broad democratic forms, in which each individual worked out his own value-system as an expression of his own personal adjustment to a democratic society.

ii. Running parallel with the comprehensivisation/freedom debate was the comprehensivisation/equality-of-opportunity debate, from the idea of compensatory education to that of equality of outcomes. Perhaps the economic events of the late seventies and early eighties have convinced many more people that equality of opportunity is indeed the pursuit of the unattainable (113). Nonetheless, the provision of a narrowly academic curriculum for all children, i.e. flat educational equality, can scarcely be the ideal of comprehensive education. Yet the creation of courses, designed to cater for a wide range of social, emotional, physical, as well as academic needs, cannot but put pressures upon timetable-capacity. If RE suffered erosion as a result, this would not have been on the grounds of its content becoming more debatable and more difficult to validate as true (although these had to be considerations), but on the sheerly practical grounds that room had to be found for new courses, and something had to go to make way for them. History and Geography were under the same threat.

iii. In an endeavour to plan and mount courses which deliberately made for social cohesion and the economic deployment of staff, and which took on board a trans-subject approach, RE had sometimes to face considerable truncation of its explicitly religious content, to the extent of sometimes becoming indistinguishable from Social Studies. <u>MACOS</u>, for instance, offers little scope for multi-dimensional RE, and a strict application of the conscience-

clause dealing with withdrawal from RE would necessitate a negligible controversial religious element in some integrated courses. But to use these grounds as reasons for pursuing a subject-approach in RE could be castigated as an inexcusable undermining of the comprehensive philosophy. Probably most RE teachers in comprehensive schools felt apprehensive about the problem of preserving an identifiable curriculum-component, RE, and of doing justice to its truly immense range of subject-matter. Some had to face criticisms of being reactionary and unco-operative, and some had to accept integration in forms which seemed to spell out the disappearance of their subject.

iv. Comprehensive education, then, would seem to have issued something of a challenge to RE along two main lines. There was first the practical problems aroused by pressures upon timetable-provision, in the face of course-diversification made necessary by the diversified composition of the new institutions. Even in schools subscribing to an egalitarian educational ideal there is a hierarchy of subjects, and decisions about time-allocation are made on this basis. It requires more than strength of character on the part of the head of RE to ensure that his subject secures an adequate provision of timetable-allotment. The positive support of the headteacher is crucial, and this is not to be gained merely by quoting the 1944 Education Act's religious clauses. It is much more likely to be obtained by examination-successes, by demonstration that pupils generally respond favourably to what is presented in the classroom as RE and by being persuaded that the RE so presented is as useful to what he is trying to do in his school as is History, Geography, Social Studies, Music, Health Education, Physical Education, Art and

Home Economics - to name some of the more usual competitors with RE for the available timetable- and financial provision.

v. The second challenge derived from the very nature of comprehensive education and its egalitarian ethos. Although some comprehensive schools might have perpetuated former educational divisions, but this time under one roof, the ideal was that the system should now encourage pupils of different social and educational levels to accept each other and live together in equality of esteem as fellow human beings. RME could, actually, be a contributer to this process, but perhaps its previous history as the subject which claimed a unique and privileged status fostered lingering resentments. Also, were there to be a suspicion that it encouraged the imposition of 'middle-class values' on 'working-class pupils', or vice versa, antagonisms could be aroused. Furthermore, the pastoral problems brought on by the creation of large new institutions necessitated a development of corresponding pastoral provision. This, in turn, led to the provision of Personal and Social Education courses, which might have appeared to some heads an appropriate re-interpretation of RE's role for the comprehensive school. By the time of Circular 10/65 it was becoming ever more clear that socialisation into the society of the sixties could hardly be conducted on the basis of the religio-social theories of forties' RME, and comprehensive education sharpened this perception. Was there, then, any use for RE as a socialising agent in the pluralistic context of the comprehensive school, and, if not, was there anything in RE which commended it as an appropriate partner in an egalitarian educational enterprise? In due course it was to become clear that multi-faith RE could make a very relevant contribution to religiously plural schools. It could also

be argued that RE would contribute to the cultural background-knowledge necessary for an understanding of English Literature and History, and that questions of purpose, value and meaning are as necessary for consideration in a comprehensive school as in any other type of school, even if Hirst's case for a religious form of knowledge might be suspected of being inimical to subject-amalgamation and of encouraging RE imperialism. But the RE teacher had to have his arguments well-rehearsed if he wanted an RE department, staffed, resourced and timetabled to a comparable degree as other Humanities subjects.

4.2.7. The Shap Movement

i. University Theology was not immune to the social and intellectual factors that have been reviewed in the previous paragraphs. Ninian Smart, as Head of the Religious Studies Department of a new University, was well-placed to innovate, his interest in school RE helping to extend the influence of these innovations to colleges and schools. His Heslington Lectures at York University (114) contributed to the debate about aims in RE, his main argument being that the inner logic of religion would drive Christian theology into a re-consideration of its content towards the inclusion of wider issues than biblical studies, with implications for school RE. He did not call for a Christianity re-formulated in humanistic terms, as did the radicals, but for an RE whose content was World Religions, in deference to the pluralism of modern society, and whose aim was the understanding of, rather than the acceptance of, religion, in deference to its secularity. This was a position that was relevant to both University and to school RE, and Smart had proceeded to establish courses at Lancaster for Studies in Religion, rather than in

Christian Theology alone, and indicated his desire to work out, in conjunction with the Divinity departments of the colleges of education associated with Lancaster, the relation between his department's Religious Studies courses and RE in schools.

ii. Smart had pioneered a new approach offering a substantive rather than a functional way forward, and to that extent differing from the solution to pluralism and secularism offered by the radical theologians. It may have been especially helpful, emerging at a time when secularity and the growth of immigrant religions were coming to be regarded as two significant, if contradictory, social facts, by those associated with RE (115). It may be noted that the Community Relations Committee replaced the N.C.C.I. in November, 1968, subsequent to the passing of the Race Relations Act. Also, although of the 184 titles listed by the University of Nottingham as RE textbooks 1960-70 no more than 5 dealt with religions other than Christianity (116), the idea of RE as education in World Religions was percolating. The 1969 Shap Wells conference on 'The Comparative Study of Religion in Education' drew sufficient support (117) for a Shap Working Party to be set up to investigate the area of the teaching of World Religions in the classroom (118). A programme of activities was started offering help to teachers from infants to sixth-formers.

iii. These moves were not unresisted. May and Johnson urged that Britain remained a Christian country (119), and May (although not Johnson) took issue with those who advocated 'increasingly varied fare' for RE, challenging the view, citing Martin (120), that Britain was a multi-racial, open, multi-belief society, although having to concede that trends might be moving in that direction (121). He maintained that minority faiths were catered for by the withdrawal-clause and by provision for denominational schools, and that teaching about those faiths was

more appropriate to Current Affairs lessons than to RE. The ensuing controversy (12) illustrated some of the twentieth-century objections that might be made against an RE as traditionally understood.

## 4.3. MORAL EDUCATION EMERGENT

### 4.3.1. Suggested New Directions

i. A religious ethic, which required a belief in God to sustain its authority, might find difficulty in remaining authoritative in a society in which churchgoing was in decline. Yet an ethic of this nature did have the advantage of not being totally subject to the pressures of relativism. Hence, an issue which became an important consideration for debate in the sixties was how to separate ME from RE while at the same time continuing to invest morality with a prescriptiveness which raised it above particular social circumstances. For churchgoing was not the only practice in decline. There seems to have been much anxiety about supposed moral decay. Crime-statistics caused concern (122), drug-taking seemed to be on the increase (123) and Mrs. Whitehouse had been moved to action (124). Much shock had been registered by the Profumo-affair. If RE was being much discussed (125) and questioned (126), this seemed more than likely to be because it continued to be invested with the vague hope that it would turn out young people from the schools who were committed to the Christian ethic, whatever they might think about Christian theological assumptions.
The favourable showing by RE in opinion-polls (127) can hardly be interpreted as a simple reassurance of British enthusiasm for religion. For, despite RE's perceived failings, and despite decreasing support for the church, there was, at least in the

early sixties, no widespread clamour for its abolition (128). But, though it may have been valued for its believed moral benefits, there was a growing desire to examine other possible ways by which ME could be conducted than through the medium of religion.

iii. The series of public lectures on ME which took place in London in 1962, not only produced an overflow-audience, but included as speakers both secularists and Christians, who ranged from physicist to philosopher, from theologian to sociologist, and from educationist to medical practitioner. The resultant book (129) indicated a preoccupation with practical outcomes of ME in the form of moral behaviour, and a corresponding lukewarmness to formal moral teaching which was not realistically in continuity with modern living. A further prominent theme was that of the rational element in morality, as seen in the necessity for conscious personal decision-making, upon a responsible appraisal of the situation. The focus was upon the social. The religious was not attacked, but Vidler, the theologian, made a point of dissociating himself from the conclusion that Christian morals were impossible without Christian faith (130). This lecture-series pointed the way towards an ME which could be a shared exercise, partly in the light of the width of expertise represented in the lecturers, partly in the muted role that could now be accorded to religion, and partly by the concern that was shown to obtain a profound understanding of the nature of young people in their actual environment. ME was presented in this series as an area to which contributions could be made from a number of different academic and professional perspectives, with the prospect of some width of agreement.

iv. Perhaps the fundamental problem that pressed for recognition was that of finding an agreed public base for ME, which would provide a convincing and compelling authority to undergird morality. Wilson was to draw attention to the apparent increase in non-authoritarian ways of thinking (131). Carstairs' Reith lectures discussed the then current challenge to authority as traditionally understood. Wielders of authority would now find their acceptance coming to depend more upon relationships than upon appeal to status. While the idea of Christian authority might always have ideally lain in this direction (132), yet its popular impression had tended to be seen as deriving from a given set of rules to be obeyed without question. Hemming saw this situation through the eyes of a Humanist (133), arguing for a move from a morality of obedience to external absolutes to one of involvement and discovery. Evolution was to him an invaluable concept, although it may be doubted whether evolution can realistically be accorded as much moral inspiration as Hemming claimed for it. But in placing morals on the basis of human relations Hemming and others were within a growing trend that was to influence subsequent ME curriculum-development, even though such a base could be subjective and unclear. It seems that young people themselves were, not perhaps self-consciously, but with an appreciable amount of self-volition, moving in this direction also (134).

### 4.3.2. Secular Moral Education

i. Once accept the suggestion that morality should be based on human relationships, then there is the possibility that a loose, 'anything-goes' type of ME might result sooner or later. If

moral absolutes had to be abandoned with the abandonment of their religious base, was there any alternative apart from relativism? Hirst was to develop a position which allowed the autonomy of morals in relation to religion, but which nonetheless set morality significantly above the cultural continuum. His book did not appear until the next decade, but an article was published in 1965, which was not only the foundation of the book, but was disseminated through a number of works (135). He analysed the relationship of morals to religion, concluding that Man's moral knowledge must ultimately be founded upon reason.

ii. His argument questioned the thesis that for something to be right is for it to be a command of God, this implying that Man knows what is right only by coming to know the will of God. He held this view to be false on three grounds, empirically, biblically and logically. Empirically Man does come to judge certain things to be wrong without dependence upon religious revelation. Biblically Romans 2. 14,15 stated that the Gentiles had a knowledge of the moral law independently of the law of Moses. Logically the status of 'ought' is different from that of a phrase like 'the will of God', the one referring to a judgement the other to a state of affairs. Of these three arguments the logical would seem to be the strongest as well as the most relevant to this study. For it would seem also to be empirically true that men are in disagreement about whether lying, promiscuity, the colour bar and war are wrong, these being the four examples chosen by Hirst, and the disagreements do not divide up neatly between the religious and the non-religious. An appeal to the empirical may therefore yield uncertain results. An appeal to the Bible may also be inconclusive, for it may be questionable to make the Romans' verses to

say that the Gentiles arrived at moral knowledge independently of divine revelation, unless the Mosaic tradition is held to be the only way in which God is said to reveal his moral nature. But Hirst did bring clarity to the debate about ME by stressing the difference in logic between fact and value. Yet to invest so much trust in reason was to assume that there is a common understanding of what constitutes reason in arriving at moral truth - or that relativism is the only reasonable moral position, which is a view to which Hirst would not subscribe.

iii. When he turned to a consideration of the positive relationship between morals and religion, Hirst made some further points which aided clarification. He indicated that to accord autonomy to morals was to make meaningful the claim that God was a moral being, was to underline that Christianity was more than a set of moral principles, and was to establish a justification for general moral principles on rational grounds. He thus showed that to separate morality and religion did not necessarily put each out of relationship with the other. He also showed that a life-style which was grounded on religious belief was as subject to general moral considerations as was a life-style without a religious base. In clarifying this point Hirst was saying something very relevant to the times in which he was writing. For it was only realistic to accept the privatisation of religious belief as a fact of British life, brought on by the social trends discussed in the previous chapter, and it is manifestly unsatisfactory to rest a general public morality solely upon privatised belief. Yet it may also be unsatisfactory if privatised belief be kept from relating to general public morality, even were the life-style arising from the belief to be acceptable to the wider society. This may provide a further reason for a separated RE and ME still to remain in interaction.

iv. Although not himself a Humanist, Hirst had given his support to two major humanist demands, namely, the separation of RE from Christian induction, and the separation of RE from ME. For the drive of his article was that, lacking agreed public criteria for validating religious knowledge, factual instruction about belief had to be the limit of the Maintained school's role in RE, engagement in the beliefs and practices of a particular religion being the role of other agencies. Yet Hirst was not bent upon demolition, for his focus was only upon the Maintained school, and he did not wish to see the removal of RE from the curriculum. Like Smart, he was emphatic about the changes that would have to take place for RE to have an assured future. That future, Hirst maintained, necessitated an ME come-of-age.

v. In this he was supported by Wilson, who had been leading a research-project in ME since October 1965, the first major publication of which appeared in 1967 (136). The basic argument of this book was that pupils could be taught to think morally as they could be taught to think mathematically or scientifically. Wilson tried to steer a middle course between the authoritarian pleas for the right answer and the relativist pleas that one moral solution is as good as another. The criteria necessary for the 'doing' of morality were summarised as autonomy, rationality, impartiality, prescription and overridingness. Wilson was working towards a concept of ME upon which a large measure of consensus might be sought. The concept was rooted in reason, rather than in assumed revelation, but it was not anti-religious. It was non-partisan, but encouraged the belief that 'right' answers to moral problems were forthcoming, given the right use of the right procedures. It was liberal and democratic, without this becoming a route which would result in the 'anything-goes' of

relativism. It took very seriously the contributions that psychology and sociology could make to the understanding of and the fostering of moral development. It had a dgree of sophistication and complexity, befitting a multi-dimensional process, which was essentially different from the simplicity of the mechanical production of predetermined behaviour. It furnished an analysis of the components of a morally educated person, so offering, if only linguistically, a way through the confusions that could gather thickly around ME. Perhaps above all, it gave hope that moral judgement could be developed and moral behaviour encouraged by valid educational means. The debit lay in what had to be admitted: that there may have been logical weaknesses in the model put forward, that little or no empirical research could yet be presented, and that extreme tentativeness was forced upon the unit at a time when authoritative recommendations and action were rather urgently needed. Nonetheless, a way forward was being indicated. Furthermore, Wilson's work was linking with another researcher who conducted a fairly substantial scheme, of some importance both to his times and to this study (137).

### 4.3.3. Developmental Moral Education

i. Bull's primary interest was moral judgement and its development, but his research-findings enabled him to make proposals about the concept of ME, and about the relationship between RE and ME. While acknowledging that moral judgements varied from individual to individual, stage to stage, and situation to situation, he believed that a broad pattern of development could be posited, comparable to the findings of McDougall (1908) and Piaget (1932) (138). But, as well as finding a sex-difference in his sample (139), he flatly contradicted Piaget's view that autonomic conscience is the fruit of reciprocity,

claiming that his evidence showed internalised morality to stem from rule-enforcement this being a finding against situation-ethics (140).

ii. In building up a concept of ME, Bull again went out of step with Piaget, this time in his criticism of the latter's concentration upon cognition, and belief that co-operation and intelligence are the two significant factors involved in the development of moral judgement. For Bull, the orectic was as important as the cognitive, and motivation as moral knowledge. Intelligence held an essential, but not a sole place in moral judgement (141), its basic functions being reciprocity, foreseeing and judging consequences, foreseeing remote goals, moral learning and resolving consequences. Moral judgement for Bull was a shorthand term for the various aspects of the total personality, expressed in its encounter with other persons. Bull also seemed more aware than Piaget of the implications of socio-economic differences for types of upbringing.

iii. ME was sketched in the broadest terms. It was developmental; it was socialisation, but at the same time facilitating the development of personal ideals; it was both direct and indirect, the latter being seen as the more powerful; its aim was personal autonomy, rooted in reason and focused on the moral experience of the child; its method was moral learning, not moral teaching; it involved emotion, attitudes, and moral skills, as well as understanding; it centred on relationships, not upon rules. This last point, however, seems to have put Bull into something of a dilemma. For his claim that heteronomy was necessary for internalised morality had to ascribe a certain value to rules. Yet his standpoint on the relationship between morals and religion was that of the Christian Humanist in which he urged a precedence of principles over rules, and of people over principles. On this issue he could put forward a valid

solution by regarding law as a schoolmaster to prepare the way for love. But on another issue his solution may not be so convincing.

iv. For Bull set aside the traditional view of morality as an outflow from religion, with its form, content, application and sanctions deriving from a transcendental dimension, and with the attribution of moral decay to decline in adherence to religion. Yet he maintained that to divorce morality from religion did not provide an adequate enough motivation to move someone from reciprocity to selfless altruism. Without going into the question as to whether such a move would be right, the point is made that religion or something akin to religion is necessary to generate the strength for this transference. But when Bull indicates the source of such strength he seems to be re-introducing the old idea of dependence upon religion which he has been at pains to discount. His solution was to advocate Christian Humanism, indicating the identity between the Christian's and the Humanist's appeal to love as the one absolute. Yet he specifically attributes the source of a Christian's love to God, in a way which requires God to be understood as a transcendent being. This is further clarified in the claim that Man's transcendence of self above all gives rise to his moral insights, this very transcendence linking with religion by pointing to a reality beyond Man. While such a position would be valid if it were put forward as an argument of natural theology to be evaluated on its merits, it is surely not a valid position in the context in which Bull puts it forward, namely as an alternative to the traditional view of religion and morality as dependent. Any attribution of a need for a transcendent source of moral strength to aid moral maturity cannot but give a re-instatement

to the mechanisms of explicit religion (rituals, sacraments, dogmas, etc.) as occupying a role in the production of moral behaviour, unless it were argued that God and explicit religion are opposing forces. Bull appears to have stopped short of the full logic of his position which would seem to require that God be identified with love in a descriptive manner, rather than being viewed as a transcendent source of love. By so doing the problem of the atheist who nevertheless loves at the same time as he expresses a hostility to God as a transcendent being ceases to be a problem to the religious man, for 'God' and 'love' are no more than equivalent descriptive words to express a naturalistic experience. But Bull is not advocating this position. He is continuing to advocate a role for transcendence, and to do so is really to put the matter back to the forties' position of equating RE and ME, from which Bull was careful to dissociate himself. The psychological and social mechanisms for the production of moral behaviour, which were to come to figure so prominently in seventies' theorising about ME, would seem to link, if at all, with God's immanence. It would then at least be possible to maintain that God's help is necessary to moral maturity, but, as such an argument would seem to need the postulate that divine help is given whether consciously asked for or not, or whether consciously experienced or not, it might take on the appearance of being no more than a pious verbalism.

v. But Bull did focus upon an important area of the RE/ME relationship, that is, motivation to moral conduct, even if his proposal seems to run into circularity. Perhaps the position of this thesis, pressing for 'intersection' as the appropriate way of viewing the relationship, better avoids this circularity. This position will be more fully developed in the final chapters.

## 4.4. CHURCH RESPONSE

i. The events of the decade were particularly challenging to the churches, and there was pressure for them to formulate a position on the changes that were taking place in RE. This was to come in the Durham Report, but a previous publication in 1968 made public the results of an investigation into RE in Maintained schools conducted at the instigation of the British Council of Churches (142). The hope was that these findings would be sociologically slanted and able to identify the underlying factors making for successful RE so as to pass this information on to RE teachers throughout the country. It is an illuminating commentary on the rate of social change in the sixties in that this hope was only partially fulfilled. The combination of swift social change and substantial regional differences to a certain extent reduced the effectiveness of the original aim, but nevertheless certain conclusions did emerge which were not only interesting in themselves, but could have been taken, at least by an optimist, as grounds for hope. The really disappointing part of the research was the inadequate section on the relationship between RE and ME, which is especially unsatisfactory in view of the complexity and sophistication of the analysis of other areas of the topic of RE.

ii. After thorough pilot-schemes and discussions a questionnaire was returned by about 1360 pupil-respondents who had spent the longest time in their schools, i.e. sixth-form grammar and fifth-form modern pupils who had had the fullest opportunity of achieving whatever end-results there were to achieve. The questionnaire was substantial, consisting of 6 sections, one of which was primarily concerned with moral situations and Christian reactions to them, and it was sent to 'high scoring', 'successful' schools, in which RE could be deemed 'good'. A further

questionnaire was distributed to teachers, investigating aims and methods. A final part to the survey was designed to test whether the high attitude-scores shown by some respondents were obtained at the expense of real insight.

iii. Alves identified the main issues, in this survey, of RE at that time. Aims, school worship, opinion-polls, the open approach, the need for well-qualified teachers, Agreed Syllabuses and their revision, the relationship between RE and ME, the growing presence of non-Christian religions in Britain all came within his purview. In trying to isolate factors making for success, he designated the 'basic bricks' of 'good' RE as length of experience in teaching the subject, the standing of the teacher and/or the subject in the school, the teacher's involvement with the school's social activity, and, but not to a marked extent, the teaching methods used. Of particular interest perhaps was the finding that there was a general association between pupils' high attitude-scores and their teachers' desire for their 'personal Christian dedication' and their 'improvement in moral responsibility'. In addition, with the help of an 'acceptability' scale, in conjunction with a 'Christian-non-Christian' scale, Alves found that at sixth-form level prejudice and/or indiscriminate acceptance was more associated with the non-Christian than the Christian position, although he acknowledged that his figures could not give a straightforward interpretation. He also found evidence that a tendency to the Christian position correlated with an overall responsibility of judgement, despite its authoritarian undertones. RE, in other words, was not producing bigots, but pupils who were slightly more responsible than their peers in their thinking.

iv. Perhaps it was the influence of these findings, coupled with

its base in the church, that resulted in only a few pages of the report being given to the topic of the RE/ME relationship. In this small compass Alves seems to make one point only, and that without supportive discussion. This point was that ME should be set within a Christian perspective (143). The humanist position is referred to and applauded in that it advocated as part of the content of ME 'experiences leading to a right evaluation of oneself and one's relationship with others' and 'experiences leading to a valid perspective on man and the universe'. But there is no doubt that for Alves the valid perspective was the Christian outlook in that an extended quotation is inserted, from an ecclesiastical source, which urged that ME continue as part of Christian RE, not to confront pupils with a supernatural moral sanction but to furnish them with a perspective on life in order to be able to face the 'perplexities and challenges of living'.

v. There can be little complaint about the assumptions of this quotation, namely that love is the universal divine purpose, that Jesus embodies this purpose and that the Holy Spirit helps everyone to attain this purpose, but objections could certainly be raised about the lack of discussion as to how these assumptions related to a socio-humanistic base to moral behaviour. The implication given is that in a 'good' school the question would not arise. But this is to adopt the forties' stance of equating RE and ME and so making it more likely that in any imminent situation forcing some sort of separation between the two, then that separation might have to veer more towards total severance at a practical level than would be made necessary by theoretical considerations. Total severance, it will be argued in this thesis, is a most inappropriate approach to RE and ME, and steps must be taken to avoid being forced into this position.

## 4.5. THE RE/ME RELATIONSHIP

i. In the sixties the outburst of research into and analysis of Moral Education raised questions about the validity of the notion of a religiously based ME. The major writers on the topic did not press for a complete severance of the two areas of RE and ME, but there was agreement that separation of the two domains was possible and desirable. The wish to separate ME from RE seems to have stemmed partly from a realisation that there may be a wide range of constituents which were eligible for inclusion in a modern concept of Moral Education. When the Farmington Trust Scheme was formed it was left to the leadership of a philosopher, a psychologist and a sociologist, who proceeded to operate on the findings from their various disciplines. There was no antagonism towards religion, but a theologian was not invited to join the leadership-team, and there did not appear to be anything distinctive which a theologian might say about modern ME.

ii. The issue which attracted probably the greatest attention was that of the role of reason in RME, and it was soon to become clear that both RE and ME would have to face the demands of rationality as each activity responded to the challenge to justify its continued presence in the schools. Yet such justification did not appear to require a total severance of ME from RE. It is the case that Wilson endeavoured to establish non-religious criteria for 'doing' morality. Similarly, Hirst contended for rational moral principles and therefore argued for the independence of morality from religion as well as for

a base in rationality for morality. But Wilson also allowed close logical and psychological links between religion and morality, and Hirst maintained that a base in rationality would enhance both the notion of God's moral excellence and the place of moral judgement in the life of the religious believer. So two of the foremost writers on ME in the decade did not see their appeal to reason as necessarily inconsistent with a religiously linked, as distinct from a religiously based, ME. It is interesting to note that they were amplifying a point made by D'Arcy in his article in the 1951 Year Book of Education, when he advocated a mutual appeal to reason by both secularist and religious person. When Bull published his research he seemed even more reluctant to sever ME completely from RE, while nevertheless rooting his concept of ME also in reason.

iii. An advantage in according reason a central place in ME was that this provided a counter-balance to relativism. The principles that Hirst advanced for secular rational morality had a similarity with the moral absolutes of traditional Christianity, and so there might at this point be an opportunity for a beneficial co-operation between RE and ME. The emergence of the view that rational moral principles exist, above personal preference and social mores, could lend weight to and may derive some benefit from the critical stance which RE might have to adopt towards a morality which consisted only of social expedience. Also, a more objective means of judging right and wrong in human situations may be necessary than the criterion of harmonious personal relationships. A further check on relativism

was found in the emergence of 'situation-ethics' which had the great merit of advocating only one moral principle (love), so offering a solution to the problem as to how to structure a hierarchy of rational moral principles when a situation occurred in which there was a clash of these principles. It also had the further merit of focusing attention upon people as more important than rules, so establishing a reference-point with Christianity, in that this seemed to be the tenor of Jesus' moral practice, and so providing further reason not to separate out RE from ME in too severe a fashion.

iv. For it is a valid question to ask whether the time was right for a complete separation of the two areas. What is a clear-cut case in a philosophical sense may not be a straightforward matter in the world of ordinary people and of schoolchildren. For even in the sixties, when words like 'liberation', 'modernity' and 'change' seemed heavily in use, children brought up in the traditional church viewpoint of the relationship of RE to ME still formed a proportion of the school population. It would hardly seem to have been in their best interests to risk destroying their religious motivation towards moral behaviour, as indeed it may not have been in the immediate best interests of the teachers who were relying on the moral behaviour of the pupils. While it would be educationally desirable for such pupils to be aware that moral behaviour could be produced on socio-humanistic motivation, the trauma involved in forcing a change of motivation upon unready pupils might indicate moral insensitivity on the part of the teacher. The corollary would of course also apply, if such change were prevented.

v. But a question which was present at the end of the sixties, and which did not seem to be examined, was whether those insisting on keeping ME within the context of a Christian RE were making inevitable an unnecessarily wide swing in the direction of total severance of ME from RE when the time came for ME to be granted its autonomy. The continuance of confessional RE as the official legal requirement was justification of a sort for Alves' insistence that ME should adopt a Christian perspective on moral issues. But his readiness to de-emphasise the role to be given to religious sanctions in morality does indicate a shift of position from the traditional approach to RME. Yet he did not consider what should serve as a replacement for religious sanctions, and he seems not to have devoted much attention to the topic of the relationship of RE and ME. While Wilson's book from the Farmington Trust's project had appeared only a year before Alves' publication, there would nevertheless have been time for him to have addressed himself to the issues raised by Wilson and his team. However, as he saw the future for RE lying in the direction pointed by the radical theologians, he probably saw the future for ME lying in the direction of situation-ethics. This certainly would be a position which would have linked with what his report asserted about a 'Christian perspective' type of ME.

vi. The problem posed by the apparent necessity to identify RE with moral absolutes was eased somewhat in the latter part of the decade. This was partly because of the developing view that the only valid absolute was love. But also, there was a correspondence between the rational moral principles posited by some philosophers as the basis for morality and the moral absolutes of religion. Wilson's suggestions about 'second-order' principles linked with religion in a way that was denigratory neither to morality nor to religion.

vii. So, though the sixties produced a move to loosen the relationship between RE and ME, this was a cautious endeavour, probably mainly because the Syllabuses remained confessional. Yet the implications were there for a more severe separation. While Goldman's work did not offer much direct bearing upon the relationship, in that biblical RE might retard religious understanding the inference was valid that it might also, in the process, retard moral understanding. Also, once the evangelising aim for RE of leading pupils into an acceptance of Christianity had been repudiated, then the religio-moral theories for ME which placed 'grace' as central to the production of moral behaviour needed revision or replacement. In addition, while a careful examination of research into values-transmission would make for reassurance that a religiously based ethic was not inevitably abandoned upon rejection of the religion, it might seem not to make very good sense to continue ME in a religious medium if religious sanctions were destined to be re-interpreted into socio-humanistic sanctions anyway. Why not speed up the process by focusing straightaway upon the socio-humanistic? But perhaps the most effective pressure for separation of the RE and ME areas was the democratic consideration that minority viewpoints, in so far as they were not destructive of democracy itself, had to be accorded rights of survival and recognition. This particularly applied as it became clear that on some moral issues (such as abortion) the churches could not speak with a single voice, and that in a resolution of an issue such as abortion technical medical and biological knowledge seemed at least as important as theological speculation, if not more so.

## 4.6. SUMMARY

i. If two events were to be chosen to mark the beginning and end of the sixties' RE decade, strong contenders would be the 1960 Agreed Syllabus published by the Bristol LEA, and the formation of the Shap Movement in 1969. The former represented the maturing biblical Agreed Syllabus tradition, which was to undergo major change by the end of the decade, before disappearing in the seventies. The latter set in motion an increasingly influential tradition, which maintained that the best way to teach Religion was through the religions themselves, and which re-fashioned the Agreed Syllabus into a pluralist shape. Between these two events, RE was in mutation, adapting to fit the Progressive school ethos and the emerging secular rational school of educational philosophy, and socially to fit a society more visibly secularising, if not already completely secularised, than ever before. The term 'revolution' (144) may be apt, if used to draw attention to the fundamental changes advocated, even though a little misleading, if taken to mean that these changes were suddenly and comprehensively implemented (145). For there were certainly those who thought the new directions, whether suggested by the neo-confessionalists or the phenomenologists, were the wrong directions. Sometimes this was because they could not detach themselves emotionally and religiously from the old, but also because others thought even the new approaches did not justify the retention of RE in a modern, secular educational system.

ii. Although some churchmen might argue that the British people were the reluctant objects, rather than the positive agents, of secularisation, few if any were prepared to deny that secularisation had taken place. There had been an indisputable rejection of regular church attendance by the public generally,

even though research did show that there was an appreciable measure of values-continuity among young people, and a certain religious consciousness existing, albeit perhaps vestigially, among both working and middle classes. This evidence was not strong, however. It could not foster strength of conviction about Britain continuing to be a Christian society, or not to the degree necessary for RE to proceed on the assumption that religious teaching would be instruction in traditional biblical Christianity and participation in Christian worship. The Secular Humanists were particularly vocal in their refusal to allow this presupposition. Though their numbers were never large, they were composed of gifted and educated people, who could reasonably claim there to be more popular support for their views than the small proportion of card-carrying Humanists would suggest, and that they were only articulating popular feeling. Some theologians had, for quite a long time, been speculating as to how theology might attempt a rapprochement with humanistic thought. In the sixties the public were made aware of the suggestions that traditional religious language and thought-forms might have to be abandoned in favour of new expressions of former theological statements, and, even more radically, that new theological conceptions might have to replace apparently discredited propositions which had 'died' on modern man. Although to some this seemed like a heretical 'selling of the pass', by appearing to say that Christianity was really no more than what humanism had been teaching all along, to others it seemed a real attempt to reach secularised man with a meaningful Christian message. These latter therefore considered that it should be incorporated into school RE without delay, as a necessary step to bridge the gap between secular youth and the church.

iii. In a similar fashion, the traditional way of viewing morality as the application of a set of rules deriving from religion gave ground to the more empirical way of seeing people in a specific human situation, which was itself the main determinant of the moral prescriptions involved. While this change could be validly seen as a valuable and proper redressing of the balance in the interests of compassion for the individual, it might have betokened a loss of confidence in religion as something which maximised freedom, and it might have led to a growth of confusion about the nature and content of morality. The suggestion that a morality linked too closely to a religion would cease to be observed once the religion was abandoned seemed to be making an appeal to increasing numbers of people. Actually, research seemed to be showing this suggestion to be improbable. More likely than not people either retained the morality, while abandoning religious ceremonies associated with that morality, and continued thereby to think of themselves as religious, or retained the morality and re-interpreted the samctions underlying it, replacing religious incentives with socio-humanistic. Theologians responded to the situation by pointing up the distinction they believed should be made between moral rules and moral principles, or by them themselves rejecting unequivocally the notion of a fixed set of rules received by revelation and subscribing to only one determinant - what love would decree in any particular situation. There were, of course, theologians who insisted that the traditional revelatory position be maintained. Although 'situationists' were vulnerable to criticism both from conservative theologians and from formalist moral philosophers, they were advocating a position that had the

pragmatic merit of focusing upon the relationships encountered in human situations, these being a matter of interest and concern to young people generally. This appeared to be a route by which religion and morality could remain in correspondence, and a way in which RE and ME could be seen as at least identifying with each other, if not as actually being complementary. But it was rather a long way from the position of the forties, by which morality was viewed as logically, theologically and spiritually dependent upon religion. It was also not an acceptable position to some leading writers on the topic of secular moral education.

iv. That religion might be greatly impoverished by reduction to morality was a possibility that came to seem more and more relevant as the awareness grew of the many-sided nature of religious phenomena. This point came to be further appreciated as evidence from men like Loukes and Daines suggested that, although young people had made an emphatic decision against church attendance, this did not necessarily mean that they had decisively rejected the idea of the spiritual, or that they had ceased to have any interest in religious matters. The growing interest shown in eastern spirituality, perhaps epitomised by the Beatles' visit to an eastern guru, further suggested that spirituality had not been killed off by materialism. There was also some evidence that schoolchildren themselves were not without a felt need for RE however critical they might be of the sort of RE they had undergone in their schools. Also, religious books retained a market. The burning problem seemed to be that traditional forms, language and methods of communication, with their carry-over into school RE, appeared to be increasingly inadequate to meet the spiritual needs of the sixties. Concern among RE teachers that this communication-problem be tackled and resolved paralleled the concern felt among many educationists and parents that an

appropriate form of Moral Education be developed to cater for modern young people. There seemed to be some very good reasons, from both RE and ME considerations, that a curriculum-project be set up to develop a concept of ME which enabled it to stand up in its own right.

v. Concern about some of the characteristics shown by some young people was a factor in quickening interest in secular Moral Education. Although the research-evidence available seemed to point to the majority of young people as being desirous of assuming adult roles and values as soon as possible, with the Latey Report officially confirming this view, there was a minority which seemed to have openly rejected the values of their elders. It was not difficult for this minority to steal the headlines and come to look a more numerous and more potent group than they in fact were. The attention given to this minority by the media fostered a general feeling that, not only were they a relatively autonomous social group, but that they were generating their own value-system (or-systems) at variance with, and destructive of, the mainstream value-system inherited from the forties and fifties. It was then a short step to postulate this condition for the majority of young people. The continuing crime-rate, the hippie 'counter-culture', the incidence of drug-taking, the growing student-unrest, with the trend of some films and plays towards the shocking, the pornographic and the outrageous fuelled this feeling. The term 'permissiveness' became widely used, changes in sexual practices were facilitated by the new availability of relatively safe contraception, and experiments were conducted in alternative life-styles to that of the family as traditionally understood. Changing life-styles did not necessarily signify changing basic values, but impressionism and hysteria on the part of adults

could easily foster the appearance of widespread moral decay.

vi. The Syllabus-writers had not been unaware of the needs of Moral Education, but the underlying assumption had been that RE equalled ME. There could be no question of abandoning the Syllabuses without Parliamentary sanction, but criticisms had been circulating even before the start of the decade about their seeming inadequacy to do the job for which they were intended. By implication this was an ME job, as well as an RE job, but it may be noted that the criticism about dearth of material for ME did not appear in any force or size, and complaints along this line were not heard until the end of the decade. Criticisms focused upon the inadequacies of the Syllabuses, as documents for religious use, several research-projects highlighting these apparent weaknesses and causing much re-thinking about the nature of RE. The concentration upon biblical material was the chief target, at first upon the grounds that it often was not a particularly appropriate starting point for twentieth-century young people to begin their encounter with religion. Soon a more fundamental criterion came to be pressed, namely that the Bible was conceptually too difficult for children to understand until they had reached the point of cognitive development at which formal operational thinking was becoming an intellectual possibility. Although this might have amounted to theological heresy in the eyes of some traditionalists, it made good sense to the Progressive educationist, who spoke the language of developmentalist psychology, and whose theories about education centred on the principle of learning by experience, as distinct from teaching by proposition. Progressivism was the received orthodoxy for primary education in the sixties, making it difficult for any subject to form part of the primary curriculum which was not demonstrably in tune with the holistic ethos

generated by such an outlook. An RE which could not integrate with the co-ordinated activities of a primary school, especially if RE material had to be handled unwillingly by teachers who had little confidence in either its truth or value, was heading into an intolerable position. Also, where did integrated RE leave the conscience-clause? Presumably it would be operable only if religious content were unexceptionable to everyone, which was a rather ridiculous position both religiously and legally. By the end of the decade these problems had been tackled.

vii. The cluster of new Syllabuses of the late sixties went some way to drawing RE more fully into the educational process, by their taking on board the principle of starting with children's experience, and by reducing the biblical material recommended for the primary school to stories thought to be more rigorously chosen for their suitability than previously. The role of the Bible in the primary school tended now to be seen more as illustrative of life-theme material, leaving it to occupy its full religious role in the secondary school. In addition, the development of the idea of 'implicit' religion gave good grounds for seeing RE in the infants stage as being very closely and organically linked with good general education. A suggestion was made that religion defined as normal experience understood in depth could justify such a practice religiously, although it was justification enough just to say that normal, non-religious experiences might be necessary as a prior requirement for subsequent explicitly religious experience to be appreciated. Feelings of awe and wonder at physical phenomena, for example, might be a prelude for understanding worship in a religious sense. This paved the way for teachers to conduct RE, which focused on the enrichment of children's normal experiences, with a sincerity, even a conviction, which would have been impossible were they to have been obliged to teach explicit religious doctrines

which they themselves found incredible. It also meant that teachers who might have reservations about RE but who nonetheless did not wish to invoke the conscience clause could find a place in which they could contribute to Religious Education without loss of integrity.

viii. There can be little doubt that for secondary teachers the sixties encouraged demoralisation, as social change forced a re-appraisal both of their role as wielders of authority and of their role as agents in the socialisation of the young. All teachers faced these two problems, but there were added complications for secondary RE teachers in that certain elements of religion had to be believed on authority, if they were to be believed at all, and that socialisation had traditionally been thought of in religio-moral terms. There were now pressures for RE teachers openly to admit the debateable nature of many of the claims made for religion, in an atmosphere of free exploration rather than closed belief. Such pressures were to a large extent due to the growing influence of empiricism, in the consciousness of both the public and the educationists. While an empirical approach to knowledge did not necessarily invalidate religion, for there are areas in religion and especially in Christianity which can stand up to empirical investigation, it did threaten core-affirmations of religion, in so far as these affirmations were metaphysical propositions. Yet perhaps these core-affirmations are nearer the heart of religion than those elements that can be substantiated empirically. This being so there would be no quick 'knock-down' answers that could be given to adolescents to support the central concepts of religion, especially if these same adolescents were being taught, as part of their education, to

question and criticise, and who might therefore be coming to see doubt as more manly, even more moral, than belief. The arguments that natural theology might employ, in an attempt to argue back from the material world to the spiritual, seemed to be yielding ground all the time to self-consistent and plausible explanations of material reality, which were independent of and did not compel belief in a God-hypothesis. However, the arguments from human consciousness to divine consciousness might have appeared to offer more hope, for inner consciousness, as a topic of general interest, seemed to be coming into the ascendant. It may be noted that Sir Alister Hardy's Religious Experience Unit was formed in Oxford in 1969. Also, a greater stress came to be laid in RE upon self-awareness and the understanding of feelings.

ix. The God within came to be more the focus of attention in the sixties than the view of God as a transcendent being, although such an emphasis could eventually run out into religious atheism, by which the word God becomes no more than a descriptive term to denote a human value-system. Linked with the stress upon immanence was the view that religion had become entirely a matter of personal opinion, lacking agreed public means of verification. Though this view had been a commonplace in some quarters for some time, it was not a position with which the church and church regulated RE could feel easy. Truth-claims could only be trivialised. Yet to blur the distinction between belief and fact, as those terms were understood in common usage, exposed RE to the charge of indoctrination, a charge that was to be pressed forcibly as educational philosophers refined their concept of what constituted education. It was scarcely possible for the church to continue to urge that schools should see RE as a means of bringing children to an acceptance of

Christianity, and into subsequent church membership. At the very least, evangelising aims had to be scaled down to the notion of bringing children only to the thresholds of faith and worship. In addition, the customary clear-cut statements of the purpose of RE, as the means by which curriculum-integration could be achieved through the centrality of Christianity, had to undergo diffusion into statements about the exploration of ultimate questions and of diverse value-and belief-systems, and into recommendations for the tailoring of RE to the whole curriculum, rather than the tailoring of the curriculum to RE.

x. Comparable changes occurred in perspectives on ME. The religio-moral theories of the forties were displaced by assertions that morality needed no authority outside itself, and that moral behaviour could be understood in terms of its own social and psychological mechanisms. Philosophers, psychologists and sociologists were invited to make clear the cognitive, emotional and social constituents of moral development, and to indicate how this knowledge might be used in school ME. The problem of how to decide on what must be regarded as right moral content was recognised, tacitly acknowledged to be insoluble, and alleviated by a concentration upon encouraging rational analysis of moral problems according to certain principles which, it was hoped, would lead to reasonable behaviour. The existence of a plurality of value-systems was coming to be accepted as a social fact. If any overarching value-system existed, this could only be seen as liberal democracy, so making pluralism in religion and morals the only option for this country, although that position was not to be worked out in any detail until the next decade. Had the church produced a thinker of the calibre to weld these plural elements into a new Christian synthesis, there may well have been sufficient

Christian capital remaining for this country to continue in its self-understanding as a Christian country. Lacking a modern Dante, however, but recognising that goodwill to its ethic was not negligible, the church saw the way forward as the maintenance of an Aided educational presence, the fostering of educational co-operation with secular and non-Christian religious educational agencies, and the expression of a willingness to learn from the human sciences about the nature of people, as the church had already agreed to learn from the physical sciences about the nature of reality. A major report was produced by the British Council of Churches (146): it was an admirable analysis of the main issues occupying RE in the late sixties, but rather meagre in its discussion of the relationship between RE and ME. Work was put in hand for a further church report which was to be published in 1970 (147).

xi. Perhaps the last word on the sixties should be given to Cox, who was a sensitive commentator upon the changes being urged on RE in that decade. He had voiced his own support for syllabus-revision (148) and had contributed to the debate about aims (149), as well as undertaking some empirical research with Marratt into sixth-form beliefs on religious and moral issues (150). At the end of the decade Cox speculated that there were five opinions current about the future of RE. There were the abolitionists, the 'as before'-ists, those who stood for University-type theology, those advocating teaching about rather than of religion, and those who were for the exploration of 'ultimate' questions (151). Cox had written before Shap which fed in yet another suggestion that to study the religions, multi-dimensionally, parahistorically and empathically, was the best way of conducting RE. This range of opinion is a commentary both on the depth of interest continuing to be aroused by religion, and on the remarkable resilience and

pertinacity which religion always seems to show. Diversity of opinion is often a sign of vigour, and, although it would have to be acknowledged that the diversity of opinion about RE and ME betokened a certain amount of uneasy confusion and even bewilderment and near despair, there were signs of vigour at the close of the decade. Writers such as Smith, for example were exploring the frontier between RE and secularism (152), and were concluding that a way forward was possible. The new Syllabuses seemed to many to be documents that could inspire confidence. The DES remained supportive, although realistic and unsentimental about the situation in the present, while not being unhopeful about the future (153). If RE had suffered some surgery in the sixties, there was much remaining that was living and viable for the seventies. Not least was the awareness that to disagree with the traditional Agreed Syllabus understanding of RE did not signify disagreement with RE as a valuable and necessary part of the curriculum. The sight of a Humanist at the close of the decade, not only calling for a fully co-operative venture, but indicating that such an enterprise was a real possibility (154), was neither as utopian nor as sinister as it would have been viewed in the fifties by people in some secular or religious camps. There were certainly many more grounds for hope that RE would proceed into the future than the showing that had been made in the sixties' opinion polls (155), which was generally favourable.

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123. See: Jeffreys, M.V.C. Religion and Morality, Oxford: R.E.P., 1967, pp. 47f.

124. See: Jeffreys. Ibid., pp. 51f.

125. The Daily Telegraph, 25.9.66.

126. T.E.S., 9.11.62, p. 607.

127. T.E.S., 20.8.65, p. 289.

128. This despite individuals and groups who were calling for abolition, as, for example: Reé, H.E. 'Opium of the Children?',

T.E.S., 13.11.64.

As late as 1969 a T.E.S. leading article could quote the 1944 White Paper's belief in a 'general wish ... to revive spiritual values' and Chuter Ede's belief in a 'general recognition' of parents 'that children have a grounding in the principles of the Christian Faith', and then go on to say that 'we judge opinion then was much as opinion now'. Citing opinion polls, the leader claimed there to be 'a deep undercurrent of dissatisfaction with the way the world is going' and deep parental worries about the permissive society (T.E.S., 24.1.69, p. 247).

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