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need to think out how the broader objectives of education could be realised through the curriculum, through the teaching process, and through the physical environment of the school. D. G. Ball, Chief Inspector of Primary Schools, was quick to seize the opportunity and, assisted by F. C. Loppell, Superintendent of the Auckland Education District, organised a series of discussion courses for senior people concerned with the primary schools. Three of these courses, attended mainly by inspectors of schools, have already been held and courses for headmasters will be held later.

Education for Democracy

The courses for inspectors evolved into a kind of staff school. Socially there was never any question of their success, for there was something of a reunion spirit about them. There was no carefully articulated programme for the courses. It was agreed to take as a basis for discussion the statement made by the Rt. Hon. Peter Fraser (as Minister of Education) in 1939:

The Government's objective, broadly expressed, is that every person, whatever his level of academic ability, whether he be rich or poor, whether he live in town or country, has a right, as a citizen, to a free education of the kind for which he is best fitted, and to the fullest extent of his powers.

This is the broad purpose of an education for democracy, one that fits the system of education to the needs of the individual child rather than the child to the existing educational set-up, and one that puts emphasis on the art of learning rather than on the art of instruction. These ideas were brought forth in the discussions, and unanimity was not reached easily, but only as a result of hard work, of close discussion where the merits of every viewpoint put forward were examined dispassionately by the group. Discussion in a full group in the comfortable lounge of Wallis House, and in small groups in odd corners, went on from morning till evening, was continued informally by twos and threes in free periods, and often extended far into the night. Towards the end of each week the group worked round to the question of applying the broader purposes in terms of school practice.

Community living and discussion of this kind made for an easy give-and-take of ideas. Actually, it was an ex-

periment in joint thinking or what the Americans call "group dynamics"—a process of discussion to which they have devoted much attention. Apart from the overall topic already mentioned, each group was free to decide how it would work. Those attending came to Wallis House not only prepared by many years of experience and fortified by preparatory reading, but also aware that the problems to be discussed would be their problems, not those set down by someone else, that they would decide procedure, and that they would be encouraged to bring their points of view into the open.

A further idea was adopted, one suggested by G. W. Parkyn, of the New Zealand Council for Educational Research, who had seen it in operation at seminars he had attended last year in England. This was to appoint one of the group to act as observer for each general discussion. His job was to watch the group while it worked and at the end of a session report what he saw: that is, he looked specifically at how the group operated as a group and then gave a frank opinion of the strong points and weaknesses of the discussion. Observers were ruthless and their remarks did a great deal to encourage group feeling and thinking.

Kept in Perspective

The membership of each course did not consist entirely of inspectors. To keep the primary-school point of view in perspective people from other fields were included, such as H. C. D. Somerset and A. E. Campbell, and evening talks were led by men like Professor I. A. Gordon, Professor O. L. Bailey and W. J. Scott. The Acting Director of Education, A. F. McMurtrie, opened each course, and on two occasions spoke with great insight of his own contacts extending over half-a-century—as pupil, teacher and inspector—with the education system.

The Wallis House meetings are pilot discussions and both inspectors and headmasters will extend the discussions into their own work. Talking things over throughout the service, which leads to understanding and to good personal relationships at all levels, can go a long way towards the aim of education for democracy.

BULLETS IN THE BALLET

ACTORS are notoriously temperamental people, and as Ngaio Marsh and many another writer of detective stories has perceived, a nice big echoing theatre is a wonderful place for a murder. All sorts of alarming visions can be conjured up of bodies whisked into the flies or rolled up in the back-drops, of live cartridges substituted for blanks in the property pistol, or of unbuttoned rapiers doing dire carnage in the stage duel. But the idea behind *The Show Must Go On*, the latest BBC serial thriller which starts from 2YA at 9.30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 29, is better than this. The story deals with a newly-formed theatrical company who are rehearsing musical comedy in a haunted theatre. Mixed up with the music, bright singing, and drama of the play itself is a series of mysterious murders that the cast get involved in. Queer bumps and knockings through the walls, eerie voices coming apparently from



nowhere, or bodies appearing suddenly in the middle of a passionate aria, are not the best aids to getting on with the show, but somehow or other (and with a gradually diminishing cast) the production carries on. What the actors and singers don't know, and what listeners don't know either until the last episode, is that the embalmed body of a once-famous Shakespearean actor is sealed up in a secret room. Yet the mystery isn't as simple as all that, and there are many other queer goings-on in this unusual musical thriller. The leading role is played by John Bentley, a protégé of that BBC producer who specialises in the macabre, Martyn C. Webster.

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