

**INFLUENCES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUTDOOR  
PURSUITS IN FRENCH CHILDREN'S EDUCATION**

**Thesis submitted for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
at the University of Leicester**

**by**

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**April 1999**

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

There are many people to whom the writer will always owe thanks for their help with advice and information in their special fields. They are so numerous that to name some would inevitably lead to injustice in not mentioning others. They include teachers in schools and universities, library and record office staffs, wardens and staff of centres, and senior staff of organisations who answered many questions about their agencies and the benefits they offered to young people. My grateful thanks are due to all of them. These words are to be seen as applying equally to France as to England.

The trustees of the Faire and Allaway Fund of the University of Leicester were kind enough to give a grant at the beginning of the research project which provided initial encouragement and impetus.

I am grateful to Dr Clive Sutton of the School of Education, Leicester University who introduced me to the La Coûme Centre in France, and later helped with advice on the material form of the thesis.

Richard Aplin and Angela Wortley, both of the School of Education, quietly and patiently encouraged and helped me over the years of this study despite their other heavy commitments; finally, Professor Ken Fogelman provided invaluable help in the last stages of the writing up. None of the above are responsible for weaknesses in the thesis.

My wife, Inge, has been an unfailing support in spite of her own deep involvement in other matters.

N W D

## **Acronyms and Abbreviations**

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <b>CEMEA</b>     | <b>= Centres d'entraînement aux méthodes d'éducation active</b>                  |
| <b>CIDJ</b>      | <b>= Centre d'information et de documentation jeunesse</b>                       |
| <b>COLVEA</b>    | <b>= Confédération des œuvres laïques de vacances d'enfants et d'adolescents</b> |
| <b>CRDP</b>      | <b>= Centre régional de documentation pédagogique</b>                            |
| <b>CREPS</b>     | <b>= Centre régional d'éducation physique et sportive</b>                        |
| <b>ENSFS</b>     | <b>= École nationale de ski de fond et de saut</b>                               |
| <b>EPS</b>       | <b>= Éducation physique et sportive</b>  |
| <b>Féd F ...</b> | <b>= Fédération française de ...</b>   |
| <b>FFEPMM</b>    | <b>= Fédération française d'entraînement physique dans le monde moderne</b>      |
| <b>FFV</b>       | <b>= Fédération française de voile</b>   |
| <b>FSCF</b>      | <b>= Fédération sportive et culturelle de France</b>                             |
| <b>INRDP</b>     | <b>= Institut national de recherche et de documentation pédagogiques</b>         |
| <b>INSEP</b>     | <b>= Institut national du sport et de l'éducation physique</b>                   |
| <b>IREP</b>      | <b>= Institut régional d'éducation physique</b>                                  |
| <b>LFEEP</b>     | <b>= Ligue française de l'enseignement et de l'éducation permanente</b>          |
| <b>NAOE</b>      | <b>= National Association for Outdoor Education</b>                              |
| <b>NEF</b>       | <b>= New Education Fellowship</b>  |
| <b>OECD</b>      | <b>= Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</b>                  |
| <b>ONISEP</b>    | <b>= Office national d'information sur les enseignements et les professions</b>  |
| <b>PEP</b>       | <b>= Association des pupilles de l'enseignement public</b>                       |
| <b>SEVPEN</b>    | <b>= Service d'édition et de vente des publications de l'éducation nationale</b> |
| <b>TES</b>       | <b>= Times Educational Supplement</b>  |
| <b>UFOLEP</b>    | <b>= Union française des œuvres laïques d'éducation physique</b>                 |
| <b>UGSEL</b>     | <b>= Union générale sportive de l'enseignement libre</b>                         |
| <b>UNSS</b>      | <b>= Union nationale de sport scolaire</b>                                       |
| <b>USEP</b>      | <b>= Union sportive de l'enseignement du premier degré</b>                       |

**The ministers/ministries of education in both England and France changed their titles several times in the years covered by this study; they are therefore both referred to as ministers/ministries of education – lower case**

**Note:-** In this study: 1 references to England include Wales but not Scotland.  
2 France refers to Metropolitan France only.  
3 'he', 'him' and 'his' normally include 'she', 'her' and 'her/hers'.

**The famous expensive British boarding schools are described as Public schools (upper-case P) to distinguish them from French and English publicly provided or maintained schools.**

# **INFLUENCES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUTDOOR PURSUITS IN FRENCH CHILDREN'S EDUCATION**

Norman W Dobson

## **ABSTRACT**

**An attempt is made to identify factors leading to the development of Outdoor Pursuits (ODP) in French education from the beginning of the nineteenth century to recent years.**

**Research questions were posed based on early and subsequent knowledge of the field, from them hypotheses were developed grounded in the data found and the insights arising from visits, reading and discussion.**

**Examination performance is of overriding importance in French education; giving time to non-academic subjects such as Physical Education arouses teacher and parent concern for possible effects on career prospects.**

**Influences affecting the spread of ODP in education from the early 1800s include an increasingly affluent population and growing popularity of ODP in society. Belief in the value of contact with nature, and the therapeutic benefits of fresh air for city children encouraged charities from the mid-1800s to arrange country or seaside holidays for poor families and children. Some schools for the well-to-do arranged holiday time mountain expeditions, reflecting practices in their social class.**

**New Education was introduced into France in 1899; its influence was apparent in the Popular Front government (1936-38) which made the forty hour week and two weeks paid holiday obligatory for all employees. Thus ODP, formerly the domain of the well-to-do, were more open to the general populace. To some extent New Education was apparent in Vichy government (1940-44) methods, and, more distinctly, for some years after the war, through government controlled experiments in 'active' education and school time ODP.**

**The traditional pressure of examinations and the spread of ODP in society have resulted in term time primary school visits which incorporate both academic work and ODP, so quieting the fears of teachers and parents; secondary school ODP meet more difficulties. Benefits claimed from ODP experiences are many and varied.**

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Reasons for this Study of the Development of Outdoor Pursuits in French Children's Education**

In 1950 two educational experiments began which were concerned with introducing pupils of publicly provided schools to Adventurous Outdoor Pursuits (ODP) and which both appeared to have been influenced, at least partially, by the New Education movement.

The first of these events at the beginning of the autumn term 1950 was the Vanves Experiment in France (ch 7 below) which gave a class of thirteen year old boys in an elementary school a year's lessons which included much more Physical Education (PE) than was the norm. After a year, deemed to be successful according to the criteria previously laid down, the experiment was repeated in a modified form. This time it began with ten year old boys who were to remain as the experimental group for three years. They followed a similar enhanced PE regime but also spent a month skiing in the second and third years.

The second experiment was the opening of the first Local Education Authority residential 'Open Country Pursuits Centre', White Hall, in Derbyshire, England on 31st December 1950 (Afford 1977 & 1978, passim; Longland 1951, 1955: personal experience)

Within the first year, courses were offered in rock-climbing, caving, orienteering, skiing, canoeing, and camping in wild places. Sailing was added later and, more recently, mountain biking has been included.

These two unrelated but contemporaneous events in countries still suffering from the effects of the recent war suggested that they might be related to some common causal features stemming from experiences prior to the war as well as to the war itself.

This coincidence was of interest as I had been involved in outdoor activities since the late 1930s and was a voluntary instructor at the Derbyshire Centre during its first two years. I had been a temporary instructor at the Eskdale Outward Bound school when it opened in the summer of 1950. Full-time appointments at Brathay Hall, Ambleside and then a season at Man o'War Bay Centre in the Cameroons added to the experience and depth of interest. As a result I have, over the years, introduced pupils in schools and students in teacher training and youth leader colleges to ODP as enjoyable and socio-educational activities.

## **Definition of Outdoor Pursuits (ODP)**

The boundaries of ODP are difficult to define. The term is here taken to mean recreational, educational and/or adventurous activities which are carried out on natural or wild terrain as opposed to carefully prepared pitches as for traditional team games such as cricket or football. The activities have developed and acquired their form and mores through the interaction of participants with natural environments, while setting their own goals to achieve. The goals can be, for example, to climb a particular route on a rock face or to descend a particular river. The challenges normally involve setting the self against the terrain not against other humans, though the activities are usually carried out in co-operation with human companions so social learning can take place. Because the activities were generally non-competitive there were few rules though conventions developed; to start on one rock climb but to step aside, even for a couple of moves, onto an adjacent easier route, or to carry the canoe round the fiercest rapid, would negate the right to say the intended challenge had been successfully met. But the element of competition has seldom been entirely absent; attempts to be the first to conquer a mountain or a particular face pervade the literature of mountaineering.

For school aged pupils Outdoor Pursuits in England can include mountain or country walking, rock-climbing, canoeing, caving, sailing, skiing if one is lucky enough to get snow, orienteering, a rope course, camping, bivouacking and all-terrain cycling. Depending on the skill and interests of the teachers or instructors and the aims of a course there may be more or less emphasis on learning the instrumental skills needed for these activities, or emphasis may be placed on personal and social development. A blurred boundary separates ODP from the development of environmental awareness but field-work supporting academic study in, say, botany or geology is more distinctly separate yet may still need ODP skills for comfort and safety reasons. Such field-work has not been considered in this thesis while environmental awareness is barely touched on.

Terrain and climate have their effect on what activities may be included, and on their particular form, so there is no internationally agreed 'list' of what constitutes ODP. However all centres running courses would be expected to offer pupils new experiences, excitement, challenge and social interaction – and a memory of enjoyable satisfaction, or, occasionally the reverse, that could lead to learning something about the self.

France is aware of the physical and social personal benefits claimed for ODP, which are normally known collectively as *Activités physiques de pleine nature (APPN)* [Physical activities in open country]. For reasons largely geographical, France tends to offer a wider range of APPN than those listed above for they have a wider range of terrain and climate. Also England is much more densely populated than France, the former at a density of 354 persons per square kilometre, the latter at 101; even Wales has more people, 135 to the square kilometre, than has France but Scotland at 64 is more sparsely populated (COI 1992,

4; Mermet 1992, 48). France is further south and more continental than Britain so their summers are warmer and the weather annually is rather more consistent. This means that one can be wet yet comfortable for more hours than in England, so canyoning, wild-water rafting, sailing and canoeing can be enjoyed by novices for more hours per day and over a longer season than in Britain. France has much higher mountains (Mont Blanc 4 807 metres; Snowdon 1 085 metres) so assured snow in winter encourages enormous investment in all kinds of winter sports facilities so skiing figures much more prominently in French ODP than it does in Britain. The more extensive open country also encourages pony riding, land-yachting and extensive networks of long-distance walks and cross-country ski and mountain routes.

Another way of looking at APPN is suggested by the *Union nationale du Sport scolaire* (UNSS, 1993b, 27) when they describe them as *Actions dans un environnement physique avec incertitude* [Activities in an uncertain physical environment]. Certainly much of the interest inherent in such activities is occasioned by variable terrain, perhaps reinforced by changeable weather.

A French organisation, UCPA [*Union nationale des Centres sportifs de Plein Air*] (Chs 5 & 10 below) defines APPN, or *activités de plein air* (as they call them) as meaning not just *oxygénation à la nature* [taking the air in the country] but as leisure sporting activities. UCPA sees them as bringing people into contact with the natural elements and inviting each individual to discover his limits – then to surpass them, but without the spirit of organised competition which is the hallmark of the sports *Fédérations*. The expression *plein air* first appeared in official documents in 1936, a souvenir from the 1936-1938 *Front populaire* government (Malesset 1985, 107).

In this study we are thinking mainly of school age pupils so new experiences, new challenges and adventure are within our brief. To catch one's first tiddler at age six is an adventure, to lead one's first climb is a challenge at any age. Being away from home for a night, let alone a week or more can, for many children, be challenge, adventure and a rich learning experience all in one, especially when ODP are added.

Taking young people to the countryside in England or in France is invariably justified by claiming benefits of an educational and social developmental nature which covers a broad range of learning. This is high-lighted by the variety of labels attached to this practice of education out-of-doors which suggests that the benefits are ill-defined but believed to be numerous and wide-spreading for each individual. Among the labels are outdoor education, adventure education, development training, outdoor development, adventure learning, outdoor recreation, outdoor pursuits, adventure activities and a blanket term 'outward bound activities' which annoys the Outward Bound Trust but is an indication of how well known and influential that movement has been.

Because there is need for perseverance to complete a mountain route, or courage to tackle a river there grew up in Britain in the 1940s and 50s an unquestioned assumption that such activities were beneficial to participants' characters, especially if they were young. Subsequent research tended to support this belief in benefits though defining, then measuring, the benefits created problems (Barrett & Greenaway 1995; Dobson 1975, ch 2). Certainly, compared with academic exercises in a classroom or a match on the playing field, an excursion on a mountain is 'real', there is no opting out of the effort of getting back to base through the blizzard, the alternative would be, at best, uncomfortable.

### **Comparing English and French positions**

With a long and, from 1950 for some years, a close involvement with educational ODP I feel able to look comparatively at the French development. There are parallels in the values which were attached to the activities in the two countries especially during the war, but there are differences of practice due to traditional educational demands or expectations; attempts are made to explain these from knowledge of the English situation and the information about France which was gathered from many sources.

Starting from an English point of view, but it is hoped an open minded one, it is initially difficult to conceive how the French education system is structured and to grasp the unspoken differences in values and expectations. Reading and meeting people in France gradually remedied this in some measure. The centres where the children were participating in ODP were as varied yet as similar as they are in this country, i.e., they were largish residential establishments with generous space around. On the whole, the children were not noticeably different from ours. As with English centres the outdoor activities offered depended on the terrain, altitude, season and availability of useful water. The main difference from English centres is in the provision of indoor artistic, musical, modelling or other creative pastimes which normally feature in English school curricula but are considered of low value and therefore are of low frequency in French schools; visits to ODP centres thus help to remedy, to our eyes, this gap in French children's school experience.

### **Methodology and Outline of the Study**

For this study it was necessary to discover the relevant antecedents of both pioneering experiments and evidence for the thinking, values and circumstances of the people responsible. Happenings much more than a century earlier appear to have been contributory and there were more recent factors common to the two events, particularly related to the New Education movement which generally aims at pupils learning through experience rather than just from books; this involves a good deal of 'doing', whether it be manual crafts, music and art, field-work, or games and physical activities of all kinds, preferably in the open air.

The history and the sequels of the Vanves innovation are traced. The effects have been considerable in the educational practices of France. Some attempts are made to highlight

similarities and differences in practices in France and in England but English developments are perforce treated perfunctorily for want of space.

### **Theoretical Considerations**

While considering the field and gathering initial data a number of research questions arose in addition to the original one of why two countries should independently begin these events almost simultaneously. It became apparent that relationships between events, circumstances, thinking and values of the times, i.e., the social history, from the 18th century onwards were seminal. As data came to light they suggested theories which might hold good through to present times. The basing of theories on already discovered data is referred to by Glaser & Strauss (1967) as Grounded Theory. Such theories suggest further points for investigation leading to yet more discoveries and support for, or modification of, the earlier tentative theories grounded on initial knowledge. From the theories hypotheses may be produced which are tested at appropriate points in the thesis and collected for discussion in the final chapter.

### **Documents**

Much of the information for this study is derived from printed material. As such it has its weaknesses in that some of the sources are secondary and are therefore somebody's interpretation from earlier, perhaps primary sources. A good many primary sources are used however. One must count the articles by Fourestier on the Vanves Experiment as primary and, in general, most articles in *l'École Publique* and *l'Éducation nationale* were written by people such as *inspecteurs* who were involved in the events described. Articles in the journal *Cahiers pédagogiques* were all written by teachers involved in the *classes nouvelles* and *lycées pilotes* after the war – a few before the war – and who were therefore believers in the New Education methods used. The school *École des Roches* appears in this study; the book [1936] of that title is by Georges Bertier, Vice-principal from its founding in 1899 and Principal from 1908 to after the 1939-45 war. Gustave Monod was an old boy of Bertier's school as is evident from material in magazines examined in the school archives. Monod was a member of the clandestine group with Langevin, Wallon and others who planned during the Occupation for changes in education after the war. He had been involved in much of the pre-war experimentation by Jean Zay. As director of secondary education for France from 1936 to 1940 and 1945 to 1951, he was responsible for creating the *classes nouvelles* and *lycées pilotes* during those years. His interview in *Cahiers Pédagogiques* (1968, 78, nov; 7-18), includes much in his own words as well as extracts from official circulars in which he would have had a hand. Such documentary evidence, and much more used for this thesis, had to be read bearing in mind that, objective though authors such as Guichard (minister of education 1969-70) might think themselves to be, they were writing for an audience and inevitably reflecting their own points of view or the policies they were officially advocating. Malessett (1985) and Rosa (1986) as secretaries-general, respectively of UCPA and FFC,



were responsible over some decades for the development of their organisations (chs 5 & 10) and might therefore be somewhat biased.

One is reminded by May (1997, ch 8) that it is necessary to seek for the reality behind statements made by writers, even of primary sources, by attempting to recognise their stand-point and their intentions in writing. An effort has been made to do this. In some cases triangulation has allowed facts or points of view to be verified or modified by finding more than one source that could be taken into consideration.

## **Interviews**

Representatives of voluntary organisations concerned with outdoor activities, for example, the Scouts, Youth Hostels, *Les Francas*, *UCPA* and others were interviewed. The various organisations were initially contacted by letter and most sent helpful printed material which explained their aims and methods. A further letter asked for interviews with a senior representative; dates and times were then fixed but a few organisations suggested they should be telephoned once the writer was in Paris. This created some difficulties and one learned that *patientez* meant 'hang-on, he should be available soon'. Some thirty interviews of one and a half to three hours each were completed in Paris, usually one in a morning and another in the afternoon. A smaller number of interviews also took place with some organisations' regional representatives in Bordeaux and Perpignan. Set questionnaires were not used since organisations differed so much, instead, the previously supplied material was the basis from which we started. Interviewing very capable and dedicated general secretaries or other senior representatives was demanding, particularly as only two interviews took place in English; but they were rewarding people to meet. Although interviews were in French, which is not the writer's strongest subject, where there could be any doubt about accuracy of meanings, a check was made by reading back the notes taken and a small number of modifications were made, sometimes as a result of second thoughts on the part of the interviewee. In some cases the representative being interviewed did speak English, one had been a teacher of English, but it had seemed polite to use French unless the interviewee suggested otherwise. It is felt, therefore, with reasonable confidence, reinforced by organisations' printed material, that information was accurately garnered.

## **Sources of printed and manuscript evidence**

During the interviews more printed material was collected, sometimes requested but more often pressed upon me. This included historical resumé's, as well as current and immediate past periodicals of the organisations, the whole amounting to a good many kilograms. In addition, opportunities were taken to browse in book shops, particularly in the Boulevards Saint Michel and Saint Germain, where several useful books were found.

To trace the history of the development of outdoor activities in general and then in schools and youth organisations, several libraries and collections were visited.

**ENGLAND** Using the libraries of the London Institute of Education, of the Universities of Leicester, Loughborough, Birmingham and Leeds led to finding much useful data; London for New Education and French education material, Leicester for French education and the New Education movement, Loughborough for journals on Physical Education, and Birmingham for French PE and other journals. Charlotte Mason College, Ambleside, part of the University of Lancaster, has a useful collection of English and American journals and relevant books. The Derbyshire Record Office in Matlock holds the minutes and other documents concerning education in the county; the decision-making leading to the setting up of White Hall is to be found there. The Public Record Office at Kew holds valuable records, for example, of correspondence between Directors of Education and the Board/Ministry of Education but Kew material was not used for want of space in this study. Historical and environmental material about individual Outdoor Pursuit Centres and their neighbourhoods is to be found in the libraries of some Centres.

**FRANCE** The first library used was that of the *Institut national du sport et de l'éducation physique (INSEP)* at Vincennes on the outskirts of Paris where some five hundred international and aspiring international athletes in twenty-four sports live permanently. They receive vocational education on site or go daily to neighbouring secondary schools or universities. Informal discussion with teaching staff provided useful background information about the French physical activity situation. A week was spent in residence at the Institute by kind permission of the Director. Some days in the library of the Aquitaine CREPS (*Centre régional d'éducation physique et sportif*) in Bordeaux, were valuable for perusing historical and up-to-date documents and journals. This Centre, like Vincennes, houses aspiring *athlètes de haut niveau* [of high level] who go out to receive their education in Bordeaux. Conference papers on some aspects of Outdoor Pursuits (ODP) were found in the library of the University of Bordeaux during the same visit. A library full of educational riches was that of the *Institut national de recherche pédagogique (INRP)* [National Institute for Educational Research] at 29, rue d'Ulm. This library is centrally placed in Paris and, besides whole and half days, was used between interviews. Correspondence and discussion with staff members of INRP produced valuable statistics on the numbers and ages of children benefiting from *classes transplantées*, and useful references.

A lucky discovery was the quite extensive library in the *Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou* (The Pompidou Centre) which can be used on Sundays when all other establishments are closed. The last institutional source of information visited was the *Centre d'information et de documentation jeunesse* [Documentary Information Centre for Youth] (101, Quai Branly, 75015) where young people of all ages can consult the enormous array of leaflets, brochures, books, visual aids, and staff, for information and advice. Their queries concerned immediate matters such as where to get financial help towards a holiday (which the French consider important) or, still more importantly, about future careers, the qualifications required and where to obtain them.

## **Searching for threads**

With some awareness of the field from past experience, reading and enquiries were directed at attempts to fill gaps, and to deepen and widen existing knowledge. As information accumulated so more precise searches could be mounted and more pointed questions posed to the specialists met during visits and conferences. One answer resulted in a reference to research into increased PE for a class of girls in the early 1930s in Lyon (ch 2). Following this up provided links from the early *colonies de vacances* (ch 3) and tuberculosis research (ch 2) to the Popular Front (ch 3), the Vichy government's (1940–44) encouraging of physical activity (ch 4 & 5), and leading to the Vanves Experiment (ch 7). Focused reading resulted in finding New Education links from Abbotsholme School (ch 3) to the *École des Roches* (ch 3), on through the Vichy regime and to the experiments from 1945 of *éducation nouvelle* and others including that at Vanves.

There was also a connection with White Hall since Jack Longland, Director of Education for Derbyshire from March 1949 was chairman of the Council of Abbotsholme School from 1969 to 1974 (Sederman 1989) and before that, a parent.

## **Personal up-dating**

To become familiar again with the outdoor education world, participatory visits of a week each were made to several residential LEA Centres in Snowdonia, the Lake District, the Pennines and to White Hall in Derbyshire as well as to the YMCA Lakeside Centre on Lake Windermere. Most of these residential Centres concentrated on outdoor pursuits but a small amount of field-work figured in some of them. Field-work, for example for biological studies, was the main purpose of one Centre where a flying visit of one day was managed. Opportunities were taken to talk with the staff members of all centres, and with those bringing visiting parties. They were always enthusiastic, except for one or two of the visitors who were 'pressed men' but all were convinced that the pupils benefited from the experience in various ways which they sometimes found difficult to put into words.

In France visits were made to two Centres near Bordeaux, to one in the Pyrenees, one in the Jura and one in Chamonix. A visit was paid to the *École des Roches* (ch 3) where their archives were explored; this school was modelled on Bedales School in England, which was inspired by the ideas of Abbotsholme. A visit was also made to Abbotsholme School, the first New Education school for the 'Directing Classes' to survive successfully; it had an influence beyond its size.

In the case of every visit, whether English or French, each director/principal/head was warmly welcoming and readily talked about his (only one 'her') centre or school.

## **Importance of this study**

This study began out of personal interest; a few points emerged as the work progressed where English educationists could learn from the French experience, though each country's long standing traditions would make some practices difficult to translate to the other. School journey parties, especially for skiing (*classes de neige*), are so popular that a great deal of expertise on how to use the time to best advantage has been accumulated by French specialists such as *inspecteur* Giolitto (ch 8). Examples were found where knowledge of French practice could have considerably improved the efficacy of English visits to the Continent.

## **Some Characteristics of French Educational Practice**

There were two successive Vanves experiments, planned and supported centrally. The second one was a two-part experience of which the smaller portion proved to be a significant turning-point in French education (ch 7). The first experiment, lasting one academic year, adopted a new type of school programme called *demi-temps pédagogique et sportif* [half-time class-work and half-time sport] and was an expensive, ambitious attempt to test whether more PE and less class work would benefit the children without academic loss. In the succeeding three year experiment, there was added, in the second and third years, a one month stay in the Alps (*classe de neige*) where formal lessons filled the mornings and partly the evenings (*demi-temps pédagogique*), and skiing (*sportif*) occupied the afternoons. The *classes de neige* constituted the most popular part of the experience and influenced French education from then on. The central control evident was virtually unknown in British education but was normal in France; the pattern stretches from before Napoléon through to the 1990s.

There is a traditional emphasis in French schools on work for examination purposes, yet there is also a frequently expressed need for children to blossom personally (*s'épanouir*). There is concern too about examination pressures causing overload (*surmenage*). The Vanves experiments claimed to address these concerns.

Another clear difference between England and France is in the age at which children are thought old enough to go away from home. Nursery schools (*écoles maternelles*) and some youth agencies take children from the age of three for ten or more days of skiing or other activities without their parents; received English belief, and English maternal reactions, suggest that such an age is thought too early for children to be away without psychological harm being done.

## **The Role of Adults**

As a general rule, youth organisations, rather more consciously than in England, see themselves as educational in the broadest sense where the word implies 'drawing out' or encouraging the potential which is within the child; that is, *s'épanouir* [to blossom], they operate as *éducateurs*, while the tradition is that schools are institutions for instruction. In

youth organisations and schools, all the adults, instructors, directors or cooks, secretaries, administrators, psychologists, nurses, youth work *animateurs*, and teachers, any who are seen as having an influence on young people, i.e., as *éducateurs*, are affiliated (about forty unions in all) to the *Fédération de l'Éducation Nationale* [FEN] (Halls 1976, 148). The division between the roles of schools and youth organisations has become blurred to some extent but not obliterated in the last few decades.

Secondment of teachers, on full pay, is part of a government system of subsidies received by youth organisations. Several teachers in this position were interviewed who saw it as a normal career move. In England there are qualified teachers who work for youth movements but there is no certainty of a return to school work if desired since teachers are not established *fonctionnaires* [civil servants] as they are in France.

## Religion

The division between religious and non-religious institutions in France is difficult to appreciate in England. Since 1882, the date from which schooling became obligatory, state schools (*écoles publiques*) have been free and secular (*laïque*). As in Britain each child, from the age of six in France, to sixteen, must receive an education considered adequate; Roman Catholic schools provide this for a significant minority of children. Parents may do it themselves at home as in Britain. Youth work is similarly divided. For every *laïque* [non-religious] organisation there seems to be a parallel Roman Catholic one, but the chasm between the two is wide; virtually no personnel of one organisation seemed to know their equivalent in the counterpart organisation. There are, in addition, smaller Protestant and Jewish organisations such as the Scouts. As Penin (1995, 14) says (here comparing France and Germany but equally applicable when comparing France and England):

*L'École est le reflet d'une culture, le produit d'une histoire, d'une tradition. Comme le modèle français, imprégné du combat laïque, qui est incompréhensible pour les Allemands.*

[The school is a reflection of a culture, a product of history, of a tradition. The French model, impregnated with the secular struggle, is incomprehensible to the Germans].

## Involvement of the medical profession

The *colonies de vacances* (ch 3) were therapeutic holidays from at least the 1880s, mainly for children from large towns where tuberculosis and rickets were common. A number of doctors researched into the effect of fresh air on tuberculosis in children. A Dr Latarjet was active in this and also in organising courses in skiing, as well as conducting research (ch 2) into increased PE for school girls. The main organiser of the Vanves Experiments was schools medical inspector Doctor Fourestier.

## **Recurring themes**

Through this study some themes recur, including:

- a) resistance by teachers to giving time for PE
- b) reminders of the child's need to blossom (*s'épanouir*)
- c) experiments being government approved, supported and monitored
- d) parental concern not to lose examination work time (related to [a] and [d] above)
- e) frequent reference to leisure (as a good thing)

## **The Background to Social Changes**

The industrialisation of western Europe during the 18th and 19th centuries resulted in growing towns becoming unpleasant places to live in. The by-products of this change from largely rural to an urban, industrial milieu affected especially the manual workers in the new industries. The professionals with comfortable incomes were able to escape when they felt the need, especially from the middle of the nineteenth century as trains became more common, but the working poor lived without respite in vile conditions. Though France did not industrialise as early as did Britain, there were, before 1840, expanding towns where factories absorbed large numbers of former agricultural workers and their children. Factory owners were not required to provide tolerable working conditions so, for many, life was unpleasant and involved excessive hours of work every day of the week.

These conditions influenced the type and take-up of leisure pursuits, the spread of education, the general quality of life, and the expectations of what life could offer people and their children. The interplay of the changes was complex. A number of those who were comfortably placed helped the poor, sometimes just to placate them (ch 2) but there was also self-help as workers united in societies from the 1830s and in trade unions, legalised from 1884 (Thomson 1966, 195).

### **Escape to the outdoors for some**

Pollution, overcrowding and squalor gave incentives to those who could to seek pleasure in the unspoilt countryside. They were able to do so with the growth of better transport – improved roads, railways and, later, bicycles – and rising national wealth from the 1870s.

### **Leisure time**

Generally, free time remained tied to the rural and ecclesiastical calendar up to about 1860 (Holt 1981). The availability and formalisation of leisure time came gradually through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (ch 2) and was finally to have a considerable effect on the spread of outdoor pursuits among workers and their children in schools.

The growing popularity of team games from about the 1870s among the workers of England and, a decade or so later, those of France, seems to have been an early phase in societal acceptance of it being normal and justified for the ordinary citizen to follow a hobby or pastime, that is, for him to devote time and energy to satisfying an inner need, as does play for children.

## **Leisure activities affecting French schools**

Schools are not isolated from the societies of which they form a part, so popular values in the social class which a school serves affect that school. The teaching staff of a secondary school tended to be drawn from, or become assimilated to, a social class similar to that of the pupils. This applied very much in France where secondary schools in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were staffed entirely by *professeurs agrégés* (Halls 1976, 152), a competitively selected group of graduate teachers, the pupils being mainly from middle and upper class families. But *instituteurs* (elementary school teachers) had been pupils in elementary schools, followed by a non-university course of teacher-training.

As outdoor pursuits grew among the well-to-do a few of the *professeurs*, probably with experience and love of mountains, organised school mountain expeditions from the 1870s. For the workers' children, a decade later, a few *instituteurs* organised school expeditions in more accessible terrain. But none of these excursions would take place in school time.

As France became yet more prosperous and working hours shorter the very existence of leisure time began to be generalised and moved down the social scale until the Popular Front legislation of 1936 to 1938 gave all employees a five-day 40-hour week and two weeks of paid holiday. Jean Zay, minister of education, moved to get recreational activities, as an official experiment in selected *départements*, into the school curriculum as opposed to nothing, or just dull drill, to which French, and English, elementary school children were subjected.

## **Changes in Educational attitudes to sport**

In time, national thinking over sport and recreation changed. Sport was considered for many years to be leisure and therefore not in the schools' remit but much later (ch 8) it was adjudged that school sport conferred benefits. Increasingly in the 1960s sport was thought of as a valuable social developmental medium and from 1967 it became officially the responsibility of PE teachers in secondary schools and has come to include, in a few schools, mountain biking, skiing, canoeing et cetera, as well as *le foot* and *le basket* (ch 10).

In France before the second world war skiing was a *sport d'élite* but after being introduced to an elementary school in 1953 through the Vanves Experiment it has become one of the most popular social and recreational sports in France. This was a breakthrough that resulted in many other class activities being undertaken away from school (*classes transplantées*). The Vanves experiment was not the only factor, but it was an important stimulus.

Only a few schools in either country made use of ODP for educational purposes up to 1939 but from the post-war years its use in publicly provided and other schools, beginning on a small scale, multiplied many times over until from the late 1960s many thousands of school pupils each year in England and in France experienced a sojourn of some days away from

home. Despite this increasing popularity it still remains a matter of chance if an individual teacher or head-teacher in a particular school is enthusiastic enough to organise a *classe transplantée*.

### **Post-war hopes**

A common feature of the spirit immediately after the second world war, was that each child should benefit from the best school system that his or her country could provide. But what that best system should be generated a great deal of argument in both countries. Schools and classes using New Education methods, and the use of teaching aids such as films and gramophone records were among the experiments tried in France; an in-service training centre was opened at Sèvres in 1945 to propagate these methods. The most fundamental change to take place, based on demands stretching back to 1918, was the move to comprehensive education (*école unique*), but not until after 1959.

Talking and planning, often clandestinely, during the Occupation from 1940 meant that people of many persuasions were united in their demand for a more equitable life for all. When the Liberation came these expectations inevitably affected schools and parents who were now more ready to accept experimental ideas, ideas they would not have considered, nor probably afforded, only a few years earlier. The ready welcome of *classes de neige* from 1953 suggests that acceptance of school involvement in preparation for leisure was coming about but still only as long as it did not compromise the traditional and continuing demand for examination success.

### **PE in the French school curriculum**

In England there has generally been agreement about physical activity occupying a reasonable and regular place in any school curriculum but in France Physical Education/drill was more usually seen as a marginal discipline and has been the subject of tepid neglect, often outright rejection, from the mid-nineteenth century to recent times, so the acceptance, by parents and teachers, of school journey parties (*classes transplantées*, aka *classes de découverte*, or *classes de nature*) in term time was a revolutionary step. PE however, was, and is still, treated as something separate and readily dispensable.

The development of outdoor education in French primary schools has been largely independent of PE which was stigmatised by the fact that military non-commissioned officers (NCOs) were engaged to teach it from the middle of the nineteenth century in both France and England. Earlier, the subject had a respectable reputation, some of the early exercises practised the skills required of a gentleman such as vaulting on to a (dummy) horse and army officers were appointed to teach these skills. One officer, Colonel Amoros, in 1830, published his *Manuel d'éducation physique, gymnastique et moral* in which he said that the subject should be 'educative, useful and agreeable' and 'one cannot teach something well if it is boring, one must interest the pupils.' (Thomas 1990, 16). But when cheaper NCOs were appointed they treated the pupils as 'other ranks' needing to learn elementary



parade ground drill. The stigma reflected the social rank of the instructor, what he taught and his personal habits but he also represented time lost from academic work. Outdoor pursuits however were, from the beginning, again in both countries, organised by teachers of any discipline in holiday times so the area is free of such negative connotations. In England the traditional team games, from their invention, were also associated with teachers of any subject and with self-government; in time they tended to acquire a too positive mystique. In France however they were considered a foreign import and to have a 'snob' aura (ch 3); the ministry and most schools were against them. Even in the 1970s games were only beginning to be accepted in some French schools while the gymnastic portion of PE continued to be little valued (ch 6). Yet thousands of teachers, of all disciplines in England, and *instituteurs* in France, have organised residential class visits for outdoor pursuits since the 1950s. It seems that PE and ODP are, to a considerable extent, seen as separate disciplines.

The number of outdoor pursuit classes in French secondary education is small because of examination and timetabling problems (see Appendix 2). No statistics are available, compared with primary education for which detailed figures are produced (ch 9). In England and Wales the number of primary schools arranging residential outdoor activity visits is limited because most LEA Centres reserve the greater part of their places for the secondary school age range, so the imbalance in numbers is reversed from one country to the other. One reason for not taking primary children in many English Centres is that they are thought too young to be away from home for several nights or to be introduced to climbing, map-reading, canoeing and so on in the wild country in which many Centres are set.

### **Factors encouraging the growth of outdoor pursuits**

There is little doubt that favouring the growth of outdoor pursuits is the satisfaction of a desire in some people to see beauty, or a change from everyday scenes, and a need for physical exertion as a change from the sedentary life of cities. In western Europe as a whole a number of factors came together from the eighteenth century onwards. The factors included:

- 1 The writings of Rousseau in the eighteenth century encouraged people to see beauty in wild country. Thus the pleasure of new scenery, the exertion involved, the satisfaction of curiosity, and possibly other motives, caused the number of 'explorers' to increase as the years passed, but they were almost entirely limited to the upper and middle classes.
- 2 A general questioning of old belief systems including religion, a rapid growth of the sciences, criticism of social values as they then were; all part of the Enlightenment movement which was later seen to have been a harbinger of the American and French Revolutions.

- 3 Some secondary schools local to the mountains organised expeditions (ch 2) from the early 1800s; social, educational and physical benefits were claimed.
- 4 Industrialisation of western Europe meant, for urban dwellers, separation from nature; for the poor it meant overcrowding, rickets, TB, long working hours and little or no leisure. Some of the well-to-do were concerned; they formed charities and did 'good works', many but not all, with religious motivation; these philanthropic people and their organisations introduced urban poor families, or just the children, to fresh air in open country or by the sea through special centres, *colonies de vacances*, the YMCA and other movements.
- 5 The same unpleasant urban conditions encouraged some of those with the time and money to escape to rural areas, particularly the wilder ones, where the excitement of pitting oneself against the elements might be found, or purposeful study of the environment could be carried out.
- 6 Clubs were formed by the 'explorers' in the mid-1800s, for example, the Alpine Club and *Club alpin français* to satisfy the social needs of like-minded people and to arrange favourable conditions for practising their pastimes.
- 7 From the 1870s the accessibility of the mountains through the newly built railways, a product of industrialisation, enabled some elite French schools to organise mountain expeditions for socio-educational and pedagogical reasons, and to spread interest in the mountains among the pupils of the same social class; almost certainly too because the *professeurs* enjoyed being in the mountains and with the pupils.
- 8 From 1872 and especially the 1880s, British team games and athletics were introduced into France. The working class in England and France adopted them for spectator purposes then participated increasingly as working hours were reduced, and growing prosperity allowed workers some disposable income. Sports clubs were formed which normalised the idea of sports and hobbies for urban workers. The growth of affluence and of free time continued, reducing the barriers to people indulging in more time demanding leisure activities. From 1936 a 40-hour, five day working week and two weeks of paid holiday increased the opportunities for all employed French people to choose a pastime more freely.
9. The increasingly popular *Écoles maternelles* (nursery schools), first provided before 1800, receive many 2 year olds and almost all 3, 4 and 5 year olds, so French children are accustomed at an early age to being away from their parents each day.
- 10 In the 1890s New Education spread in Europe; well-to-do French copied Bedales school in 1899 when founding *l'École des Roches* (ch 3). New Education ideas officially gained ground in 1936-38, 1940-44 and for some two decades from 1945.

- 11 Examination results have long been important in France so little time has ever been spared for 'unimportant' practical subjects or PE but *demi-temps pédagogiques et sportif* (half-time class and half-time sport) (ch 7) overcame this reluctance among *instituteurs* and parents in a time of fresh thinking after the war.
- 12 The application of science and technology to sports equipment has made it safer, more effective and more comfortable. The increase in individualised private transport and the invention of the minibus have made ODP terrain more accessible.
- 13 The French believe in the value of purposeful leisure activity for encouraging the 'blossoming' of a child's potentials; a few schools now accept that they have a role to play in this development. The British parallel belief was in the value of tough, adventurous activities to 'develop character' but this was modified in later years.
- 14 Modern media, especially radio and some television, made the first ascent of an 8000 metre mountain, Annapurna in 1950 by Maurice Herzog, and the ascent of Everest in 1953, well known; so outdoor pursuits were 'glamorised'. Herzog was later in charge of the Youth and Sport section of the French ministry of education.
- 15 The rare French secondary school ODP visit is normally for only one week, mainly because of time-tabling difficulties; French teachers do not cover for absent colleagues.

Most of the above points must be considered as positive factors in encouraging outdoor pursuits in French society, and in schools and youth organisations – except for the last, number 15. A school visit always depends on somebody being enthusiastic enough to put time and energy into organising, and perhaps overcoming colleagues', or the head teacher's, objections; and the inevitable time tabling problems in secondary schools. In French secondary schools there has always been the problem (expense and organisation) of supply cover. Children may, therefore, arrive with primary school ODP experience but find no further opportunities in their secondary school. Fortunately there are several youth organisations which cater for pupils in holiday time (ch 10).

The gradual moving down the social scale of the situation in which individuals had uncommitted money and time is the most important (point 8), since lack of money for equipment, transport and living, and of adequate time, are complete blocks to participation. The interim stage, from about 1870 to the 1930s in which many workers found they had money and time enough for watching or participating in, say, a game of football was important. It was that period which accustomed society to accepting that the working population, as their growing prosperity and free time allowed, could indulge in leisure pastimes; out of the multiplicity of pastimes existing, some chose outdoor pursuits.

The increase in prosperity and of free time have continued, the growth in popularity of ODP in society has shown little sign of diminishing and this has been reflected in French secondary schools where renewed attempts are being made to encourage ODP.

### **Research Questions**

From the initial exploratory work, background reading and previous knowledge a number of questions were developed. The first question must be the one that stimulated the study, the following ones lead into looking at the field in more detail.

1 Why, almost at the same time, did two nations so soon after a devastating war, start to introduce children in provided schools to ODP?

To answer this question, and further questions (below), one needs to take into account a number of factors, some of which are unique to each nation and others which are common to them yet not necessarily identical. Factors thought to have a significant influence can be grouped under the following five headings:–

A) Geographical      B) Historical      C) Cultural      D) Economic      E) Social.

These are by no means watertight divisions for they influence each other in multiple ways. An attempt has been made however to group the main influences under the most appropriate heading.

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| A) Geographical: | Terrain and water; population density; climate; availability and proximity of resources; transport   |
| B) Historical:   | Wars; continuity and changes of practices; role of governments   |
| C) Cultural:     | Traditions and values; importance of education, provided by whom?; attitudes of relevant people; justification of PE and ODP; philanthropy |
| D) Economic:     | Effects of industrialisation; urbanisation; availability of disposable money & leisure time; new artefacts                                 |
| E) Social:       | Social class and leisure; age of children and length of stay; claimed benefits of ODP; drawbacks   |

These groupings are somewhat arbitrary; several items could justifiably have been grouped elsewhere, which illustrates the difficulty of offering simple, unambiguous explanations for events – which will be evident in the discussion.

Further questions follow which attempt to tease out details and the significance of many of the data uncovered.

2 What official agencies instituted these two events? Were there voluntary agency models already in use?

- 3 How influential was the medical profession in physical activities in schools?
- 4 How important was New Education in encouraging ODP in French education?
- 5 How important was industrialisation in the growth of ODP?
- 6 What were the benefits claimed to be derived from ODP at different times?
- 7 What continuity of thinking and policies was there from one regime to another?
- 8 What measures, and by whom, are taken to regulate risk in ODP in education?
- 9 What part has social class and growing affluence played in society's attitudes to leisure and ODP?
- 10 What influence have examinations had on PE and ODP in French schools?
- 11 What effect have the Scouts and other voluntary movements had on ODP in education?
- 12 Why was *demi-temps pédagogique et sportif* so successful in the 1950s?
- 13 Why was the *Front populaire* period such a turning point in changing people's attitudes?
- 14 Why were classes *de neige* seen as an important turning point in French education?
- 15 Why did mountain exploration, football and other pastimes each become popular once they had been introduced?
- 16 Are ODP always beneficial for the areas where they are practised?

These questions are posed as appropriate at the end of each chapter to see if they guide thinking and raise theories then hypotheses which, when tested, may help to clarify the processes that have gone on for more than two and a half centuries since the first known records of men exploring the glaciers of the Alps.

## **Outline of the Study**

**Chapter 1** This thesis draws upon documentary, bibliographical and interview material in attempts to answer the research questions and to produce theories grounded in the data found.

**Chapter 2** traces the move down the social scale of disposable time and money among the workers and the spread of active leisure. The popularity of games such as football was hastened by the 1914-18 war. Doctors encouraged activity in the open air to counter urban induced TB. Experiments in enhanced school PE programmes were conducted but sport was rejected by schools. The Popular Front government (1936-38) decreed the 40 hour week and 2 weeks of paid holiday for employees.

**Chapter 3** British Public school sports and New Education methods introduced into France by influential individuals; French schools and ministry of education rejected them but workers took up the sports. Some elite secondary schools introduced their boys to ODP. Charities and churches arranged countryside and seaside holidays for poor children from the 1850s, just as in England. Popular Front government decreed that all helpers with children's agencies should receive training.

**Chapters 4 & 5** deal with Vichy government attempts to mould young people through school and youth movements into less 'decadent' ways by means of *éducation générale* including physical activity. The government's policies were anti-democratic and rejected by many people. Planning went on secretly for post-war changes in, among other matters, education and youth work.

**Chapter 6** looks at some of the attempts made to incorporate best of wartime thinking and New Education ideas into French education. Popular Front ideas were extended, some schools accepted the idea of a 'civilisation of leisure', social barriers to elite pastimes were reduced.

**Chapter 7** Pre-war experiments in education, and Vichy attempts to change education, were combined with new ideas and parental acceptance of breaks with tradition to allow more PE and classes going away for residential visits, especially for a combination of skiing and normal class work. This last became very popular and was adapted to other activities.

**Chapter 8** Teachers still resisted the idea of PE in class time because of pressure of examinations though timetable adjustments and a shortened week encouraged PE and ODP in school time.

**Chapter 9 looks at, mainly primary, school visits. Central control is evident in the opening of further Centres to cope with demand for residential *classes transplantées*. Specialist teachers made available for some studies. Snow classes especially popular.**

**Chapter 10 traces the development of two youth organisations which sprang from the war and the Occupation.**

**Chapter 11 is a summary and discussion in relation to the research questions originally drawn up and the grounded theories and hypotheses arising from the data found. There are some tentative questions which could be the basis for future research in the area of outdoor pursuits in French education.**

## CHAPTER 2

### RADICAL THINKING AND CHANGING CONDITIONS THROUGH TWO CENTURIES

When superstition reigned mountains, lakes and forests were reputedly haunted by evil spirits. New thinking, encouraged by general questioning during the eighteenth century in the Age of Enlightenment (*le Siècle des lumières*), banished irrational fears. People then began to perceive wild country with different eyes, seeing beauty in place of horror so leading on to the Romantic Movement of the last two decades of the eighteenth century and the early years of the next century. Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) was himself a radical thinker and virulent opponent of the established order of privilege through birth, inequalities before the law and religious intolerance; his writings are said to have contributed considerably to the coming about of the French Revolution (Larousse 1923, 164; Guillemin 1973, 7). Rousseau's

reveries of the *Solitary Walker* were to spark an explosion of Romantic naturalism throughout Europe (Wokler 1995, 1).

Personal recreation while communing with nature could increasingly be seen as rewarding and not eccentric. Rousseau's writings also influenced educationists towards child-centred methods and a belief that the child should be educated in contact with nature:

The base line of all great educational theories from Rousseau and Condorcet in France ... was that the environment formed the person (Green 1990, 30).

Froebel, Pestalozzi and others took it into account in developing their theories. Thomas (1990, 13) considers that Rousseau advocated the education of the body and that:

*On retrouvera une partie de sa pensée chez Hébert.*

[Some of his thinking is to be found in Hébert's work].

Hébert and his method of PE appear a number of times in this study.

Those with time, the means and the desire explored. The Enlightenment encouraged the enquiring mind; just seeing was not enough, it was necessary to record, to measure, to map; and to discover, for example, new plants or other forms of life, thus providing goals for the curious. For some of these people, as well as discovering objective facts, the very act of exploring became a pleasure in itself through appreciating the newly perceived beauty, the physical exertion involved and the satisfaction of curiosity. The way was increasingly open to enjoyment of a satisfying outdoor pastime and to justification for escape from industrialised towns.



Two Englishmen opened the way for mountain exploration; a William Windham and a [?] Pococke explored the glaciers of Chamonix in 1741. When the speed of travel was at best that of a horse this implied considerable free time and spare cash. These two men *ouvrant la voie à la tradition des voyages en montagnes* (Rauch 1988, 64) [opening the way to the custom of excursions in the mountains] stimulated French and Swiss to emulate them in the very next year – and the *duc de La Rochefoucauld* some twenty years later. To some extent Rousseau's writings reflected what was already happening. The fact that Windham and Pococke were untitled Englishmen from Britain, the first country to industrialise, suggests they had benefited from the wealth and free time created by that industrialisation allowing them the freedom to take mental and physical pleasure from this new form of recreation. One must admit that this date was very early in the industrial revolution. Windham's name is linked with a Pierre Martel in Dufour's 1879 account of the 1741-1742 exploit (Rauch 1988, bibliography, 184)

### **Working hours and free time**

Up to about 1860 rural free time in France generally remained tied to the ecclesiastical calendar. Pastimes were local in character and some were brutal in their practice. Church fêtes included quoits, skittles, sack races, leapfrog, animal baiting and games such as 'football' with every man in a village being in the 'team', pushing, kicking, hacking, punching against the opposing team. But the irregular Holy days fitted uncomfortably with the fixed times of repetitious drudgery in the new urban industries (Holt 1981, *passim*). The rising level of education and the increasing urban secularism made both the brutality and the church association of these fêtes less acceptable so Holy days were sometimes ignored, to the advantage of the factory owners.

Regulation of factory working hours came gradually. Samuel (1984, 19-20) says that for the non-agricultural population up to 1848 free time did not exist; the average working day lasted for 13 hours, sometimes even 17 hours. In 1848 factory hours were fixed at 84 hours, i.e., seven days of twelve hours; this law was often ignored by employers though hours did slowly decrease. Despite pressure from the churches and the *Confédération générale du travail (CGT)* [General Federation of Workers] the six day week of 60 hours was not enforced overall until 1912, so the playing of team games inevitably took place on Sundays. Many British workers had Saturday afternoons free from the 1870s so British football matches took place on Saturdays. Some clubs, for example, Aston Villa and Bolton Wanderers, started in 1874 as Sunday school teams (McIntosh 1968, 62-3); their muscular Christian curate manager/organisers could not have justified Sunday matches in those Victorian days. Clearly ODP, in either country, were still very much for those who could afford accommodation, equipment, travel and time.

From the 1880s the French Unions (their existence legalised in 1884) began pressing for an eight hour day. Industry by industry, the eight hour day was achieved, postal workers in 1900 being the first and, nominally, all workers after 1919 worked only six days of eight

hours (Samuel 1984, 33; Gevrey 1995, 16). The breakthrough to the forty-hour, five-day week for all employees, came in 1936.

In Britain at Wedgwood's porcelain works, the summer working day was from 6.0 am to sunset, in winter from sunrise to sunset but the invention of gas lighting in 1792 enabled the working day to be extended! The average British working day was then fourteen hours (Samuel 1984, 20).

### **Weekends**

From as early as 1825 French workers tried to secure *la semaine anglaise* [the English week] which meant Saturday afternoon and all of Sunday being free. This demand was inspired by the fact that from that year some British factory workers obtained the right to have Saturday afternoons free (Samuel 1984, 36). [McIntosh (1968, 63) says the year was 1847]. The British unions received the backing of a law in 1850 forbidding the employment of women and juniors after 2.0 pm on Saturdays, the restraint spreading to most employees in British industry by 1890 (Samuel 1984, 36). Not until 1912 was the rule introduced for women in French clothing factories and State industries, then, soon afterwards, for all workers (ibid, 36-7).

### **Holidays with pay**

Holidays with pay began in 1900 when Paris Metro workers were accorded ten days break and were followed in 1913 by office workers who were granted one week. But generally paid holidays had to wait until the left-wing *Front populaire* government of 1936 (ibid, 37). In the 1920s 1 500 000 British workers enjoyed a week's holiday with pay and 3 million by 1938. In 1939 11 million were granted a week's paid holiday following the Amulree Committee's recommendation (Mowat 1955, 503). The French universal right to two weeks from 1936 was a contrast.

### **Dawn of the Age of Leisure**

The condition of having some disposable money and time were moving down the social scale from about the 1870s, so pursuits needing some free time and disposable income were being enjoyed by people who, a generation earlier, could not have contemplated them. This normalised the idea of working people having pastimes which satisfied individual needs and tastes. They also encouraged individual development and identity in an increasingly urban and anonymous existence.

With this movement of social and economic boundaries there was a growth in the number of those just below the well-to-do. These would be people such as *instituteurs* who had blocks of free time and finance enough, with careful budgeting, to emulate the German *Wandervögel* who, at that time, were wandering their country living frugally (Dixon 1957, 136-7). The Clarion Rambling Club of Sheffield, started in 1900, may have been comparable people. This club was described as 'the first workers' Sunday rambling club in the north of England' and placed an emphasis on 'self-improvement, knowledge and

understanding of the countryside.' (Walker 1985, 146). Paris *instituteurs* who took their classes away for days at a time from the 1880s may have included French equivalents. This was the beginning of ODP through the schools for workers' children.

### **Sport spreading in France**

The increasing numbers of working people with some free time and disposable money quickly took to the English sports though mainly as spectators at first despite the intentions of the Baron de Coubertin (ch 3) to retain them as exclusive to his social class. Cycling was already popular, the first race (on penny-farthings) being in 1869 from Rouen to Paris (Holt 1981). Cycle races such as the Tour de France from 1903, were popular betting events; professional athletes and footballers became heroes to their followers.

From 1880 to 1900 real wages increased by 30% and this improvement continued to 1914, so more people had a modicum of income above that required for mere subsistence (ibid, 10). This influenced the leisure market. Newspapers reporting sports news in 1881 numbered 21, in 1900 there were 45, by 1914 about 220 were doing so, reflecting growing leisure and literacy following obligatory and free education from 1882 (ibid, 10).

In the same period sports virtually replaced church fêtes, and membership of sports clubs grew steadily. By the late 1890s the *Union des Sociétés françaises des Sports athlétiques* (USFSA) had 200 affiliated soccer, rugby and athletic clubs and the number had grown to 1600 by 1914; the Catholic *Fédération gymnastique et sportive des Patronage de France* (FGSPF) grew from 72 clubs in 1905 to 1763 in 1914 (ibid, 196). The remarkable growth of the Catholic groups was achieved by turning their bible classes and youth clubs into sports clubs after separation of Church and State in 1905 (ibid, 1967), capitalising on the popularity of the newly fashionable sports.

The vital factors allowing such a growth of clubs were the shortening of working hours and more people with some small disposable income. Modern transport, i.e., trains, better roads and the motorised bus from the early 1900s allowed more distant fixtures to be arranged and more paying spectators to attend.

The slow appreciation of workers' real incomes and the shortening of working hours enabled workers to take part in hobbies appropriate to their means. It would seem that play of children, which has no reward except for an inner satisfaction, has its counterpart for adults.

Braunschvig backs up the general picture:

*Le nombre des lecteurs s'est multiplié grâce à la diffusion de l'instruction, à l'abaissement du prix des livres (au moins jusqu'en 1914), à la hausse des salaires et à l'augmentation des loisirs* (1926, ix).

[The number of readers has multiplied because of the spread of education and the fall in the price of books (at least up to 1914), to a rise in incomes and an increase in leisure time].

The popularity of sport was reinforced by the 1914-18 war. Matches to combat boredom, and the mixing of social classes, resulted in many being introduced to team games. The government gave grants to the *USFSA* and to the *Union des Sociétés de gymnastique de France (USGF)* to help in producing strong, effective soldiers. This attitude prevailed until 1936 when the *Front populaire* government, more liberally, gave grants to the *Loisirs populaires* [mass leisure] movements (Holt 1981, 12).

In little over thirty years, the occurrence of disposable time and money allowed the workers to take up these imported activities. But few yet had sufficient resources to indulge in outdoor activities such as mountaineering.

### Outdoor Pursuits and Social Class in France

More than two centuries ago some of those with time and money were exploring adventurously, some recording their results for posterity:

*Le 30 juillet 1762, à 4 heures du soir, ... le duc de La Rochefoucauld d'Enville, quitte Genève ... pour un voyage aux glaciers de Savoie. Partis à cheval, ils emportent dans leurs bagages un baromètre pour mesurer les hauteurs, deux thermomètres, dont un propre à être plongé dans l'eau, et une très bonne boussole d'Angleterre. .... Le 2 août, les voyageurs ... quittent Chamonix qu'ils ont gagné la veille ... (Rauch 1988, 63).*

[On the 30 July 1762, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon ... the duke ... left Geneva ... for a trip among the glaciers of Savoy. Leaving on horse-back, the party carried in their luggage a barometer for measuring altitudes, two thermometers, of which one was for immersing in water, and a very good English compass. .... On the 2 August the party left Chamonix which they had reached the evening before ... ].

It was people of comparable rank to the duke and the upper *bourgeoisie* who had the time and means to indulge in such exploration at that period; Rauch (1988, 181-91) lists 25 works published before 1800 about mountains, the Alps, Pyrenees, Jura, Peru[!] and the scientific instruments used. The authors include English, French, Swiss, Germans and Italians. By 1823 travellers exploring the mountains were numerous enough for the Chamonix Guides Association to be born (Jackson [1971], 3; Rivière & Andrieu 1988, 75) as well as similar organisations in the Oisan and the Pyrenees at about the same time (Malesset 1985, 211). Jackson ([1971], 3) believes that mountain guides called the Snowdon Rangers antedated the Chamonix association, suggesting that tourists were also active in Britain. Perhaps by 1741 Windham and Pococke felt they wanted more demanding terrain than Snowdonia.

As France industrialised, leading to pollution and overcrowding in the cities, some members of the liberal professions, as in England, took to outdoor activities to find clean air and tranquillity, some following in the footsteps of Rochefoucauld.

By 1870 the main outline of France's present network of railways was complete (Thomson 1966, 252) so now urban dwellers could quickly get to the mountains. As enthusiasts

multiplied kindred spirits joined together and regional clubs emerged in the 60s, the *Club alpin français* becoming an association of clubs on 2 April 1874 (Rauch 1988, 117). The Alpine Club started in 1857. Other organisations such as *Amis de la nature* [Friends of Nature] followed shortly after; parties from secondary schools in Paris and other cities visited the Alps from the 1870s (Ch 3 below).

Exploration, i.e., mapping, measuring and so on as did Rochefoucauld, or sometimes testing themselves against the prevailing conditions, was not limited to men though the social class tended to be consistent. Veyne (1979, 45) reports that the second woman to ascend Mont Blanc was the comtesse Henriette d'Angeville, aged 44, on 4 September 1838, carrying her handbag, fan, and mirror so that she could adjust her hat. On the summit she toasted the comte de Paris.

Veyne's article is illustrated by a photograph of a straw-hatted, and long, wide-skirted lady on the Mer de Glace, Mont Blanc, in 1900. Her male companion, in straw boater, follows behind, while the guide carries the equipment; '*les Victoriens savent s'amuser sans perdre la face*' (1979, 45) [the Victorians knew how to amuse themselves without losing face].

Some English women climbed. 'When the Revd W E Durham went climbing, like most married members of the Alpine Club he left his wife and daughters to wander round the picturesque parts of Swiss valleys. Women ... safely roped to guides, were occasionally allowed on the safer glaciers.' (Lowerson 1993, 211). But not all were so conventional or timid; a Mrs Jackson on an expedition in the Bernese Oberland in January 1888 had several toes amputated because of frostbite; and a Miss Lucy Walker was the first woman to ascend the Matterhorn though she firmly repudiated any idea of her being a 'new woman'. 'It remained possible to treat women like this as eccentrics safely to be admired because there were so few of them' (ibid, 211).

As the title of Veyne's article suggests, *L'Alpinisme: une invention de la bourgeoisie*, activities like mountaineering and other pastimes requiring time and money were the prerogative of a minority well outside the ranks of the ordinary workers, and that doing these things just for personal satisfaction was a fairly new phenomenon. And the aura of their economic status in society rubbed off on the activities.

## Cycling

Cycling became fashionable for a time and the *Touring club de France* was started in 1898 for the benefit of middle-class cyclists (Holt 1981, 91), or 1890 (Rauch 1996, 44), or 1889 (Berthier 1972, 138). New cycles were expensive, and by the mid-90s it was 'the height of fashion to be seen in Hyde Park in London or the Bois de Boulogne in Paris on a bicycle.' (Michael 1980, 9). The 'Safety' bicycle (both wheels of the same size) invented in the early 1880s, was a very visible product of industrialisation. The invention of the pneumatic tyre in 1888, and using ball-bearings, tension-wire spokes, tubular frames, and chain drive – all

new inventions and brought together in one efficient machine – represented modern industrial development. Until then the precarious penny-farthing, invented in 1862, had been the only machine available. Now well-to-do men and women could ride out into the country, and chaperoning was virtually impossible; so the new bicycle accelerated women's emancipation. Added to this 'Cycling in the 1890s proved difficult for women who wore corsets, so many left them off.' (Lowerson 1993, 207). This was the less visible side of the heated argument about women and cycling centred on 'Rational Dress', cycling bloomers, health, safety, dignity and femininity. The ultimate damnation was that 'rational dress was widely regarded as an undesirable French importation.' (ibid, 214).

But increased production brought down prices so the cachet of cycling did not persist for long, then:

Cycling transcended class barriers and brought about revolutionary changes in social behaviour and perceptions (McCrone 1988, 184).

Soon the bicycle became the means of getting to their daily work and of going into the country for people from offices and factories of the industrial towns; but the two-day weekend and paid holidays in both countries were still far away in most occupations.

### **Physical Education in French schools**

Néaume (1992) claims that PE barely existed in French rural primary schools in the 19th century. Furthermore, he reports, an enquiry in 1867 found that of the 414 secondary schools existing in France 344 [83%] had no covered space suitable for physical activities while 228 [55%] had no equipment whatsoever. PE was also virtually absent and its status low in English secondary schools but at least there was sport for most boys, and some girls, to provide healthy activity (McCrone 1988, ch 3 *passim*). For *lycéens* only fencing was approved in preparation for the examination for military and naval schools and the prestigious *École Polytechnique*.

PE/drill, if any, in the 414 secondary schools was provided by 174 military or ex-military personnel. These ex-NCOs had no educational background and were ill-suited to teach pupils of any age. From them the pupils learned to swear and to spit (Néaume, 1992). This illustrates the correlation of low status instructors with the low status subject.

The French government from 1851 made attempts, usually ineffective, to ensure some gymnastics and drill every week in schools and *écoles normales* [teacher training colleges] (de Genst 1949, 309). An 1869 circular, exempting student *instituteurs* of a 'weak constitution', resulted in a flood of parental requests for exemption, backed by compliant doctors. Néaume says there was timidity in enforcing the 1851 law for many decades.

In England, elementary school teachers also gave drill if they gave any physical activity at all. With large classes, negligible facilities and children whose attendance was often spasmodic and short lived before it became compulsory in 1880, enthusiasm and heroic

determination were needed. In secondary schools (none were under government control) activity in the form of team games varied from slight in city based schools such as St Paul's to excessive in well known Public schools where a boy might practise for over 20 hours a week if he aspired to getting into the school cricket team (McIntosh 1968, 51).

Following the 1867 inquiry a *Certificat d'aptitude* was inaugurated in 1869. This tested instructors' teaching and theory as well as their practical gymnastics (Thomas 1990, 17-8). When *Écoles normales supérieures* [Higher teacher training colleges] were set up for women in 1880 and men in 1882 the calibre of teachers improved though these were not PE institutions. In 1886 the elementary week was fixed at 30 hours, of which 2½ were to be for gymnastics and military drill but in 1890 the minister of education, Jules Ferry, said that recreation and games should predominate. For the first time, enjoyable activities were officially advocated, but with little effect (Néaume 1992). As de Gaulle said in a later context about teachers: 'his requests, even his orders, had met with "a stubborn passive resistance."' (Halls 1976, 186). Examination results dominated school life.

### **Methods in school Physical Education**

A considerable number of thinkers have tried to devise effective school physical education methods but it seems that original thinkers' ideas lose the sparkle of inspiration and joyfulness when in others' hands. The first activities to be lost, for example, from the scheme of Guts Muths (Germany, late 18th century) when tried in France and England with adults, were the recreational activities, running in the open-air, jumping streams, climbing trees, throwing, wrestling, balancing, lifting, carrying, pulling, dancing, walking, swimming, vaulting and fencing (McIntosh 1968, 79). Later, Hébert's programme (France, 1890s to 1950s) (ch 4 below) included a similar list but it needed the backing of the Vichy regime in 1940 to achieve acceptance.

From the 1870s in France, as in England, there was argument about the best system of PE for pupils, but the Hébert programme included every bodily activity. The main hindrance was resistance by teachers and parents to 'wasting' time on any method at all since the *baccalauréat* was necessary for access to higher education, or a primary leaving certificate to get a job as, for example, a postman or village constable. Few *communes* wished to fund their elementary school if additional money was to be 'wasted' on PE, and so endanger examination successes.

### **The administrative position of PE**

In France PE was often seen as aimed at producing future good, erect soldiers whereas in England attempts to link it with military preparation usually aroused lively opposition and the subject was always controlled by the Board, Ministry or Department of Education. The marginality of PE in France is illustrated by the many changes in its administrative location at government level. After 1918 PE was attached to the Ministry for War, in 1922 Henry Paté was responsible for military preparation of young people and for PE. From June 1924 Paul

Benazet was *commissaire général à la guerre chargé de l'éducation physique* but from 11 October to 29 October 1925 he was under-secretary of State in the Ministry of Public Instruction and Fine Arts, responsible for technical, vocational and post-school education and responsible for physical education and preparation for military service. The military aspect of the post had been diluted. Then in 1928 Paté re-appears as under secretary of State in the Ministry of Public Instruction and Fine Arts, charged with PE. So, ten years after the War, preparation for war is omitted. Paté held his position from November 1928 to March 1930 under four different prime ministers. The title of the position stayed unchanged until February 1934 but was held by six different men in ten governments under six prime ministers. In February 1934 Louis Marin was Minister of Health and Physical Education and this linkage with health persisted to June 1936 (Bordeaux, CREPS Library file). Similar vacillations continued for another half-century.

Physical Education was finally [?] attached to the ministry of education in 1981, but Thomas (1990, 110) is not confident that it will remain there. The qualification of *Agrégé*, 'the most highly sought after' (Aplin 1993, 7) qualification filled by competitive examination, became available in 1982 for physical educationists (Thomas 1990, 4). The *agrégation* was instituted in 1719, suppressed during the Revolution but re-established in 1808 (Léon 1967, 35 & 69). It has taken nearly three centuries for PE to gain rights to that respected qualification.

### Medical services, fresh air and PE in France

There was a close connection between medicine and PE, the word *hygiène* often occurs in French PE literature. From 1921 a course was offered in PE at the Faculty of Medicine at Bordeaux, resulting, through a Dr Tissier, in the founding in 1927 of a Regional Institute of PE (IREP), now a research unit of the University of Bordeaux II which is largely a medical institution (Aplin 1993, 58; Aitken 1986, 302); a similar *Institut de Paris-Lacretelle* opened in Paris in 1928 under a Dr Chailley-Bert (Semerdjian 1989, 121).

Before 1900 doctors were concerned about the well being of children in big towns. Canhan (1989, 109) lists 12 doctors in Lyon alone between 1888 and 1921 whose research theses centred on sunshine and fresh air for children with tuberculosis, then common in cities. The research showed that sun and fresh air were beneficial so doctors exhorted teachers to get their children out of the classroom but pollution was so bad in many towns that little was gained thereby. Awareness of the beneficial effects of fresh air was not new; Rauch's (1988) bibliography lists several works concerning the beneficial effects of fresh air and bathing from 1697 (p 185).

A Dr André Latarjet qualified in medicine in 1906 at Lyon. In 1923 he became director of the new summer vacation *Cours supérieur d'éducation physique* to up-grade PE teachers; and in 1928 he was appointed to be founding director of the *Institut régional d'éducation physique (IREP)* in Lyon. PE had been redefined in 1923 in the official bulletin of the ministry of public instruction as being predominantly *hygiénique*, that is, to activate and improve the



bodily systems and co-ordination, rather than the building up of muscular strength (Canhan 1989, 109). The effect of war demands was fading. PE was made compulsory for all pupils in French elementary schools in 1925 (one can only say 'Again!'), two hours per week being the prescribed dose. At the same time PE was redefined, this time to *rafraîchir l'attention et de discipliner la volonté* [to refresh attention and to discipline the will]. PE was still a disciplinary subject. With the prevalent concern about tuberculosis it comes as little surprise that official instructions specified that breathing exercises should occupy much of the two hours. Some free running and active play might have been more effective, space allowing, to get pupils breathing deeply.

Latarjet's appointment as head of the summer school puzzled Canhan as he could find no record of previous involvement in school physical education but the doctor was an enthusiastic outdoor sportsman especially for skiing (ibid, 110). From 1928 he was asked by Henry Paté, then responsible for PE in the ministry of public instruction, to organise ski courses in the *académies* of Isère, Haute Savoie and the Jura in collaboration with the FFS (*Fédération française de ski*), which was then just coming into existence, and the CAF (*Club alpin français*). Latarjet was President of the medical commission of the FFS so he was especially aware of the value of mountain air. It seems that the *classes de neige* of the Vanves experiment in the 1950s were not a totally new idea.

Canhan finds Latarjet's appointment as director of the IREPS of Lyon covering the *académies* of Lyon, Grenoble and Besançon even more puzzling. He suggests that Latarjet was helped by Edouard Herriot, who was mayor of Lyon from 1905 to 1955 and *Ministre de l'instruction publique* from 1926 to 1928 (Prost 1979, 108). Latarjet had invited the minister to speak at his summer school in 1926, following which Herriot instituted an inquiry into school PE. The findings were so deplorable that he spoke at the 1927 summer school too. *Les liens entre A Latarjet et E Herriot ... étaient des meilleurs* (Canhan 1989, 111) [The relationship between Latarjet and Herriot ... was close]. Canhan answers his own question as to the source of Latarjet's preferment. A further clue as to how Latarjet came to be appointed is given by Rey-Herme (1989, 52). Discussing the rate of tuberculosis among school children in the years 1900 to 1910 and the enthusiasm of doctors for the *colonies de vacances*, he mentions *le pneumologue Latarjet s'y trouve omniprésent* [the lung specialist Latarjet was always around]. So, within a short time of qualifying in 1906 Latarjet was apparently making sure that he was known and seen by everybody who mattered in his field.

### Medical and PE experiments

In 1931-32 Latarjet, now a *professeur* in the medical faculty in Lyon, began an experiment with increased physical education in a school programme. He selected the 31 most backward second year girls from a working class primary school in Lyon. They were the most *dissipés, inattentifs, paresseux, et souvent de caractère instable, indolents ou particulièrement violents* (Canhan 1989, 106) [scatter-brained, inattentive, lazy, and often of

unstable character, indolent or particularly violent]. These girls were given two hours a day of physical activity, their daily academic work being reduced from six hours to four. Improvement in academic work was almost immediate and the girls were claimed to improve in their *caractères*, this being put down to increased confidence through improvement in body control and the acquisition of new skills. These results were particularly marked among the puny, the weak and the unstable. The class was almost free of minor illnesses, absences in the year totalled 53 (less than two per child) compared with 1 413 (about 47 per child) in the parallel class. The continuity of attendance must have been of significant educational value compared with the intermittent attendances among the controls.

One should be inclined to caution in attributing improvements entirely to the increased physical activity, beneficial though that undoubtedly was. The special attention being paid to the girls would have a marked effect on their attitudes to school, to their teacher and to school work – this is known as the Hawthorne Effect (Rosenthal & Jacobson 1968, 164-73). Being picked out for special attention increases motivation and stimulates the desire not to fail nor let down the people who are paying them such attention. The same influence would be operating on the class *institutrice* and school *directrice* too.

These results were obtained with no other changes in the pupils' lives, no extra food nor changes initiated in their family circumstances though attention was paid to their personal hygiene. Every day began with thirty minutes of activity, and was then punctuated by periods of activity and games, each short enough to avoid physical fatigue.

The results were so beneficial that the experiment was repeated with another class over three years. In their third experimental year, 1934-35, the girls improved in weight and height by 1.4 kg and 2.5 cm compared with 0.1.5 kg and 0.2 cm in the controls. After three years it was found that the girls, chosen because they were the least satisfactory pupils, had apparently overtaken and surpassed their peers in academic achievement, in physique and in behaviour. After two years they took the first eleven places in the year. At the end of three years five girls sat for and obtained their *Certificat d'études primaires* (CEP). As Canhan says (1989, 108), for three years, these girls had only four hours per day of class work compared with their peers' six hours, yet they were rated in the general examination 2nd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 12th out of 26 entrants.

The normal curriculum was cut down to essentials and teaching was by 'modern active methods' (ibid, 106), reminiscent of New Education for these children who had seemed resistant to all teaching. One must wonder why the experimental *classe de santé* had only five representatives entered for the CEP when the parallel class had 21? Were only the best pupils entered in order to obtain artificially good pass rates? This appears to have happened in the Vanves experiment which is discussed later (ch 7). This pattern of experiment, and possible 'cheating', is repeated in the years to come. The sharp reduction in the hours of class teaching would have raised protests from school and parents had the class been a normal one

but from the description of the girls one imagines they were considered to have very feeble chances of gaining the leaving certificate so there was apparently little to lose whatever was done with them. The results, massaged though they may have been, and the medical status of Latarjet, may have opened the way for more experiments in enhanced PE in a class's timetable but they still did not persuade the average teacher in front of his or her class to take them out for regular spells of activity.

### **Hope of escape for PE from military taint**

The close connection between medicine and physical education in France early in the century had led, between 1928 and 1932, to Dr Tissié and a Dr Sigalas initiating a government funded *Institut régional d'éducation physique* (IREP) [Regional Institute of Physical Education] then ten more, each one directed by a doctor of medicine. PE people hoped that the medical connection would mitigate the low status of PE and its practitioners but disillusion soon set in: *On jugera leur influence <<nulle sur l'EP scolaire >>* (Taupin 1989, 118) [It was thought that they had no influence on school PE ] since the doctors had little knowledge of school teaching. Demands from practitioners of PE for a national institute for the subject increased from the late 1920s. Finally *le décret du 5 octobre 1933 institua donc l'École Normale d'Éducation Physique (ENEP)* (Semerdjian 1989, 122) [The decree of 5th October 1933 instituted the Teacher training College for Physical Education]. Its first director was Dr Chailley-Bert but in 1936 he was replaced by an E Loisel, a qualified PE man with a psychology background and inclined to Hébert's methods (ibid, 123). Thus the subject of PE had made a break for independence from medicine and now had its own specialist teacher training college.

### **Public protest over IREPs**

A great deal of money went into the IREPs. The one in Paris allocated money for an annual winter sports course from early in the 1930s. *La presse demande la fermeture des IREPs* (Taupin 1989, 118) [The press demands the closure of the IREPs]. Taking students of the low status discipline PE on a *sport d'élite* excursion at a time of widespread unemployment resulted in a not entirely surprising reaction. The idea, however, would seem to have been a clear link from the Latarjet ski classes of 1928 to the outdoor adventurous activities in provided schools and the *classes de neige* [snow classes] of the 1950s (ch 7 below).

### ***Le Front populaire* Government 1936-1938**

From 1936 the left wing *Front populaire* governed France. It set out to improve the lot of the average citizen in many ways. Latarjet's PE experiment was repeated under Jean Zay, minister of education, in three *départements* from October 1936, the three becoming thirty in 1937. One of the three was the Aude where it was organised by *Inspecteur* Maurice David *un des plus grands hébertistes de l'époque* (Semerdjian 1989, 123) [one of the great Hébertists of the epoch] and who appears later in this study (chs 4, 5 & 7). In July 1938, Zay, already sympathetic to New Education principles, increased the weekly official

hours of physical activity for all elementary pupils in France to 2 hours of recreation and 3 hours (a half day) of sport and outdoor activity (Canhan 1989, 113). One needs to be a little sceptical about the extent of compliance by schools with this new rule; Talbott (1969, 211) says that Zay 'made physical education obligatory'. Yet again this suggests that PE was still a rejected subject in many schools. The instances of experiments in PE quoted in this study were by definition exceptions; was PE maintained only as long as an official eye was on them?

The half-day of sport and outdoor activity, itself a repeat of a suggestion by Demeny (1850-1917), was the precedent for the *demi-journée de plein air* [half-day of open air] promoted by Maurice David under the Vichy regime – a clear case, among several, of continuity from regime to regime.

### **Leisure & holidays for all**

The unions had won their battle for the 8 hour day in 1919, and in the 1920s the Saturday half-day had become fairly normal, so the growth of leisure time and decreasing unemployment from the mid-30s was making life more comfortable. Thus, when the Blum government decreed the five-day, 40-hour week and two weeks of paid holiday from 1936 a vastly greater number of families could afford to explore their own country and take up leisure pursuits.

Léon Blum, Prime Minister of the *Front populaire* government, appointed two under-secretaries of State in the Ministry of Health, Léo Lagrange for physical education in educational establishments, and Desarnaulds for leisure and sports for everybody. After a year Lagrange was given both portfolios and the notion of legislating jointly for leisure and education was inaugurated.

*Les lois sur les congés payés de 1936 symbolisent le moment où les loisirs basculent irréversiblement de la vie privée dans l'ordre public* (Rauch 1996, 9)

[The laws of 1936 on paid holidays symbolise the moment when leisure irreversibly became part of private life for the general public].

These laws finalised the slow growth of entitlement to leisure pastimes which has been outlined above through the efforts of sympathetic legislators, the churches and the trade unions during the previous hundred years.

It was then found there was a need to help some people 'furnish' their minds so that they could enjoy their new leisure time fully and beneficially.

If and when school PE existed from the 1850s through to the 1930s, it did not include sport, games or leisure activities, *play* was not for school time, therefore there were many people who were not mentally attuned to the idea of *play* or meaningful recreation in this newly acquired free time:

*La ... incontestable vacuité que créent ces dispositions chez l'homme de labeur, exige d'être meublée moralement et intellectuellement* (Decaune & Cavalier 1962, 97).

[The ... undeniable personal emptiness that these measures brought to light among the workers demanded that they should be enriched psychologically and intellectually].

But many people did use this unaccustomed leisure time; from June to December 1936 the number of youth hostels belonging to the secular movement (*Centre laïque des auberges de jeunesse*) more than doubled to 500. Young *instituteurs* and other educators took a leading part in this development and Léo Lagrange was elected president of the movement in 1938. He was also responsible for 200 000 children going to *colonies de vacances* in 1937; the motivation for this being partly political as he wished to show that a democracy could do as well for its children as could the Nazi regime.

In June 1937 Blum moved Sport and Leisure from Health to the ministry of education where Zay and Lagrange worked well together, Lagrange now being responsible for physical education in the education system as well as for out-of-school sports and leisure. For the first time leisure and education were administratively together, a vast step from the thinking behind the 1925 official bulletin, only twelve years earlier, which said sport was leisure and therefore had nothing to do with schools (ch 3 below).

In the same year Lagrange started a *Brevet sportif populaire* (Sports Certificate for All). It comprised tests of physical competencies and was so successful that 400 000 children took it in its first year. Lagrange may have been moved towards this project by the example which Hébert had set with his booklet of achievements for each participant; or possibly the recording of performance which all German children experienced – but the French *Brevet* was voluntary and was a sign of Lagrange's belief that sport should be for everybody who wished to participate, not just for a sporting or social elite.

Zay and Lagrange made equipment and facilities more available than ever before. They also began planning for regional in-service teacher training centres in physical education, centres which came to fruition under the Vichy regime.

Education and leisure both benefited. The school leaving age was raised to fourteen and the number of scholarships enabling elementary school children to go to *lycées* was increased. With subsidies of 50% of the cost of stadia, pools, camp sites and other facilities, the resources for leisure pursuits increased sharply. And the arts and other recreations were not neglected. The scale of the government's intervention was unprecedented. Tourism, camping, package tours, group travel tickets and hitch-hiking grew considerably:

*Une véritable soif de liberté et de culture se manifeste dans tout le pays, entraînant un très grand nombre d'initiatives nouvelles* (Decaune & Cavalier 1962, 97- 8).

[A veritable thirst for freedom and culture swept through the whole country, leading to a great number of new initiatives].

The *Front populaire* laws, not just for recreation but for working conditions and general concern for people, created a memory that unified many disparate groups during the Occupation after 1940, and persisted into the early years of the Liberation.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Applying Glaser & Strauss's model of Grounded Theory (1967, 42) to:

**Question 5** 'How important was industrialisation in the growth of ODP?' We may say:

| <i>Category</i>                 | <i>Substantive Theory</i>   | <i>Formal Theory</i>  |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
|                                 | Effects of industrialisation  | Value of industrialisation  |
| Properties of industrialisation | Increase of wealth & available free time  | Overall benefits to society   |
| Hypotheses                      | Increase of industrialisation produces, after an interval, more wealth & free time, allowing greater choice of hobbies & pastimes | More wealth & time results in wider choice of pastimes, some of which will be ODP |

Industrialisation as a factor in the development of ODP in France and then in its schools has been of central importance. The fact that the first recorded men to explore the glaciers of Chamonix came from England suggests the importance of the wealth and free time which industrialisation creates, Britain then being several decades ahead of the world along that path. But Windham and Pococke's manifest wealth and free time were not unknown in Europe since they were immediately followed onto the glaciers by people who lived within easy reach of the Alps, some of whom then published accounts of their exploits. 'Easy' is comparative since it took Rochefoucauld two days on horseback to reach Chamonix from Geneva, a distance of some 80 kms.

One may hypothesise that industrialisation created wealth for a few in the eighteenth century but for many more a century or so later; some of the affluent left the polluted towns to find fresh air in the mountains while others thought such exploring was an interesting activity, once somebody had started the idea. It may be that Windham and Pococke became bored with British mountains and wanted something exotic because distant, adventurous because new, as climbers now go to the Himalayas.

**Question 3** How influential was the medical profession in physical activities in French education?

The medical profession taking an interest in physical activities in schools is a situation in which one of the highest status professions in society associated itself with the lowest status school subject. Clearly there is overlap in the fields of interest of the two disciplines but it is unlikely that the student-doctors researching into the effects of sunshine and fresh air can have had much in common with the ex-army drill sergeants. There were however some military and non-military middle class men involved in PE during the nineteenth century; French, Spanish, Swedish, English and German individuals, or influences, were evident, creating general disagreement [*guerre de méthodes*] which allowed the medical profession to step in and take over influential positions. Doctors encouraged the exposure of children to sun and fresh air by schools and in holiday centres. One can thus hypothesise that there was some cross-fertilisation between the two professions, medicine brought its rigour of research to PE, as did[?] Latarjet in Lyon, and doctors may have learned something about exercises in school; and play and recreation in the *colonies de vacances* (ch 3 below).

**Question 7** What continuity of thinking and policies was there in the PE and ODP field? There was continuity of the century old attitude to PE despite the best efforts of Zay and Lagrange, though, outside school the new *Brevet sportif populaire* proved to be a success, and many *instituteurs* helped in the youth hostels, Scouts and other movements. On the basis of the resistance to any activity in school except academic work, one can hypothesise that traditional resistance would need a great deal of persuasion to modify it; i.e., there was continuity of thinking and attitudes within schools though from ministry level Zay was trying to change matters. Parents' attitudes continued in the same vein for they had been similarly conditioned in their time and wanted their children to succeed academically; but people welcomed the facilities being made available for holidays and other leisure time.

**Question 9** What part has social class and growing affluence played in society's attitudes to leisure and ODP?

It is safe to suggest that social class and income had marked effects in determining who could indulge in what activity; the book titles (23 before 1800) quoted in Rauch's (1988) bibliography suggest that mountain exploration attracted a literate and scientific following which implied an elite class. A century later economics still separated adherents from the others; the price of bicycles from their first appearance confined their ownership to the well-to-do but the fall in status of cycling was much more rapid than that of mountaineering; industrialisation quickly made cycles cheaper and thus common-place but mountaineering still needs spare time and money.

An hypothesis that social class and economic status influence the type of recreational activity undertaken can be argued.

**Question 10** What influence have examinations had on PE and ODP in French education?

This raises the question of which came first – the dislike of losing time from examination work or the disdain for the subject of PE/drill. They probably reinforced each other since examinations have a much longer history in France than in England, and the *baccalauréat* (started 1808) is vital for admission to higher education and the liberal professions just as the primary school certificate was for lesser grades of official positions. Social class in the person of the ex-army drill instructor, often peripatetically visiting several schools each week, lowered the status of the subject and was reflected in, and reinforced by, the lack of a sure administrative niche which beset PE for so long. It was seen as separate from *pédagogie*. It should be pointed out that examinations in France are not just Pass or Fail, they are competitive in that the top ranking candidates get the better jobs, are accepted for the more prestigious *grande écoles* and so on. *Instituteurs* compete for promotion to *inspecteur* by sitting an examination; if there is one post then the top candidate is appointed, if two posts are available then the second is also promoted. Personal interests suggesting a rounded person count for little, examination ranking is all.

One can hypothesise that PE will have difficulty in changing its status in society but ODP were never identified with low status individuals nor did they involve loss of academic time, therefore they did not have negative associations in society. Indeed they were, from their beginning, associated in people's minds with high status individuals and schools, they were therefore high status pastimes. A further hypothesis could be that the passage of ODP to acceptance in schools should be easy as long as they can avoid threatening academic results.

**Question 13** Why was the *Front populaire* period such a turning point in society's attitudes to leisure?

The Popular Front period was a turning point in French society because free time became obligatory for all employees and started a new tradition of holidays with pay for everybody which acquired its own continuity and considerable growth. The Front set out to improve the lot of the average working man and his family and to make education at any level more open to all. It was a left and radically inclined government though the Communists never really helped it. This government gave strong backing to recreational and cultural activities in society and in schools. The ministry decreed the introduction of a half-day of open air activity and two hours of PE each week but French teachers famously ignore orders they disagree with. Perhaps the fact that politics and then war cut short a government which had passed many popular measures for French working people left an unduly rosy image in people's minds, the shortness of the Front's reign did not allow the end of the honeymoon to be reached, but it was a period to be remembered with nostalgia in the unhappy years of the Occupation. A tentative hypothesis could be that the Front brought in measures which potentially satisfied the needs or desires of the previously deprived, whetted their appetites and awakened them to the possibilities of a fuller life which was snatched away before it could be fully realised.



In a period of some two centuries almost every aspect of life changed markedly, especially from 1936 when long accepted ideas were overturned by the *Front populaire* government; the established hierarchy was put in question which was to upset the Vichy regime. Not all the new thinking was French in origin but when it chimed with French cultural values or felt needs it was adapted to the new milieu and became part of accepted practice, undergoing gradual modification as modern needs dictated.

Question 15 Why did mountain exploration, football and other pastimes become popular once they had been introduced?

Why should such a number, out of a very small proportion of the population wealthy enough, decide to follow the example of the Englishmen Windham and Pococke? And why did such a large number of workers take up football when they became aware of its existence after it was introduced into France from England? In both cases imitation must have occurred but both must have struck a chord and been the right idea at the right time to satisfy felt needs. There were a few well-to-do who could afford to enjoy mountain exploration from the 1740s, and many more workers who had sufficient time, money and a wish to indulge in sports from the 1880s onwards.

One can hypothesise that many people are looking for, or need, a hobby, pastime or recreation suitable to their personal make-up and station in life. When an appropriate activity is drawn to their attention a proportion of those in the relevant group or class will become active in that pastime.

The above suggests that industrialisation was beginning to have some effect on national wealth in the eighteenth century but a certainty that it was having a distinct effect in the late nineteenth century.

## CHAPTER 3

### BRITISH INFLUENCE IN FRANCE

#### and FRENCH PHILANTHROPY

##### Importation of British Sports

An influential section of French society took some aspects of English behaviour as their model. Britain was possibly the richest country in the world in the second half of the nineteenth century, resulting both in jealousy and in attempts to emulate her. Baron Pierre de Coubertin, an enthusiastic anglophile, a royalist of aristocratic descent, believed Britain's success was due to her Public schools producing leaders largely through their self-governing sporting regime. He thought that the leadership potential of the young men of the French nobility and upper bourgeoisie could be developed by a similar regime; their enhanced leadership qualities would then enable France to gain or regain what Coubertin thought was her proper standing in the world.

He therefore set about encouraging boys and young men of the upper classes, especially those of certain elite *lycées*, to start sports clubs with English soccer and athletics as the core activities. The schools themselves, in true French tradition, would have nothing to do with the venture but under the lively encouragement of Coubertin, helped by a Georges de Saint-Cler who had lived in England for some years, *Racing Club de France* was started in 1882 by boys and old boys of the prestigious Paris *lycées* Carnot, Rollin and Condorcet, and *Stade Français* in 1883 by those of *Lycée St Louis*. Until they obtained their own sports ground *Racing Club* used the hall of the *Gare St Lazare* (a railway terminal) in Paris for athletics and football; *Stade Français* used the *Parc du Luxembourg* and then *les Tuileries*. Both clubs imported the English concept of the amateur (non-artisan) gentleman sportsman and they forbade betting; membership was very exclusive. The programmes consisted of soccer in the winter and athletics in the summer but when it was realised that soccer was the game of the English, and then French, working classes, they changed to rugby (Thomas 1990, 22). This origin of sport in France gave it a 'snob' and foreign aura which it took some decades to live down (ibid, 21; Brackpool 1977, 25).

It may be that this founding of sports clubs, connected with, but independent of well known *lycées* with influential sponsorship and future influential citizens among the pupils, along with the *snob*, aristocratic and foreign aura (Thomas 1990, 26), reinforced the ministry of

education's refusal to accept sport for many years. The Marey Commission decided in 1889 that there was no place for sport in *la gymnastique*; in 1925 the official bulletin of the ministry defined sport as leisure and therefore not the schools' business. PE, that is drill according to the Swedish, Joinville or other system, was declared to be educational and was supposedly taught in schools (but usually was not) while sport and games remained outside the province of schools and of PE teachers until 1967 (ibid, 28; Brackpool 1977, 25). It became, instead, the domain of quasi-voluntary organisations such as the Catholic *Fédération gymnastique et sportive des patronage de France (FGSPF)*, now the FSCF.

The tradition of the provision of sporting opportunities outside the orbit of the schools was perhaps reinforced by Dr Phillipe Tissié (1852-1935) (Ch 2 above) in the Bordeaux area who was an enthusiastic worker for sport and physical activity, including British team games. In the 1880s he organised annual *Lendits* (sports festivals) lasting several days, for teams from schools in the *académie de Bordeaux*. The programmes included gymnastics, rowing, dancing and athletics (Thomas 1990, 25-6). Tissié was also responsible for the first provincial Rugby club, *Stade Bordelais*, to be founded by a Frenchman. This was associated with the fact that many English families in the wine trade lived in the south-west of France; their sons, coming home for the school holidays, introduced the game of rugby to their French friends. Thus groups associated with *lycées* in that part of France began to play the game, some becoming town clubs which thrive to this day.

The 1925 official bulletin mentioned above was accompanied by a new scheme of PE devised at the *École de Joinville* which now trained both civilian PE teachers and army instructors. There was a slight softening of the line against sport in schools since the scheme suggested that sport could be introduced to pupils aged sixteen to eighteen (that would be pupils approaching the *baccalauréat*), 'as a supplement to the *exercices éducatifs*'. Joinville emphasised that all had to be done with moderation for:

*bien des jeunes gens et encore plus de parents sont devenus irrémédiablement hostile à tout exercice physique et surtout au sport, parce que des accidents répétés ou graves ont interrompu les études* (Salles 1989, 130).

[many young men and even more of parents have become immovably against all physical exercise and especially against sport because repeated or serious accidents would interrupt studies].

Here is an official admittance, or claim, that PE, including sport, was disliked by many boys and by even more parents, a situation much more than half a century old, and also indicating how important (competitive) examination results were, and are, in France.

Representatives of British commerce introduced other aspects of their life besides their products to the French and generally they found fertile ground, except among schools. In 1872 British expatriates founded Le Havre Athletic Club to provide familiar leisure activities, the club welcoming French membership as time passed. In Paris, somewhat later, two

football clubs were founded by British engineers; then when Club Français was started in 1892 by Anglophile Frenchmen, a league could be started (Holt 1981, 65).

Despite the growth of sport in French society, the country's education system would have nothing to do with it although, as we have seen, some schools' pupils and old boys started their own clubs. Its origin and examination pressures were the chief reasons for rejecting it. *Il sort lentement du cadre aristocratique dans lequel il est né et le développement des loisirs favorise son éclosion* (Thomas 1990, 26) [It emerged slowly from the aristocratic background in which it was born and the development of leisure favoured its blossoming]. Its aristocratic protagonists – Baron Coubertin and his kind – in a consciously republican country, plus its foreign origin, did not, at first, enthuse defenders of French culture.

Thomas (1990, 26–7) gives three reasons for the boom in sport at the beginning of the twentieth century. Firstly, the law of 1st July 1901 allowed groups of like minded people to come together in clubs and leagues without legal difficulty; secondly, the gradual change of image of sport from its aristocratic origins; thirdly, the decisive factor Thomas says, was the suggestion by Coubertin on 25 November 1892 at the fifth anniversary meeting of the *Union des Sociétés française de Sport athlétique (USFSA)* at the Sorbonne that the ancient Olympic Games should be revived. An international meeting in 1894, originally called to discuss the problems posed by amateurism, unanimously agreed to the idea and the first Olympic Games of the modern era took place in Athens in 1896, 285 athletes taking part. As a result, athletics and other sports received enthusiastic approval and publicity through the 40 or so newspapers now reporting sports events (Holt 1981, 10).

The cult of athleticism and self-government in English Public schools in their usually spacious surroundings had limited scope in *lycées* as most were sited in 17th and 18th century town-centre former Catholic college buildings. However, in some *lycées* the boys, inspired by the schools encouraged by Coubertin, took matters into their own hands and, from the 1880s onwards, started both athletics and team games, despite discouragement by principals and staff. This is something of a parallel to the English Public school situation of the early 1800s when boys defied their headmasters to play cricket or to row.

### **Further British Influence, New Education**

Wonderment as to the sources of Britain's world-wide success caused people besides Coubertin to suggest reasons. From 1880 a French social scientist, Edmond Demolins, wrote a number of articles for the journal *Science Sociale* which were published as a book in 1897 under the title, *A quoi tient la supériorité des Anglo-Saxons?* [How to Account for the Superiority of the Anglo-Saxons].

Demolins adopted a slightly different point of view from Coubertin. He thought the English had evolved a more advanced society than that of France in which there was liberty (for middle and upper class boys) to be individualist but where there was also encouragement and

readiness to collaborate and produce concerted action for the common good, as for example, where boys customarily ran not only their self-governing games but also hobby clubs and debating societies within their Public schools. To put his theories to the test, in 1899 Demolins founded a school for French boys, *l'École des Roches*, mainly inspired by Abbotsholme and Bedales schools, both of which, ironically, had rejected the conventional Public school model. In this new French school New Education principles replaced many of the conventional ways and values of the *lycées*. Thus was New Education imported into France. Demolins' faith in it was such that he sent his own son to Bedales (Perier 1974, 10).

A Dr Cecil Reddie had founded Abbotsholme as an alternative school for the 'Directing Classes' in 1889. He aimed to provide an education which would harmoniously develop each boy's potential by encouraging his artistic, imaginative, literary, intellectual, creative, religious, moral and physical qualities. Crafts and manual labour in part replaced traditional sports 'so that a more wholesome feeling will be aroused towards manual labour.' (Reddie 1900, 26). Activity was brought into virtually all subjects. Unfortunately, before the end of the century, Reddie was already proving rigid and difficult to work with.

J H Badley (1923), one of Reddie's founding members of staff, started Bedales in 1893; it became the inspiration for *l'École des Roches* rather more than did Abbotsholme. These pioneer schools were models for the New Education movement which was to spread almost world-wide among the well-to-do although the movement influenced education for the working classes too.

*L'École des Roches* is in open country; self-government was fostered, for example, in team games and school societies, as was self-discipline to replace the imposed discipline of a standard *lycée*. It was not then co-educational since the Catholic church would not (especially in a boarding school) tolerate the idea of boys and girls over the age of eight being educated together. Nevertheless, the school pioneered having women teachers dealing with adolescent boys, and it was ecumenical, having both Protestant and Catholic chapels.

This, and two other later New Education Schools in France, (*l'École de l'Île-de-France* and the *Collège de Normandie*) were always looked upon as foreign since they were indeed inspired by foreign models. The influence of *l'École des Roches* on French educational philosophy and practices was small at first, it aroused widespread interest but few imitators. Its real influence came later when its methods were officially approved and many of its practices were experimented with at national level during the *Front populaire* and the Vichy regimes, and for two decades after 1945. Like Abbotsholme, it had an influence out of all proportion to its size. Under Demolins and, after his death in 1907, under Georges Bertier, the school acquired a very good reputation:

There was created a splendid school, so acclaimed even by its critics, in which the new personal methods were combined with the French tradition of humanism in a proper regard for both physical and mental culture (Boyd & Rawson 1965, 13).

## Physical Education: *Hébertisme*

From the late 1890s a system of physical education had been developed by a French naval officer which could be used with children and with adults. It was adaptable to the space available and to the abilities of the class members. The officer, George Hébert (1875-1957), had noticed that in less developed countries people moved with more grace and less fatigue than did his naval ratings, that they used their bodies with greater efficiency and had a wider range of movements and skills that they used in everyday life. Hébert classified human movements into ten categories; walking, running, jumping, climbing, going on all fours, balancing, lifting and carrying, throwing, defence and swimming.

His programme included virtually every form of sporting and recreative activity and encompassed outdoor activities using boats, skis, skates et cetera:

*Ces dix familles permettent à l'individu d'acquérir la vraie force, c'est-à-dire la vitesse, l'adresse, l'énergie, la résistance qui représentent les qualités foncières* (Thomas 1990, 24).

[These ten groups (of movements) enable an individual to acquire strength or vigour, that is to say speed, dexterity or skill, energy and endurance which represent the basic qualities].

The development of a person's physique was thought by Hébert to be desirable for utilitarian reasons, '*être fort pour être utile*' [be strong in order to be useful] and could best be achieved through what he called '*la méthode naturelle*' (Hébert, 1934, rep 1960) which was commonly called *Hébertisme*.

Hébert made the lessons interesting by dividing the class into smaller homogeneous groups; each group would travel from one end of the *plateau* [exercise area] to the other in waves, members of each wave performing the required exercise at intervals of a few metres in their own time. If space permitted the class would keep on travelling, not restricting itself to the *plateau*. As far as possible the lessons took place in the open air and each person wore the comfortable minimum of clothing.

Hébert also considered that each person should learn to:— row, cycle, ride a horse, defend him or herself with a weapon, enjoy new physical activities especially as an adult, develop practical sense, and take a skill to the highest level possible. Each person should be free to choose which skills to develop, and the needs of children and adolescents for variety should be satisfied. Every individual would thus acquire a repertoire of skills and a general conditioning, so gaining the confidence to try further new activities which could be chosen from an innumerable range of possibilities. Recreative games appropriate to age, sporting games in ones, twos and in teams and *tous exercices, conventionnels ou non, qui sont habituellement considérés comme sports* (Hébert 1934, 7) [all exercises, conventional or not, which are normally considered to be sports]. Water games according to age including team games with accepted rules, gymnastic games with and without apparatus, wrestling, human

pyramids, lifting, throwing. Then there was travelling by natural means with an aim such as excursions, hiking, alpinism, hunting, fishing; travelling with *engins*, such as skis, skates, bicycles, stilts; travelling by horse; travelling by water whether sailing or rowing [he does not mention canoeing]; wrestling of different varieties, fencing, stick fighting, archery, weight lifting, dancing, juggling, tightrope walking, balancing on the hands, acrobatics, and he adds *etc.* A truly catholic programme. Finally Hébert adds manual work of the most diverse kinds, gardening and terracing, work in the fields, carpentry, and again he adds *etc.*

Hébert's content is very similar to the corresponding parts of New Education work. He categorised the activities as providing for: 1) general development, or for the development of particular parts of the body; 2) practical usefulness; 3) virile and moral action; and 4) keeping the body in good condition. From the point of view of this study he defined those producing general development effects as being derivatives, or combinations, of moving naturally from place to place, such as hiking, mountaineering, hunting and fishing expeditions and those that demand similar prolonged exertion for moving about by bicycle, on skis, on skates or by boat, especially beneficial for those adults wishing to maintain themselves in good condition (Hébert 1934, 8).

Besides allowing for children's need to play in a variety of ways he took account of the fact that individuals have different needs, different resources of money, time and physique, and each has individual tastes. Hébert noticed that those who retain their vigour and health the longest are those who continue to practise one or more of the above 'travelling' activities.

Hébert was barely involved in the *guerre de méthodes* [war of methods] which racked French physical education from the nineteenth century until well into the twentieth but he campaigned against the medical dominance of PE (Semerdjian 1989, 122). Apart from an almost united antagonism to all forms of sport, which were thought to be quite uneducational (and foreign, *snob* and leisure), physical education exponents of other methods seemed to agree on very little. It is clear from the brief description of *Hébertisme's* broad range of contents, including virtually every physical activity and the approval of games and outdoor pursuits, that he stood apart from the others in his eclecticism and reasoning. Hébert's method gradually became better known through his writings, for example, *l'Éducation Physique Raisonnée* (1907) [Rational Physical Education], and public displays such as at an international congress of physical education in Paris in 1913 when he aroused much enthusiasm by demonstrating with 350 participants including children, women and marines. As a naval officer in charge of the Navy's School of Physical Education Commander Hébert had some leverage though his methods were not accepted at Joinville, the military School of Physical Education; nor did they gain much ground in educational circles until the Vichy regime chose *Hébertisme* to be the national system. Hébert's methods acknowledge some British influence; since he excluded almost nothing, he therefore embraced those sports

which had originated in Britain but also *l'influence de la pensée de Rousseau est nette* (Thomas 1981, 23) [the influence of the thinking of Rousseau is clear].

### **PE and sport at l'École des Roches**

For physical education Demolins, from the school's founding, adopted Hébert's *méthode naturelle* which was claimed to develop strength, speed, energy and hardiness. Altruism was also a quality which Hébert claimed the method developed (Hébert 1934, 8). *Hébertisme* ran alongside team games imported from England in the school's curriculum. Hébert considered craft work to be part of PE but at l'École des Roches it appeared under a Guild system in which pupils served apprenticeships within the school. Demolins died in 1907 and was succeeded by his deputy Georges Bertier.

Since the Hébert method included virtually all outdoor adventurous types of activities which need thought and decision making, it was probably the method furthest removed from drill of any kind, so it is not surprising that Demolins preferred it to other methods in which movements are performed to order, by learned reflex with little room for thought.

With their own estate of 58 hectares, and a PE curriculum which included varied activities and manual skills, the boys had a life very unlike that of the average *lycéen*. The inclusive programme encouraged physical versatility and an open-mindedness to new activities.

### **Sport and team games**

At l'École des Roches sport began with three English public school masters who introduced cricket, rugby and athletics. The spirit of fair play, team loyalty and playing for the good of the House or the school were inculcated in the boys. Teams played against included *Stade Français*, *Racing Club de France* and *Lycée Louis-le-Grand*, all pioneers of 'English' team games as a result of Coubertin's efforts (*Journal*, juillet 1921). On Sundays they went to historic and interesting sites within reach by bicycle.

The school believed in the value of fresh air, bathing and sunshine; they made use of them all. They built their own outdoor swimming pool as, from 1929, they had their own artesian supply found by a water diviner so all boys learned to swim (Bertier [1936], 92).

The school recruited a teacher of Ling gymnastics in 1912 but found the method useful only for therapy. Other boys went straight on to Hébert's *méthode naturelle* in preparation for team games. Even Bertier subscribed to the view of the time that 'Sport was only a useful adjunct to the training of the body.' (ibid, 89) which meant exercises – even though here they were the comparatively informal *hébertist* ones. New boys, coming from a normal French regime, were likely to need some strengthening and suppling work before they could join in ordinary games. In 1930, when the school won the athletics championship of their *Académie*, they were the only school to enter a team! (*Journal de l'Écho des Roches*, juillet 1930). With so little interest in the surrounding area it must have been difficult to maintain



enthusiasm for competitive activities, which probably explains why cricket and hockey were dropped in 1950.

The school's enthusiasm for outdoor activities may have been the source of an initiative by Old Boys. *En 1926 rares étaient les parisiens qui faisaient du ski .... (L'Écho des Roches, déc 1934, 82)* [Few Parisians skied in 1926 ... ]. In 1926 Old Boys of the school formed the Ski Club of Paris of which still in 1934, the chairman and two committee members were Old Boys.

### Scouting

After its beginning in England in 1908 Bertier introduced Scouting to his school, it being the first French school to have its own troop in 1911. He eventually became Chief Scout of France. In December 1912 the troop joined a demonstration organised by the *Éclaireurs de France* [Secular Scouts] when 6 000 scouts heard patriotic speeches from Generals Niox and Lacroix, and were shown relics of Napoléon (*L'Écho des Roches* juin 1913).

The Scouts camped and did geological field work in the Cotentin Peninsular in 1913. They tied down (against the wind) an air-force plane that made a forced landing on their school playing field, and mounted an all night guard. In 1914 they camped on a deserted island of the Chausey group in the Channel (*Journal de l'Écho des Roches*, juillet 1915), and in Corsica in 1933 (*Journal de l'Écho des Roches*, juillet 1934).

Today, the school no longer has a Scout troop and because of the pressure of academic work outdoor activities are not arranged (except for field-work purposes) but many pass their holidays in outdoor pursuits with youth or commercial organisations. Within the school there is a generous programme of physical education and games of the order of seven periods each week; additional voluntary participation is also encouraged in tennis, riding, badminton and so on.

### Self-government in the School

The school had other unusual features, especially for France. In his book Bertier [1936] discusses the ways in which pupils played a part in the government of the school, which helped them in their personal development. Many pupils held posts of responsibility, they met with the Head and staff representatives at fortnightly meetings and all had their say. (This was a common feature of New Education schools). The place of women in the school is also discussed. Demolins, from the start, had appointed married couples to be in charge of Houses, women staffed the junior school and there were women teachers in the senior school, including for the sciences. Bertier says it was '*audacious*' to have women in a residential secondary boys school so it is not surprising that the school eventually went co-educational but not until 1960. Boyd and Rawson (1965, 14) report the then Head as saying that the girls' presence in the school has been of inestimable value in the orientation of the emotional life of everyone concerned.

The openness of the school to fresh ideas is demonstrated by the fact that in 1929 visiting speakers included Cousinet, a New Education enthusiast, who talked about his group teaching with primary pupils, and a Mr Blanchard who talked about *La Chevalerie du Scoutisme* [The Chivalry of Scouting] (*Journal de l'Écho des Roches*, juillet 1929). Bertier [1936] discusses Scouting in his chapter on *Éducation morale et sociale*.

### Education and the Mountains

Töpffer, a teacher from Geneva, is one of the first to leave accounts of combining outdoor pursuits and educational activity by taking school parties walking in the mountains on what the French now call *randonnées pédestre* but which Töpffer referred to as *voyages en zigzag*, later to be known as *caravanes scolaires* (Rauch 1988, 106). From June 20th to 25th 1826 he took a party of *collégiens* mountain walking around Chamonix. He talks of the effect of the sun on their skins and of the change in their confidence as they became accustomed to the vagaries of nature, their growing awareness of geography and history and of the peasant economy, of the knowledge of each other and of themselves that resulted from reactions to the beauty, the hardships and the sometimes comfortless nights. But he talks too of a sometimes *rire inextinguible* [unquenchable laughter] (ibid, 103), and how, after a hard day, the boys thought the only food to be found, sometimes just dry bread and cheese, to be like ambrosia and the *petit vin* [local wine] like nectar. The hardships made them appreciate the comforts of their daily lives and the fertility of their home area. Here Töpffer strongly supports many of the claims teachers make today for ODP as a social and educational medium.

Since there are no material rewards from, for example, climbing a mountain the activity has to be justified by observation of changes in appearance and behaviour, and also by what has been claimed to have been learnt from the experience. The above paragraph impinges on three relevant matters. The first being the improved health claimed; the second being in the area of what the French call education but in this study is called socio-education or socialisation, that is the ability to be an acceptable citizen which the French have always considered to be the family's responsibility; the third being learning academic matters such as geography from walking the ground instead of from books which the French consider to be in the area of instruction, the traditional function of the school. Social class and economic status meant that workers' children could not normally enjoy such excursions.

According to Rauch Töpffer was not the first to organise such excursions. A Mr Gerlach, head of a school in Geneva at the beginning of the nineteenth century, apparently led school parties in the mountains. According to the chronicles of the *Club alpin français*:

*C'est sous sa conduite que le doyen des Alpinistes français, notre collègue le marquis de Turenne, a visité, dans sa jeunesse, Chamonix et le Mont Blanc (Rauch 1988, 118).*

[It was under his (Gerlach's) guidance that the doyen of French alpinists, our colleague the marquis de Turenne, had visited Chamonix and Mont Blanc during his youth].

Obviously at least one boy had been 'bitten' by mountaineering for his lifetime as a result of his school days' experience.

Gerlach and Töpffer apparently remained as educational pioneers until the 1870s when a number of schools began organising *caravanes scolaires*. The newly available train system enabled this increased activity – the line Paris/Nice was opened in 1864 (Rauch 1996, 20). Climbing clubs were founded by and for adults in the 1860s in Germany, Switzerland, Italy and France for now the mountains were effectively 'nearer' the cities. From when the *Club alpin français* (CAF) became an association on 2 April 1874 it negotiated reductions in tariffs in hotels and on trains (by up to 50%), and by arranging help from its regional branches and other countries' clubs. In 1875 CAF helped nine French schools, ten in the next year, of which five were from Paris; it helped 53 schools from 1874 to 1879. All the schools were *collèges* or *lycées*, that is, secondary schools. In 1876 CAF began a travel bursary scheme to help schools who were arranging mountain expeditions. A Mr Gourdin, a founding member of CAF, was the moving spirit in starting this idea (Rauch 1988, 117). Clearly members of the outdoor movement were determined to spread their ideas, especially among their own social class.

There were some prestigious names among the schools. *Collège Rollin* was the most active with sometimes two expeditions in one year but *lycées Louis-le-Grand, Henri IV, Fontanes* and *Lakanal* are among those named (Rauch 1988, 116-7).

Calbrix suggests that it was part of a general movement in the section of society from which these pupils were drawn:

*C'est avec le début de l'ère industrielle du machinisme ... qu'on trouve des hommes qui, par réaction, se tournent vers la nature pour retrouver l'air pur, le calme, l'action physique au sein des grands espaces, Ces premiers pratiquants sont en général des personnes aisées, disposant de loisirs (Calbrix 1973, 114).*

[It was with the beginning of the industrial era ... that one finds men were turning, in reaction, towards nature in order to find again clean air, tranquillity, physical activity in the wide open spaces, These first practitioners were, in general, comfortably off, with leisure time available].

Most of the school expeditions took place in the summer holidays but a few were at Easter or Whitsuntide (Rauch 1988, 117).

The supporters of the *caravanes scolaires* had in mind:

*Tout à la fois un idéal pédagogique (extraire l'élève de ses livres pour lui faire découvrir la nature des choses), patriotique (faire connaître à l'enfant le territoire de sa patrie), idéologique (recruter des adhérents qui feront nombre en faveur de la découverte des paysages)* (Rauch 1988, 118).

[Simultaneously, a pedagogic ideal (to get pupils away from their books and to discover the nature of real things), a patriotic ideal (to make the territory of their own country known to the children), and an ideology (to recruit people who would want to explore the countryside)].

The first of these (in bold) is very New Education in tone, and was probably inspired by Rousseau with his then relatively recent educational writings.

As we see, action was taking place from the early nineteenth century for the good of young people if they were pupils in particular secondary schools, especially if they were geographically well placed. The arranging of expeditions clearly continued into the twentieth century; describing the enjoyment and satisfaction which she derived from the mountains as a *lycéenne*, Béatrix Dussane thought mountaineering to be:

*Une des plus heureuses formes de l'éducation physique ... parce qu'elle est, en même temps, une éducation morale et intellectuelle* (1934, rep 1957, 15).

[One of the happiest forms of physical education ... because it is, at the same time, a psychological and an intellectual education].

Her eulogising continues. Mountaineering makes one learn to think ahead and to ensure that one is carrying the day's necessities. Skill, patience and adaptation to difficulties are learnt, and that when courage and skill are applied, the mountain presents few insurmountable obstacles. According to the motto of the *Club alpin français* <<Là où il y a une volonté, il y a un chemin.>> (ibid, 16) [Where there's a will, there's a way]. When united on a rope with two or three others, there is the solidarity of combined effort under the leader of the rope [*l'esprit de cordée*]. Dussane was a member of the *Comédie française* (a prestigious position) when she wrote her article.

The attitudinal separation by the teaching staff of outdoor pursuits from PE and sport appears to have been complete in the elite schools mentioned. Lycée Lakanal, in Paris, had meant:

Five years of imprisonment, .... Worst torture of all, Lakanal possessed a magnificent park of some thirty acres, but students were forbidden to use it; ... according to one old boy (Talbot 1969, 10).

The pattern of social class and subject separation showed as clearly in France as it did in England; the status of the activity allowed the *professeurs* to take part just as their Public school contemporaries did in coaching, refereeing, or even playing in school games as did, for example, Thring of Uppingham for several years (McIntosh 1968, 60).

But it depended, and still depends, on the enthusiasm of individual teachers prepared to give their time and energy to such projects.

## Philanthropy in France

As industrialisation progressed poorer young peoples' needs struck the consciences of philanthropically or religiously inclined members of the middle classes in both France and England.

The YMCA began in France and in England in 1844, being known in France as *Unions chrétiennes de jeunes gens (UCJG)*. It recruited, as in England, from the middle classes for its voluntary helpers and dealt largely with young people from the *groupes sociaux d'obédiences différentes* (Rauch 1988, 119) [social groups expected to obey their superiors] and tended, as in England, to concentrate at first on the post-school age group. The general spirit was *un désir affirmé de réaction contre des modes de vie urbanisés* (ibid, 119) [a firm desire to react against the ways of town life] so excursions out of the cities were organised for members. It seems to be a common reaction by many of the more fortunate to feel happier in rural surroundings. There was, too, a realistic awareness of the damage caused to health by the overcrowding, pollution, poverty-driven inadequate diet and restricted horizons of the urban poor.

Was it another manifestation of paternalistic concern such as that shown by a clergyman, T A Leonard, who introduced rambling to his parishioners of Colne, Lancashire, hoping to replace the annual drunken Wakes week with 'its mindless spending of hard-earned wages on inane amusements' in Morecambe and Blackpool (Walker 1985, 144)? His first attempt was a two-day holiday in Ambleside in June 1891 during which 30 of his men parishioners climbed Wansfell and Helvellyn. Within two years he founded the Co-operative Holidays Association (CHA) which offered a week's rambling based in Ambleside or Keswick. But by 1899 the clientele had changed from cotton mill operatives to mainly teachers and shopkeepers; they '... were rebels against all stuffiness and snobbery. They were there for the comradeship, health and adventure.' (ibid, 149, citing Lewis Paton, later High Master of Manchester Grammar School).

Another of the early English movements was the Ragged School Union (RSU) which by 1869 was sending sick, delicate and crippled children for one week stays in the country, even some fortnight stays by 1880. A middle-class philanthropist, Quintin Hogg, from 1870 arranged annual country holidays for children attending his Ragged School and Boys' Club – which later became Regent Street Polytechnic. By the turn of the century the YMCA, YWCA, the Children's Country Holiday Fund, Homes for Working Boys and the RSU were all arranging country camps for the urban poor (Lowe 1982, 87). By 1895 the RSU had acquired several large houses in open country. These were an extension of the RSU's scheme 'Day in the Country' first started in the 1840s when visits to Richmond and Bushey Parks, and to Muswell Hill gave the poorest children some hours of fresh air (Montague 1904, *passim*). All this parallels the development of *colonies de vacances*.

As Rosenthal (1986, 140-1) says, perhaps somewhat uncharitably:

The moral and spiritual pestilence attributed to the city represented ... a judgement ... by the upper classes on the way of life of the lower. ... the enterprise of moral reform was largely to convince the poor of the superior standards, amusements and manners of their betters. ... The pleasures of outdoor living ... were suddenly invested with an almost mystical capacity to shape character ... a diverting escape from city heat [and] ... opportunity to expose the city urchin to the edifying moral impulses to be found in nature.

### *Les Colonies de Vacances*

France was not lacking in charitable movements. Besides the French YMCA and others, an important movement, which at the time it began was mainly for therapeutic reasons, was that of the *colonies de vacances*. The movement appears to have been very like the Ragged School Union, acquiring centres offering holidays to poor city children. The first *colonies* began ... *pour aérer les enfants pauvres et souvent déficients des grandes villes* (Calbrix 1973, 114) [... for giving fresh air to the poor children often damaged (by their living conditions) in the big towns]. Rey-Herme (1989, 47) says that the first *Ferienkolonie* [holiday colony] was started in 1876 with some forty boys from the slums of Zurich by *pasteur* Wilhelm Bion of that city. Rauch (1996, 65) says '*68 enfants ... pendant l'été*' [68 children ... during the summer] which may imply that there were two *colonies*, or a continuous small flow, that summer. The children stayed, from two to ten at a time, with families who had spare rooms.

Bion had seen the benefit his own son had derived from a summer in the Alps and thought poor children should equally gain from such experience. He claimed that children from the:

*Bas-quartiers de Zurich ... forcés de passer leurs grandes vacances dans des demeures sombres et sordides, des rues sales et étouffantes, ne tirant de leurs jours de liberté aucun profit ... au contraire rentrant en classe après leurs vacances moins forts, moins vigoureux et moins équilibrés* (Rey-Herme 1989, 47).

[Poor quarters of Zurich ... forced to spend their long holidays in dark and sordid dwellings, in dirty and stifling streets, getting no benefit from their days of freedom. ... on the contrary, going back to school weaker, less vigorous and less mentally balanced].

For his pains he was called a *charlatan socialiste*.

Rauch quotes a number of instances in which much is made of the claimed therapeutic situations of the centres, for instance:

*Le parfum de la garrigue met aussi du baume au coeur et c'est bien de baume que ces êtres chétifs ont besoin* (1988, 138).

[The perfume of the dry scrubland brings balm to the heart, and it is this balm that these puny beings need so much].

From early in the eighteenth century belief in the value of bathing in the sea or at a spa was commonplace in western Europe (Brown 1707), the practice being normally restricted to the élite but French philanthropic and religious bodies wished to extend the benefits to the less

privileged. In 1862 the *Société de Saint-Vincent de Paul* proposed founding an establishment similar to one that the Protestants had set up in 1858 where poor families could come for sea bathing (Rauch 1988, 136). To take poor urban families for sea bathing became more feasible because railway lines were continually being built at this time. Bordeaux was connected to the coast at La Teste in 1841, and Rouen to Dieppe in 1848 (ibid, fn, 47-8). By the latter year France had 2 000 miles of railway and by the 80s had some 20 000 miles (Thomson 1966, 180).

In 1881 *pasteur* Lorriaux and his wife introduced the idea of *colonies de vacances* into France when forming *l'Œuvre des Trois Semaines* [The Three Weeks Charity]:

*De procurer un séjour de vacances de trois semaines au moins, à la campagne ou au bord de la mer* (Rauch 1996, 65).

[To provide a stay of at least three weeks in the country or by the sea].

Lorriaux's movement was for four categories of clients.

1. Boys and girls, aged 7 to 13;      2. Young people who were delicate or convalescent;  
3. Mothers with children of any age; 4. Adults needing a holiday but who could help in looking after the children. It was thus not what came later to be thought of as a *colonie de vacances* where only children were received but more of a sanatorium for a wider age range. In the reputedly first year of *colonies* in France, the title [The Three Weeks Charity] already implied the assumption of a three week or longer sojourn. This period remained the standard for more than fifty years and may have been established from the early bathing centres or related to the length of the school holiday (below).

Le Père Rey-Herme (1989, 47-56) discusses the question as to whether the *colonies* considered *hygiène, sport ou éducation physique* to be most important in their programmes. Clearly, as he says, they began, and for many decades remained as '*la première ligne de défense contre la tuberculose* [the first line of defence against tuberculosis]. The programmes of *colonies*, whichever organisation they were attached to, seem to have been full of physical activities whether inspired by Swedish Ling, Hébert, or the army method of Joinville. There were many varieties of ball and other games, water play, sometimes trapezes, rings, and horizontal and parallel bars. In addition there were athletics, wide games including *rallie-papier* [paper-chase] and 'long walks in readiness for route marches in the army' (ibid, 49). There were some quieter hobby type occupations too. The whole was a means of keeping the children occupied, giving them little time to think and, compared with their normal school day, they were not missing 'more important' lessons.

Rauch (1988, 178) suggests that the *colonies*, based on a fixed site and with many games with rules, were a means of providing security and regularity for children who were often from homes where rules, regularity and security were little known; in fact some were initiated into the existence of, and necessity for, rules in society. The *colonies* had:

*Une mission d'apaisement. Régularité et réglementation sont des gages d'efficacité: ..., l'Œuvre cherche à assainir cette enfance que l'urbanisation sauvage jette dans la confusion et l'anarchie* (Rauch 1996, 67).

[A calming mission. Punctuality and regularity were the measures of effectiveness ..., the charity sought to make healthy these children whose rough urban life had engulfed them in confusion and anarchy].

*Colonies* also sought to combat the laziness (*oisiveté*) which menaces the languid, purposeless holiday maker and which it was assumed holidays from school encouraged (ibid, 68).

The *colonie* was a pastoral work, operating on human groups and demanding constant watchfulness by the staff, this pastoral aspect being as important as the physical health effect of the site and the life being lived there. Rauch compares this situation with Töpffer's *caravanes scolaires* in which the boys were away from fixed sites and the security of knowing there was a bed and a meal waiting for them as they were accustomed to in their home lives; they had to develop a way of living and looking after each other regardless of where they were at any moment.

Rauch also sees the 'wide games' such as the treasure hunt, in which the rules of the game must be observed but some thinking is required, as early stages of the more demanding initiatives required of the *collégiens* when finding the way to conquer a summit. Each situation was a learning and socialisation *éducatif* experience appropriate to the age and background of the young people concerned.

*Colonie* movements sprang up all over France in the two decades after Lorriaux's initiative. Placing small groups with families at first, as had Bion, movements soon acquired or built their own centres. Mme de Pressensé's *Œuvre de la Chaussée du Maine* (p 56 below), founded in 1882, sent twenty children to the country in that year, 38 in the next year; by 1901 it had four country houses of its own (Rauch 1996, 67).

The Catholic and Protestant churches inspired many local movements but cities and towns also set up their own centres, and teachers' secular organisations were involved. *La Ligue de l'enseignement* [Teachers' Union] and *Le Sou des écoles* [School penny] were active by 1883 running what were called *colonies scolaires*; *institutrices maternelles* had their *colonies maternelles scolaires* from 1898.

Financial support for *colonies* came from private donations and from town councils. *La Caisse des Écoles* [Local government school fund] of the IX<sup>e</sup> *arrondissement* of Paris sent 100 children in 1883. In 1887 all the *arrondissements* together formed *le Comité parisien des Colonies de Vacances*. In 1902 they sent 5 329 children to *colonies*, roughly equal numbers of boys and girls; this sounds impressive but there were 142 287 eligible children (ibid, 68). Many other towns and groups formed their own *colonie* organisations.



The motives of people helping in *colonies* were probably as mixed as were those described by Davies and Gibson when talking about youth work in England at about the same period. The moral and health dangers of industrial city life were appreciated by those with social consciences, though some may have been concerned to maintain the status quo by ameliorating conditions without changing class and wealth inequalities, and also maintaining their church's influence:

Frequently they were pushed on, not only by altruism and generosity, but also by fear, self-defence and self-interest. Individuals joined the band of providers also because the activity of providing was itself moderately pleasant and satisfying (Davies & Gibson 1967, 21).

Rey-Herme cites Vimard, a worker for *colonies* in the 1920s, who said that the sporting federations set out to produce champions without thinking about physical education but *la colonie de vacances est un centre éducatif où santé et caractère se développent de pair* (1989, 47) [... is a socio-educative centre where health and character develop in parallel]. By 1925 the *colonies* had added the encouraging of the blossoming (*s'épanouissement*) of personalities to improving health, and the Catholic aims to retain adherents and save souls.

### **Managing *colonies de vacances***

There were many points to be considered when arranging *colonies*. Length of stay, the number in a group, boredom, home sickness, the quality of programme and facilities, and the fact that a shorter stay would allow benefit to a greater number – though three weeks seemed to be the agreed duration from the start – all were points for discussion. It was claimed that, when children came without their families (implying that some did come as families), a long separation caused a loss of much that had been gained in the first few days, and that after three weeks the children had already benefited as much as they were going to. A benefit claimed, besides improved health, was the discovery of a natural order of things in the countryside where one could renew communication with the elements.

The difference between the French three weeks and the usual English one week such as the Ragged School Union initially organised is puzzling. The only credible reason found relates to the length of the school holidays.

From 1814 to 1891 the schools' summer holidays lasted for six weeks, two 3-week *colonies* end-on could thus be fitted into the break from school. The holiday was much later in the year than it is now to enable the rural pupils to help with the harvest, the dates being determined by each *commune* to match the expected time for gathering. However, from 1838, the ministry of public instruction ordered that school holidays should occur on fixed dates. *Académies* were allowed one from a choice of two sets of dates. The first beginning in the last week of August and ending in the second week of October, the other, one week later for starting and finishing. Rauch (1996, 62) gives no reason for this variation though one might surmise that it was still related to the expected dates for harvesting. In any case, school attendance was not compulsory until 1882. The custom of spreading the country's school

breaks, as now for the winter sports February break, has a long ancestry though for a different reason.

In 1892, only ten years after the *colonies* were reputedly begun in France by Lorriaux the summer break was lengthened to being the whole of August and of September to October 1st, that is, eight weeks; and from 1912 the last two weeks of July were added, making the break ten weeks. But the three week period for *colonies* had become established by then.

The Easter holiday of one week was a church break whose date depended on the phases of the moon but the dates were fixed in 1860 as part of the *laïcisation* of French society. The Christmas break became two weeks in 1925, so the school year is divided into three regular terms. The lengthening of holidays was in keeping with the growth of leisure. Holidays, in the nineteenth century, were times when the school influence was absent and, it was assumed, the pupil could get into bad habits so holidays should be short. Going away for a holiday *éducatif* was available only to the rich: *la famille intègre les loisirs dans sa mission éducative* (ibid, 64) [the family integrated leisure into its socio-educative role].

### Accommodation

The finding of accommodation for large numbers of children in rural areas for *colonies* was a problem. A number of expedients were tried. The first was using a building not far from the town which became a day sanatorium, rather as did the RSU in its early days. Children needing fresh air and activities came just for day visits. Such arrangements are still made under the title *centres de loisir sans hébergement (C.L.S.H.)* (Centres without overnight accommodation) by organisations such as *Les Francas* (ch 10). Or a group of ten or twelve with an experienced adult, stayed with neighbouring peasant families with spare rooms, or in a school during the holidays. A third method was to arrange exchanges between the town and country children and a fourth was simply to place the children as lodgers with country families. Gradually organisations acquired or built their own centres as did agencies in England.

Certainly there were children who needed a break from their squalid homes. From 1852 inspectors of health were asking for improved living conditions in the *Département de l'Hérault*. In 1899 a Mr Heubner drew attention to the number of children with tuberculosis and in 1904 a medical *professeur* Grancher reported that in the XVI<sup>e</sup> *arrondissement* of Paris, 141 children out of 896 [nearly 16%] were tubercular, compared with barely 1% of country children. In the same year in Montpellier nearly 50% of children aged 9 to 15 in one school were, or threatened to become, tubercular (Rauch 1988, 142).

The selection of children for a *colonie* was based on a number of criteria. Lists of those needing the experience were obtained from schools and elsewhere; children were sent to particular centres according to needs, gender and age, but medical examination would exclude the infectious and the really dirty, as would a record of bad behaviour. Age limits

were 8 to 14 (Rauch 1988, 143-5) or 7 to 13 (Rauch 1996, 65), younger ones needed too much care. Goals were to improve the hygiene, health and mental balance of the needy.

Also, according to Rioux (1978, 92):

*Pour compléter l'œuvre scolaire et former de vigoureux conscrits.*

[To complete the work of the schools and to train vigorous conscripts].

and

*Pour gagner à la morale ou à la religion des corps et des esprits chétifs.*

[To improve their morals or to win these weak bodies and souls for the church].

said secular and Catholic bodies respectively. The diocese of Paris also had the reputation of its *colonies* as a priority. To ensure modesty and good repute, homogeneity of groups was maintained within each *colonie*; the mixing of pupils and apprentices was avoided as far as possible (Rauch 1988). Rauch does not say so but it is extremely unlikely that there would be mixing of boys and girls in a *colonie*.

### Charitable people

Rioux (1978, 93) suggests that the *laïc* and the Protestant were virtually the same bodies as distinct from the Catholics, but he also distinguishes a third group, the philanthropic. These last were frequently rich, sometimes aristocratic, individuals. In 1882 Mme Elise de Pressensé, aristocrat, Protestant, socialist, founded *l'Œuvre de la Chaussée du Maine* to help the families of Versailles men shot or deported after the *Commune* of 1871.

From 1880 *instituteurs* took complete classes for *voyages pédagogiques* (educational journeys). They persuaded the councillors of Paris and the Minister that the expeditions were worthy of financial support. But they had to forget the educative value of the elements, instead they took books for lessons in improvised classrooms. Children's measured growth in chest expansion justified the financial support. They excluded no child because he was not well behaved (ibid, 93). Here is a contrast with the *colonies de vacances* and a parallel with the later *classes transplantées* and the *mi-temps* Vanves experiment (Ch 7).

In England the national team games figured early in teachers' voluntary efforts. In London and other large cities teachers were, from the 1880s, running school football teams and by 1895 cricket, athletics and swimming were offered, all out of school time (McIntosh 1968, 121). There are records too of London school teachers from 1895 taking children into the country (File B107, Brotherton Collection). Lewis reports that from 1896 young London teachers were pioneering school journeys in holiday time. By 1914 'over one hundred schools took parties away to Epping Forest ... and even ... The Peak and North Wales.' Under the 1918 Education Act, the London County Council (LCC) subsidised journeys lasting for between one and two weeks. By 1920 the LCC was helping 300 schools a year. Ages for boys and girls were mainly 10 to 13, and a variety of accommodation was used. The School Journey Association negotiated reduced train fares (Lewis 1923, 200-01).

## Differences of social class expectations

The expectations, selection and planning for the *caravanes scolaires* and for the *colonies de vacances* were different (Rauch 1988, 146). The *collégiens* and *lycéens* derived pleasures and benefits from unexpected daily events which were part of the socio-educative experiences. They met situations which widened their horizons and they were relied upon to react appropriately. In the *colonies* however, careful organisation and planning ensured that there were few surprises, and only those who were likely to do as they were told were accepted. The two types of children came from backgrounds which gave them profoundly different degrees of self-confidence and *savoir-faire*; and there was an age difference. Initiative was not encouraged or expected from the *colons*. Primary school children received an education based on a curriculum which emphasised 'facts to the detriment of the need for explanation, contemplative observation to the detriment of the exercise of judgement.' (Talbot 1969, 26). Secondary school pupils, however, were being educated for responsibility and leadership.

In 1900 there were only about 100 *lycées* and 250 *collèges* in the whole of France, which were attended by less than 3% of French children (ibid, 19). This figure gives some idea of the exclusivity of a secondary school education – the *baccalauréat* taken normally at the end of the full course was even more exclusive, only 1% of the cohort in 1900 obtained that qualification (Mermet 1992, 108).

## Paternalism? Philanthropy?

In 1874 *le pasteur* Comte founded *l'Œuvre à Saint-Étienne* which arranged holidays for his parishioners and their children away from the fetid air of the industrial town (Rauch 1988, 143). Comte and his wife (who had seen their own anaemic child benefit from a stay in the mountains, as had Bion's) started it as a movement for families. Since the Lorriaux movement also catered for needy families it is difficult to see what were the differences from those of the 1850s for sea bathing, and what justifies 1881 being considered such a key date.

Comte endeavoured through his movement to inculcate in parents the habit of saving money. Each May parents booked their child for the coming holiday and paid 1 Franc so committing themselves to paying their share according to their means. This commitment:

*Ne s'agit pas de jouer sur la pauvreté mais sur la moralité: économiser pour la santé de ses enfants* (Rauch 1988, 143-4).

[Was not a question of playing on their poverty but on their morality: to economise for the sake of the health of their children].

It was hoped that the commitment would encourage them into the habit of working and saving steadily through the incentive of benefiting their child. Rauch (1988, 144) suggests that behaviour, of parent and of child, was a factor in acceptance – worker behaviour had to subordinate itself to the established *bourgeois* norms. There are parallels with the paternalism of the clergyman T A Leonard, and of the youth workers in England, then and later.

Rauch possibly classed this as a *colonie* to use as an example of ways by which the middle-class used such baits to change the behaviour of those within their sphere of influence. [Personal communication from Professor Rauch, April 1998, confirms this.]

Rey-Herme (1989, 47) says that many were to imitate Lorriaux. As with gradual developments it is normal for ideas to be progressively built on and the stage or date at which a new name may be appropriately coined or attached can be a matter of chance. Raillon (1949, 2) says: *Née, il y a un siècle environ, d'initiatives chrétiennes (catholiques et protestantes) la colonie de vacances ...* [Born approximately a century ago from Catholic and Protestant initiatives, the *colonie de vacances* ...]. This sounds as though Raillon is counting the first bathing centres from the 1850s as the beginnings of *colonies*. Apparently the movements labelled as *colonies de vacances* were the outcome of at least thirty years of development. Changes did not then cease; a *colonie* visited by the writer in the 1960s bore little resemblance to the picture of poor city children being done good to.

Comte became one of the best known *colonie* activists. Penin (1996, 24) says that he started the movement *l'Œuvre des enfants à la montagne* [Charity for Taking Children to the Mountains] in 1893 which fits the excerpt given by Rey-Herme (1989, 47-8) of a narrative by Comte. When he and his wife saw their child walk for the first time after his recovery in the mountains he thought of the children trapped in the stifling city under a cloud of lead pollution in July and August. In his imagination the anaemic and the rickety passed before him, with their melancholy gaze on him, saying:

*Vous procurez tous ces avantages à vos enfants, pourquoi sommes-nous exclus de cette distribution de santé ... Vos enfants sont-ils plus méritant que nous?*

*Je le répète, trouvez une réponse satisfaisante à ces questions que je me posais au mois d'août 1891 à l'ombre d'un sapin, ...*

*l'Œuvre des Enfants à la Montagne existait dans ma conscience ... et je m'occupai immédiatement de la réalisation pratique de mon projet.*

[You get all these advantages for your children, why are we excluded from this distribution of health. ... Are your children more worthy than us?

I say again, find a satisfactory reply to these questions that I put to myself in August 1891 in the shade of a pine tree ....

The idea of 'Children for the Mountains' was in my head ... and I occupied myself immediately with putting the project into effect].

### Growth of *colonie* movement

By the first decade of the twentieth century the number of *colonies de vacances* being arranged by people with the time and the inclination had increased considerably. The (Catholic) *Union française des colonies de vacances* (UFCV) was founded in 1907 and published for its members the journal *Saines vacances*. [Healthy Holidays] (Raillon 1949, 3). Clearly, children's health was a dominant reason for *colonies*. The UFCV brought together many Catholic *colonie* movements for mutual support following the separation of the Church and the State in 1905, as had happened with the sports clubs already mentioned.

Rey-Herme (1989, 55) suggests that the growth in the number of *colonies* early in the twentieth century was accelerated by the Grancher Report of 2 January 1904 showing an incidence of 16% of tubercular children in the XVI<sup>e</sup> arrondissement of Paris, and by the dedicated work of Comte. He says that the medical world rallied to the support of the *colonies* as an important counter to the disease.

Penin (1996, 23) attributes the growth of the *colonie* movements to:

- a. the magnitude of people's preoccupation with health and particularly the struggle against tuberculosis
- b. the efforts of the Catholic Church to regain its position of influence after the separation of State and Church in 1905
- c. the incessant activity and example of *pasteur* Comte, and other Protestant *pasteurs*, concerned for social justice, and rejection of social inequality.

Comte went on working until the 1920s for *l'Œuvre des enfants à la montagne*, which added *et la Mer* [and the Sea] to its title a few years after its founding.

The secular *Comité national des colonies de vacances* had about half the market for *colonies* but it disappeared after 1945; Rey-Herme (1989, 49) offers the fact with no explanation. Raillon, however (1949, 4), says that *colonies* increasingly belonged to factories, municipalities and *départements*, drawing much of their finance from the State and *collectivités* so they could probably undercut, or offer better facilities than, most voluntary organisations but the Catholic movement would have the allegiance of its adherents wishing their children to be in a 'safe' Catholic environment, regardless, within reason, of the price.

The *Éclaireurs unionistes* (Protestant Scouts) started in 1911 (the year that Bertier started his school's troop) and the *Éclaireuses* (Protestant girl guides) in 1912. By 1914 there were 9 600 *Éclaireurs de France* (secular scouts). Catholic scouts appeared just after the first World War and their Guides in 1923 (Rauch 1996, 269).

*Pasteurs, instituteurs* and, after the War, priests took scouting influences as well as their religion to the *colonies*. So there was an inter-play of ideas from the worlds of Scouts, churches and education. Raillon (a Catholic) is generous in praising the secular Scouts and teachers for their contributions for he considered that previously the secular *colonies* had omitted the moral educational aspect of their work, which for him, would be based on the Catholic faith:

*Des équipes d'instructeurs, parmi lesquels on compte des hommes remarquables, issus, pour la plupart, du scoutisme <<Éclaireurs de France>> et de l'enseignement public, firent en peu de temps une œuvre considérable* (Raillon 1949, 3).

[Teams of instructors, amongst whom one counts some remarkable men, for the most part coming from the (secular) Scouts of France and from the (secular) state schools, quickly made a considerable difference].

Raillon was perhaps thinking about the start of the *Centre d'entraînement aux méthodes d'éducation active (CEMEA)* which was founded in 1936 and was getting well into its stride when he was writing in 1949.

Numbers are uncertain but Penin (1996, 22) quotes attendance at *colonies* for 1921 as about 130 000, and 420 000 for 1936. In the latter year the *Front populaire* government made organisers of *colonies* provide training for their staff, this being a precursor to a requirement that an approved diploma be held, or be in course of preparation, by staff (Raillon 1949, 2). The success of the *colonies* movement may be judged from the fact that even in 1944 (the year when the Liberation began) it is estimated that 350 000 children attended *colonies*; by 1964 the number was of the order of 1 350 000 (Crémieux-Brilhac 1965, 272). From that high point, however, numbers began to decline as the image of *colonies* became somewhat dated and had a hint of charity in it. The affluence of the 60s encouraged the growth of commercial agencies and there was also competition for parents' money from schools' *classes de neige* (ch 7) and other *classes transplantées* as well as newer agencies offering exciting and healthy holidays. By the 1990s children attending the re-named *centres de vacances et loisirs*, numbered about 850 000 annually (Mermet 1992, 421), a considerable fall from 1965 but still a substantial number.

An inquiry in 1992 into the goals of a random sample of organisations running 148 *centres de vacances*, with or without over-night accommodation, divided out as follows:

| <u>Agency type</u>                                 |       | <u>Declared goals being to promote</u>               |
|--|-------|--|
| Non-profit making agencies                         | 47.9% | responsibility, socialisation, <i>épanouissement</i> |
| Works committees                                   | 21.6% | autonomy, socialisation, <i>épanouissement</i>       |
| Municipalities                                     | 27.7% | recreation for children to avoid delinquency         |
| Commercial agencies                                | 2.7%  | pleasure, holiday, <i>épanouissement</i> , discovery |
| (Centre d'Études et de Communications, 1992, 10-2) |       |  |

### **Sport and the voluntary agencies**

As the popularity of sport gained momentum during the last twenty years of the nineteenth and into the twentieth century, the scene was set for sport, as distinct from physical education, to be organised outside the purview of the ordinary schools. The pupils of the elementary schools were not in the same influential position as the boys of the *lycées* so they were dependent upon adults, whether teachers or others, to organise facilities for them. Organisations for this purpose were formed offering recreational activities including games, sports and gymnastics for pupils' free time while PE/drill remained the responsibility of the school, though frequently neglected.

Besides its work with poor families and *colonies de vacances* the Catholic church had, from early in the 1800s, formed local groups which came to include physical recreation in their programmes. The Catholic *Fédération gymnastique et sportive des patronages de France (FGSPF)*, had developed from the *Œuvre de la jeunesse* [Movement for Youth] founded in

Marseille in 1814 and the *Œuvre des orphelins apprentis* [Society for Orphan Apprentices] started by the *Société de Saint-Vincent de Paul* in 1835 in Paris. By amalgamations and re-organisations through the years they became, by 1900, the FGSPF having 2 400 boys' groups and 1 800 girls' groups consisting of workers, apprentices and school pupils. Of these groups, 70% were started after 1875, further evidence of the growth of leisure time and disposable money. They organised local and national sports and gymnastic competitions which in 1902 brought together 2 400 gymnasts from 102 branches for the finals; today's finals bring together 2 500 boy and 4 000 girl gymnasts.

In 1947 the name was changed to the *Fédération sportive de France* and in 1968 changed again to the present *Fédération sportive et culturelle de France (FSCF)*. The range of sporting activities they offer to young people has continued to widen and now includes rock-climbing, kayaking, board-sailing, mountain biking, mountain walking and skiing, and virtually every current competitive sport, as well as drama, dance, and instrumental and choral music. It has now more than 2 000 mixed groups with a membership of some half million boys, girls, young men and young women and almost 200 000 members licensed to compete (FSCF 1988, *passim*, and interview). By law no one may compete at any level in France without being licensed annually.

As a large Catholic organisation working for young people it has its own staff training arrangements. Each year it runs staff courses, to a total of some five thousand person-days in gymnastics and other sports, about 1200 person-days in music, singing and dancing, and some 550 person-days in leisure/hobby activities. The FSCF is also recognised by the ministry of education as competent to run its own courses for certain units leading to the *Brevet d'État* (State diploma) and the State recognised qualifications for *animateurs* and *directeurs* of *Centres de vacances et loisirs* (*ibid*, 10); only holders of the *Brevet d'État* may be paid for their work. Similar Protestant and secular organisations also exist to cater for young peoples' personal development. All staff of such organisations who have dealings with the young are expected to consider themselves to be *éducateurs*, that is, concerned for the socio-educational development of the members. This is well expressed:

*C'est la disponibilité et la présence qui s'imposent à tout dirigeant, tout animateur, tout technicien et tout formateur pour tenir sa place d'éducateur (FSCF 1988, 18).*

[It is their availability and their presence which imposes on all leaders, all organisers, all technicians and all trainers the need to maintain their role as socio-educators].

When the Popular Front government encouraged leisure activities of all kinds from 1936, and the open-air half-day was introduced into primary schools by Zay, there was a general boost to leisure pastimes throughout the country. Laborde says that in the new world of paid holidays:



*Dans ce monde riche de promesses où les projets audacieux ne semblaient pas absurdes, où les cadres administratifs traditionnels craquaient, où un sous-secrétariat aux Loisirs, malgré l'ironie que provoquaient ce terme, était créé, où chacun était pris d'une fièvre de "faire quelque chose" ou d'aider ceux qui voulaient agir (Laborde 1965, 1-3; citing Giselle de Failly, Vers l'éducation nouvelle).*

[In that world rich in promise where daring projects did not seem absurd, when the traditional administrative frame-works were reshaped, when an Under-Secretary for Leisure was created, despite the irony which this term evoked, when everyone was in a fever to "do something" or to help those who wished to do so].

## CEMEA

One outcome of the *Front populaire* legislation was the creation in 1937 of the voluntary organisation *Les centres d'entraînement aux méthodes d'éducation active (CEMEA)*.

The new legislation was changing French society and CEMEA was founded to respond to the new needs for staff for purposeful leisure activities, for active learning, and also to stimulate changes in the *colonies de vacances*. There were those who saw a need for the regimes to change from child minding and open air recreation to active social education.

The birth of CEMEA revolved around an André Lefèvre, National Commissioner of the *Éclaireurs de France* [Secular Scouts] and a Giselle de Failly. Lefèvre believed in the formative value of collective life and he wished to influence educators of all kinds by drawing on his scouting experience of relationships based on friendship, mutual respect and work in groups. At the same time de Failly was a militant of the New Education movement and wished to find some milieu in which its ideas could benefit children; she found the *colonies de vacances* appropriate but she needed to teach their staff the New Education principles of concrete experience and active learning.

Together, de Failly and Lefèvre created CEMEA. At Easter 1937 they held their first *stage* [training course] under the patronage of Jean Zay and Léo Lagrange. Zay, already a New Education sympathiser, obviously saw this new movement as an aid to putting into practice his 1936 regulation requiring staff of *colonies* to be trained.

This first *stage* for *moniteurs* attracted 160 applicants for fifty places. When the newly 'qualified' *moniteurs* started work there was confrontation between them and the experienced directors and other staff, many of them teachers, who were accustomed to telling the passively receptive children what to do. Clearly there was a pressing need for courses for directors too. They were provided and proved to be highly successful. Instead of the anticipated resistance *les plus enthousiastes furent ceux dont on appréhendait le plus d'hostilité*. (Laborde 1965, 1-3) [the most enthusiastic were those from whom they had expected the most hostility].

From then to the present day CEMEA has been mainly occupied with training staff in New Education principles for *colonies*, and for other organisations. CEMEA's journal is still called *Vers l'éducation nouvelle*.

It is apparent that New Education and Scouting principles of active learning in small groups were the basis for an organisation concerned for improving staff dealing with the young of French society.

Now, *centres de vacances* must have not worse than one *animateur* to twelve children or adolescents; at least half of the staff being holders of, or working towards, the *Brevet d'aptitude à la fonction d'animateur (BAFA)*. For *centres de vacances maternel* (ages up to six) the staffing ratio must be at least one to eight children (CIDJ 1993, 4).

### **State involvement with school sport**

In 1931 the voluntary *Office du sport universitaire (OSU)* was started. The lateness of this establishment perhaps reflects the fact that virtually all university students were products of *lycées* and *collèges* of which most obstructed the introduction of their pupils to sporting activities. But sport was becoming so popular in society in general that it affected university students. Salles (1989, 130) says that even from 1919 there developed an amateur sporting enthusiasm among a limited number of university students. They were not connected with the aristocratic origin of French sport nor with the sport which could be played with the clubs affiliated to French sports federations where professional fouls were the norm[!]. Further change of public attitudes following the *Front populaire* decrees was shown in 1938 by the widening of OSU's field of interest in becoming the *Office du sport scolaire et universitaire (OSSU)* [Office for School and University Sport]. School pupils who wished could join from that date. In 1945 the OSSU became the *Association du sport scolaire et universitaire (ASSU)* and was recognised by the ministry of education as a public body.

From 1950 all teachers of physical education were supposed, as part of their teaching week, to give three hours on Thursdays or at weekends to the, now, *Union national du sport scolaire (UNSS)* for the pupils of their, and neighbouring, schools who joined the union. This applied even though PE teachers were not employed or paid by the ministry of education but by the ministry for youth and leisure or whatever the title of that department happened to be in any particular year. Yet they would have been awarded a black mark if an *inspecteur* had found them teaching sport in school time before 1967. (Interview with FEN, teachers' federation of trade unions). To some extent this tied the schools, tenuously, to their pupils' voluntary sporting activities though it also institutionalised its separateness from the schools. UNSS now runs extensive pyramids of sporting activities with national championships at the apices, including canoe racing and slalom, rock-climbing, skiing, rowing, cycling plus all the traditional team and individual sports (UNSS 1993a, 1-3).

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

**Question 4** How important was New Education in encouraging ODP in French education?

The motivation of Demolins in bringing New Education to France through founding *l'École des Roches* may not have been overtly class motivated but since New Education schools are normally fee charging, they are inevitably class selective. Thus, this expensive French school which included physical activities, Scouting, expeditions, self-government and manual work, introduced a considerable number of future influential citizens to ODP. Demolins' motives were ostensibly to produce a type of citizen who, he hoped, would help France win a position comparable with that of Britain in the world – a motive similar to that of Coubertin's some two decades earlier. We may hypothesise that New Education at first encouraged ODP among a privileged class in French society and in a limited number of schools of that class.

**Question 6** What were the benefits claimed to be derived from ODP at different times?

For adult adherents there have already been mentioned the escape to tranquillity, exercise in fresh air, perhaps challenge, exploration and learning from field-work. For children the same features can apply and there are also the benefits claimed by Töpffer. Improved confidence, health, growing awareness of their own country, knowledge of themselves and their peers, appreciation of their own sheltered life, and an appreciation of comforts when they appeared but making the best of things when they did not. An important feature was that they learned from real things – very New Education and 'Rousseauish'. Dussane thought mountaineering to be a most happy form of PE and to be psychologically and intellectually educative, one thought ahead and learned skill, patience and adaptability. Everybody seemed to agree that there are benefits but the assessments are largely subjective and the people writing are already converts; however, the unanimity must carry weight.

A tentative hypothesis can be extracted from the above:

Adherents are ready to justify their activity from their own experience with many details of evidence.

**Question 9** What part has social class and growing affluence played in society's attitudes to leisure and ODP?

Social class has been both a positive and a negative factor at different times and in different fields. Töpffer's expeditions in the mountains were for *collégiens*, i.e., secondary school boys and therefore middle class or *bourgeois* as were the school parties taken to the mountains from the 1870s on the new railways. In these cases social class, and the economic status of their families, played a role in ensuring that only certain children could experience such adventures.

In the 1880s well-to-do French boys benefited from the work of Coubertin in bringing football and athletics from England. Social class played a positive role in that the upper class Public schools had invented the modern forms of these sports which Coubertin encouraged

French boys at elite schools to play. But the 'snob' aura and foreign origin now proved to be a negative influence and reinforced educationists' resistance to allowing any time for sporting pursuits. However, that was no bar for the working class. They wanted or needed a satisfying pastime which they found in football; growing affluence ensured that some now had sufficient money and free time to play. The elite school people, discovering that the English working class also played football, changed to the Rugby version to avoid being associated with the now working class game.

Dr Tissié's work in the Bordeaux area may have increased the tendency for middle class pupils to play games quite separately from schools. His *lendits* could only have involved those children able to attend for several days, which would mean paying for lodgings for those from distant parts of the *académie*.

*Club Bordelais* was another sign of middle class influence from England via English Public school sons of the Bordeaux wine trade; the English and French boys probably agreed among themselves about the status of PE/drill, the same type of ex-army instructor was used in the secondary schools of both countries but rugby had upper class associations.

Cycling was fashionable in the 1880s through to the early 1900s – as long as bicycles remained expensive. The fashionable image faded when they became cheap; this applied in both England and in France. We see that social class transcended national frontiers.

It would seem that we can construct some tentative hypotheses relating to social class.

- i. The status of an activity is affected by its cost and therefore by the economic and social status of those who practise it.
- ii Practitioners of a pastime are broadly similar in social class regardless of their nationality.
- iii People practise a recreation only as long as they find both the pastime and their fellow participants congenial.

These hypotheses can probably hold only as long as the cultures concerned have reasonably similar class systems.

**Question 11** What influence have the voluntary movements including the Scouts had on ODP in education?

Many new charities, religious and philanthropic, were founded by, mainly, middle-class people when they became aware of the dreadful lives of the industrial poor in the nineteenth century. Country life was invested with some strange qualities; a 'mystical capacity to shape character' and [there were] 'edifying moral impulses to be found in nature' (Rosenthal (1986, 140-1)). It is difficult to see how these can apply to a large group of children being shepherded through three weeks in the country but, in a new milieu of fresh air, with good role models and a healthy life style they should certainly return home physically more healthy and, probably, psychologically better balanced. At root the Scouts and the *colonies de vacances* offer the same ingredients of communal living and activities in the fresh air so

benefits to the children are likely to be much the same. Voluntary organisations have introduced millions of children to the outdoors; *colonies de vacances* in their early years were especially beneficial for the rickety and tuberculosis threatened city children.

CEMEA (p 62 above) offers training for staff of any organisation which has dealings with young people; the principles of its parent organisations, Scouts, *éducation nouvelle* and *colonies de vacances* are propagated; ODP are a significant area of interest for it, q.v., Chobeaux (1994).

A tentative hypothesis could be: voluntary organisations provide ODP and social education which, traditionally, French schools do not provide.

**Question 13** Why was the Popular Front period a turning point in people's attitudes?

Zay experimented with New Education ideas, he raised the school leaving age, opened secondary education to a greater proportion of elementary school pupils and he made PE compulsory (again). He also made it obligatory for people working in a voluntary capacity in, e.g., *colonies de vacances* to hold an appropriate qualification. Especially the Popular Front ensured that the worker had some leisure each week and had two weeks of paid holiday enabling him and his family to explore their own, or another, country. People's eyes were opened to what life could hold for them. The memories of the measures introduced remained with French people during the unhappy years 1940 to 1944.

There is little in chapter 3 justifying amendment to the tentative hypothesis related to this question in chapter 2.

**CHAPTER 4**  
**THE VICHY REGIME 1940 TO 1944:**  
**EDUCATION, YOUTH WORK**  
**and PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES**

France was led by the *Front populaire* government of Léon Blum from May 1936 to June 1937 with some support from the communists. Chautemps then replaced Blum, maintaining Jean Zay at Education but in April 1938 the Left administration fell. During those two years legislation concerning work, education, leisure and holidays were passed in attempts to equalise the life chances of all French citizens.

The military defeat in May/June 1940 reduced matters such as holidays to unimportance but the Popular Front left a legacy of ideas and legislation, on some of which Vichy was to build, and which were further developed after the Liberation.

Marshal Pétain became head of state in Vichy on 1st July 1940. The regime set out to govern France in a manner acceptable to the German occupiers and to maintain law and order. It declared strongly for:- Roman Catholic values, submission to authority, knowing one's duty to France and the Church, strengthening family values, return to the land, large families, anti-Semitism and anti-Free Masonry. Secular teachers and a Godless society were blamed for the defeat. Some Vichy supporters were in favour of a one-party state and admired the Nazi regime's methods, especially their up-bringing of the young.

Decadent was the word commonly used by conservative and Catholic people to describe the condition of French society before 1940, so a National Revolution was proposed to rectify that condition:

Everything done at Vichy was in some sense a response to fears of decadence. More particularly, the defeat gave cause and opportunity for more radical measures designed to reverse that long moral decline (Paxton 1972, 147).

Decadence and its causes meant different things to different people; blame was laid on jazz, alcohol, Paris night life, short skirts, moral depravity among the young, birth control, enjoyment, the cult of ease and, going further back:

The unbridled individualism inherited from Descartes and Rousseau which led to the dismantling of hierarchy and authority in 1789 and their replacement by flaccid parliamentarianism (ibid, 23).

The Popular Front was said to have been:

A monstrous alliance of Muscovite communism, Masonic radicalism and Jewish finance ... and was blamed for having ... precipitated France into an ideological war after having weakened her (ibid, 4).

The simplistic causes adduced for the loss of the war resulted in simplistic solutions being advocated. The cure was clearly to eradicate much of the 3rd Republic legacy, especially that part of it associated with the Popular Front. Teachers were to blame because some 78% of the nation's children had been taught by secular *instituteurs*, most of whom were members of the notoriously left wing and tending-to-pacifist *Syndicat national des instituteurs*, (SNI) [Elementary Teachers' Union] (ibid, 150). They were blamed for the decadent society and the cowardly soldiers.

France's future lay in its children who were to be brought up untainted by decadence, so the education system was to be reformed to serve this end. It is very easy for the elderly to blame the younger generation for not being as good, as polite, as hard-working and so on as their generation; so easy in fact that it has been going on for thousands of years.

As Socrates (469-399 B C) said:

Children today love luxury too much. They have execrable manners, flaunt authority, have no respect for their elders (cited in Rosen 1994, 6).

and Shakespeare:

I would there were no age between ten and three-and-twenty, or that youth would sleep out the rest: for there is nothing in the between but getting wenches with child, wronging the ancientry, stealing, fighting, ...  
*A Winter's Tale*, 111, iii.

and many others.

The teachers were easy to blame for the defeat. The generation they had influenced were the soldiers who had just been defeated so the *instituteurs*, and the new ones entering the profession, had to be remodelled. Further, any organisations in which they had been influential must be suspect, for example, the secular youth hostel movement. But this created a dilemma. The Church saw hostelling as a danger to morality since young people wandered un-chaperoned but the Vichy government, to counter the claimed decadence, encouraged outdoor activities – so they vetted the staff carefully for political trustworthiness and maintained financial support.

To reform the education system and the training of teachers was not impossible because of France's traditional centralisation. Despite the chaotic situation from May 1940 the administrative system was quickly re-established, as Pétain, disliking politicians, surrounded himself as far as possible with civil servants of high quality.

The same cadre of top civil servants served the same Ministries en route to Vichy, and ultimately, back to Paris, providing a remarkable continuity of service (Paxton 1972, 334-9).

Law and order resumed to a large extent, and national examinations such as the *baccalauréat* were set and marked throughout the war years. But 85 *préfets* out of 93 were replaced in the first six months because they were not compliant enough in sacking Freemasons, socialist teachers and Jews (Rosa 1986, 16).

The prestige of 84 year old *Maréchal Pétain*, hero of Verdun in World War 1 and now titled *Chef de l'État français*, reinforced the tendency for the French people to obey the government. Therefore few responded initially to General de Gaulle's call to join him in Britain; for which, *in absentia*, he was condemned to death for treason.

The difficulties facing the Vichy government were enormous. The cost of the German army of occupation was paid for by the French, and the writ of Vichy really ran only in the smaller and poorer unoccupied part of France. Between one and two million men were in Germany as prisoners of war and much of France's industrial and agricultural production was commandeered by the Germans.

### **The National Revolution**

When the Pétain government set up in Vichy in July 1940, there were many flocking there who hoped to get their particular philosophy accepted as government policy. Some were idealists and patriots but others were merely self seekers. Some of the former were military men who hoped to rebuild France through methods which had a savour of Baden-Powell and the British Public school spirit; of these idealists, many, including Pétain, thought the French education system was too intellectual and too sedentary. Georges Bertier, headmaster of *l'École des Roches*, was one of these. He was also maintaining his school, despite much of it being converted into a POW camp, for about 100 boys compared with 330 in 1939; a sister school being set up in the Pyrenees for families in the unoccupied zone. (Personal communication, Mr Daniel Dolfuss, *ancien Rocheur* and i/c staff development, October 1995).

The principles of the National Revolution, which were to rejuvenate France, are summarised in a memorandum by General Weygand which:

Called for an end to be put to the masonic, cosmopolitan, capitalistic state, to class war, demagogy, and the cult of pleasure, and a return to the principles of Religion, the *patrie*, and the family. In place of an egoistic individualism, the National Revolution put forward the corporative idea (Cobban 1965, 183).

Unions were replaced by corporations in which employers, employees and the state all had representation, and harmony should then reign! As Thibault points out (1989, 2), corporatism is another name for fascism.

The National Revolution had its good points. It included old-age pensions, restricted the consumption of alcohol (particularly by minors), increased provision for physical activities (sport, outdoor pursuits and manual work) for children and adolescents; it also aimed at more difficult divorce, larger families, back-to-the-land; and was anti-Masonic, anti-



immigrant and anti-Semitic; not unlike the Nazi regime! The new national motto was *Travail, Famille, Patrie* [Work, Family, Motherland] in place of the old Revolutionary *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*. Jews were banned from teaching and several other professions from 3 October 1940 though Pétain tried to ameliorate the lot of Jewish old soldiers if they had military decorations, or if their families had been in France for five or more generations. Paxton considers that French anti-Semitism was based on them being non-French in culture, rather than on the Nazi principle of race (1972, 176).

### Education and Youth Organisations

Pétain disliked pure book learning and had wished, when he was Minister for War in 1934, to be simultaneously minister for education. Like many Frenchmen he believed the army completed a boy's education; some of his ideas were similar to those of Bertier concerning physical activity and manual work as important parts of a child's education.

Vichy detested the *instituteurs* so their education and training were radically changed to get them away from their traditional secular, left-wing indoctrination in the teacher-training colleges. Formerly, teacher aspirants went from the *cours supplémentaire* at the top of their elementary school at age 15 to the teacher training college in their *département* for two years. In September 1941 the rural colleges were abolished and surveillance exercised over the remaining urban ones since they were allegedly hot-beds of socialism and anti-church (Neave 1992, 97). Now the future teachers transferred to their local *lycées* and took the *baccalauréat* at the age of about 18. Then followed a term of teaching practice and a year of lectures by people trained in the *écoles normales supérieures*, as was planned by Jean Zay. The *instituteurs* now received a higher status education and they avoided the 'vicious circle of the so-called *esprit primaire*, within which primary school teachers were intellectually imprisoned.' (Halls 1976, 14).

Jérôme Carcopino was appointed minister for education in February 1941. He was a man of patience and tried to manage change through consensus. The teaching of religion in state schools had been introduced by his predecessor but it was modified by Carcopino to civics, morals and spiritual values on the grounds that the *instituteurs* had not been trained in religious education. A Catholic democrat, he exemplified the dilemma facing many French people. Was he, a Catholic, to do his best for France by working with the Catholic government, or remain an academic?

Carcopino was son of the first medical officer of *l'École des Roches* and a friend of Bertier. This closeness would have influenced his thinking, including devising the *éducation générale* which was introduced into all educational establishments. Carcopino's opinion of the school is shown by his words: *L'École des Roches devait servir en quelque sorte d'école pilote à l'Université toute entière* (cited in Courbin 1974, 6, date of quotation [1965]) [*L'École des Roches* should serve in some ways as an experimental school for the whole of our education system]. His daughter Françoise married Bertier's son Jean in the school's Catholic chapel

on 29 December 1931 (*Écho des Roches*, jan 1932). *L'éducation nouvelle* had a considerable influence on French education during the Occupation, and continued to do so for some decades afterwards.

### Physical Education

French conscripts were in poor physical condition, in 1939 and 1940 33% were unfit for military service, compared with 17% of Germans (Halls 1981, 189). Poverty, poor housing and diet, addiction to alcohol because of the lack of safe water in villages, and lack of PE at school were all contributory factors. These figures reinforced Vichy's determination to make PE compulsory [again!] in their National Revolution.

The Germans had benefited from the facilities created by the Weimar Republic from 1919 to 1933, including the Berlin Olympic stadium, playing fields, youth hostels and mountain huts, then their augmentation by the Hitler regime. From 1935 there was an obligatory daily period of physical activity in school, and performances were detailed on every child's school report (Dixon 1981, 144).

Most French schools had neither inclination nor facilities to include physical education; if they did then parents objected that they did not send their children to school for drill, still less for play or sport. A 1900 decree that there should be four periods of physical education per week remained a 'paper reform' only (Halls 1981, 186). Another case of ministry rules being ignored for this marginal subject.

Now, in a crisis situation, with the encouragement of the hero Pétain, there were hopes that objections would be more muted. But the provision of wider activities than just drill demands trained teachers, space, time, money and willingness – all scarce.

The Vichy government decided to make Hébert's *méthode naturelle* the national system of physical education in schools from 1941 though in practice, when PE happened, it was a mixture of Hébert, Swedish and Joinville material; depending on what the teacher was familiar with (Goussard 1989, 90).

*Hébertisme* used the natural surroundings, involved exposure of the skin to the open air and all ages enjoyed it much more than drill. Exposing the skin to the open air was by now accepted as beneficial, except by Catholics on grounds of modesty if males and females over the age of eight were working together. The influence of Carcopino, Bertier and a Louis Garrone may be seen in the choice of *hébertisme*. Garrone was a member of Bertier's staff at *l'École des Roches*, a Scout and a Catholic, who had been seconded to work under a Jean Borotra, who was responsible for general education, youth and sport. Garrone succeeded Bertier as head of *l'École des Roches* after the war.

## Éducation générale

General Education was an attempt to widen children's horizons (and the teachers') beyond the traditional disciplines. It included a weekly hour of choral singing, half an hour of hygiene and first aid, and moral and civic education plus five hours of PE.

Borotra became responsible for all sport and physical education (as Lagrange had been) as well as the new 'general education'. The Germans distrusted him and hindered his work by, for example, delaying his laissez-passers (Halls 1981, 190). He was a sportsman of the Coubertin school, believing in amateurism and the value of sport for its personal developmental values, which inclined the Germans to suspect him of being anglophile.

One successful Vichy initiative was to copy Lagrange's *Brevet sportif populaire*, changing its name to *Brevet sportif national*. The 'new' qualification was equally popular, 94 000 children in the Paris area alone taking it in 1941, 28% being girls (ibid, 192). This *Brevet* was claimed to be part of the fight against 'decadence'; why Lagrange's identical *Brevet* did not counter decadence is not explained.

The intended form of PE within General Education is explained in:

M R David (ed), (March 1941) *Éducation générale: 2: Les demi journées de plein air*.  
[General Education: 2: Half-days in the open air]

The contents page reads:

Preface; Why half-days in the open air?; How to organise an outdoor half-day; Suggested activities; Physical Education; Open air games; Songs; Dances; Bibliography.

The bibliography, inter alia, contains sections on Manual work and Knowledge of Nature, that is, identification of flowers, birds, fungi and trees; and the geography of France.

The preface says that:

1. France must choose a new way of life or perhaps disappear; it must ... maintain the spirit and finesse which have always animated its people, and must find again the vigour and responsibility which it has so markedly lacked.
2. The French must become again healthy and robust, hard working, disciplined and enterprising. Education must be renewed, directed towards action, effort and not sparing of the self.
3. Intellectual disciplines will contribute towards these goals but more directly the training of the body and of the character will be found on the sports grounds and in open country [original italicised].
4. The ministry of education ... has made available to the commissariat of general education, youth and sport the means by which pupils will increasingly find a trained person in each school and a training area according to the ideas of Jean Borotra.

The preface then indicates that activities will usually take place in the open air; health and hygiene will be enhanced, physical training, sporting initiatives, manual work, singing, excursions, camps and group activities will all be encouraged.

5. They will benefit simultaneously from the experiments in directed discussion in public education since 1937.

6. From now on, ..., educators must start this work; the public authorities and public opinion ... will support them.

7. It is a matter of saving our race and of preparing for tomorrow the men and women who will be the workers ..., more fair, more hard-working and, we hope, more fraternal.

This encapsulates much of the educational philosophy of the Vichy regime, reminds the French of their traditional culture, and of their claimed *esprit* and  *finesse*. It refers directly, point 5, to the *Front populaire* experimental work of Zay from 1937 through classroom discussion in place of teacher exposition. It also emphasises the claimed link, point 3, between the training of the body and of the character, demonstrating the agreement among senior officers and Borotra with English Public school beliefs.

The preface of David was plainly looking to the end of the war when the French would be hard-working, robust, disciplined and enterprising citizens. Physical activity and character development are linked but this time it is 'on the sports grounds and in open country' that these desirable changes will take place. So games and outdoor pursuits were now accepted – officially – as being *éducatif*, exercises were not even mentioned. New Education influence is apparent in points 2, 3 and 5.

Lagrange and Zay had pushed schools to practise a daily half hour of physical activity, they had also increased the amount of equipment and facilities available to schools; 'Zay claimed that by 1939 sports facilities were available in twenty-nine *départements*.' (Halls 1981, 188). The idea was carried forward by Borotra, as was Zay's idea of in-service training centres for teachers. These would have ensured, David's preface point 4, that eventually children would find an *éducateur* in each school who could teach *according to the ideas of Jean Borotra*. This is illustrated in Zoro (1986, 144) where photographs of Vichy PE include children running in open country, jumping over bushes, scrambling on rock faces, crossing a 'ravine' by a horizontal rope, cycling, sailing, rowing, canoeing, skiing, riding, and carrying a 'casualty'. Learning how to carry a casualty accords with Hébert and New Education philosophies of learning useful skills. An *éducateur* is a socio-educator, not the same as a teacher who is an *enseignant* who instructs.

The first edition of *Les Demi-journées de Plein Air* sold more than 80 000 copies which averaged out at a little more than one per school. David was apparently satisfied that the exhaustion of the first edition indicated things were moving the way he wanted:

*Grâce à l'institution de l'Éducation générale, nous avons assisté à une telle poussée vers l'Éducation physique et des sports de Plein air qu'une révision de la brochure s'imposait* (David 1943, 2).

[Due to the inauguration of General Education, we have seen such a move towards physical education and open air sports that a revision of the booklet became necessary]

A second edition of David's book came out in 1943. It was expanded and included a section on manual work written by a Georges Berthier [sic], who is described as *moniteur, membre*

*du Groupement hébertiste*: he appears as author of an historical article (1972) in which he describes the various aspects of Hébertisme. Biographical details make clear that Bertier, headmaster of *l'École des Roches* and the *moniteur* are not the same person. Bertier [1936] describes the virtues of *Hébertisme* (102-7), and manual work (127-39).

The new preface omits the words 'according to the ideas of Jean Borotra.' Pétain relieved Borotra of his post in April 1942 [under German pressure?]. His anglophile inclinations then prompted him to make for England but he was caught and deported to a German concentration camp. He survived, perhaps because, having been a tennis partner of the King of Sweden, the latter let the Germans know that 'he was interested in Borotra's fate.' (Halls 1981, 190). Germany needed Sweden's ball-bearings. Borotra was a Wimbledon competitor in the 1930s and played in the veterans' competitions until the 1960s. After the war he was founder and president of the *Comité français pour le fair-play* and, similarly, the *Comité international pour le fair-play* (Who's Who in France 1973, 298).

### Open-air half-days

The idea of a school half-day in the open air did not originate with Vichy nor the *Front populaire*. Lagrange had taken up an older idea from Demeny, one of the French *guerre de méthodes* activists who talked of half-day Thursday school walks in 1891 (Rivière & Andrieu 1988, 74) and of games out-of-doors. Lagrange had revived the open-air half-day, inaugurated the *Brevet sportif populaire* and officially supported the youth hostel movement from 22 May 1937; he had been supported by the Minister of Health, H Sellier, as part of *une politique d'hygiène populaire, de santé populaire* (ibid, 74) [a policy of general hygiene and health]. There was clearly a great deal of unacknowledged continuity in Education from the 3rd Republic to the Vichy regime.

In 1941 Carcopino said that *les disciplines du grand air* [activities in the open air] would help to form *les hommes robustes et équilibrés* [robust and balanced men] when allied to the intellectual disciplines of *éducation générale* [ibid, 75]. Carcopino was here attaching positive values to a mixture of vigorous activities and academic work, few people on the basis of experience would disagree with him. But when [if?] they occurred in school time, walks, open air activities, training in camping and Scouting were used mainly as reinforcing lessons in other disciplines, rather than as a means of meeting the elements of nature or simply being beneficial and enjoyable parts of PE (ibid, 76). Activities apparently had to be justified as academically valuable for the persuasion of parents [and teachers?] rather than for their physical, psychological and social benefits; physical activity alone was still seen as time lost from teaching 'more important' examination material.

French people old enough to have been taught by the Hébert method speak of it with warmth, and the physical education profession, through their spokesman in the teachers' federation of trade unions, *Fédération de l'éducation nationale*, (FEN) spoke of it approvingly to the writer in October 1993. *Hébertisme* was officially approved until 1967.

## ***L'Éducation nouvelle***

When looking at Vichy's *éducation générale* one can see the influence of *l'éducation nouvelle*. Activity related to academic work, a variety of PE activities, manual work, sessions of discussion, music, art, civics, study of the environment but no mind-numbing drill; these were all in the New Education style of thinking for all-round development. There seems to be little doubt that Carcopino, who would be heavily involved in devising *éducation générale*, was affected by his connections with *l'École des Roches*.

There were about-turns in education during the Vichy years, though generally not in Carcopino's time; for example, returning the school leaving age to thirteen, making the rural curriculum more rural to, allegedly, deter the drift to the towns, reintroducing secondary school fees, restoring Catholic schools' subventions and attempting to introduce religious education into public schools. There was also one-party rule, and pronounced flavours of Fascism and anti-Semitism (Neave 1992, 97).

It is ironic that the Vichy government took over so much of Zay and Lagrange's reforms while accusing them of leading the French nation into decadence. The Church reinforced this belief; Cardinal Gerlier of Lyon saying 'Whilst our neighbours were working, we were dreaming up how to organise our leisure.' (Halls 1981, 188).

## **In-Service training**

To provide in-service training to produce the 10 000 general education teachers required Borotra needed staff. He advertised for volunteers, inadvisedly, 'especielly with experience of English education.' (ibid, 193). The Germans were even more convinced of Borotra's anglophile sentiments and succeeded in getting rid of him in April 1942, followed by his attempt to reach England.

The centres which Zay and Lagrange had intended opening for in-service training for teachers were opened by Borotra backed by Carcopino. Two national and fifteen regional centres were established by 1941, receiving in a year 20 000 out of 140 000 *instituteurs* for short courses in *éducation générale*, PE and sport and outdoor half-days. Thereafter teachers were offering pastoral care, organising social-service activities, co-ordinating pupils' work and there was liaison with parents and school medical officers. This possibly contributed to some softening of the tradition that schools were only for instruction and parents for education though that tradition still holds to a considerable extent.

The fifteen regional centres were *Centres régionaux d'éducation générale* (CREG) and the other two *Centres nationaux d'éducation générale* (CNEG) (Zoro 1986, 178). There were also courses where *moniteurs* for various sports in *colonies de vacances* could acquire *brevets* [certificates]. At the liberation the CREGs were converted into *Centres régionaux d'éducation physique et sportive* (CREPS). Most of those CREPS still exist, so Zay's idea

and Borotra's practice have left a legacy of centres where top-level sportsmen and women can live, train and be educated, as well as short courses be run.

### **Values attributed to sport by Vichy**

Many people believed in the value of physical activities but their values were not always those of Borotra. Pétain and Weygand stressed the need for physical fitness and also simplistically believed that sport produced courage and discipline. General de La Porte du Theil, who ran the *Chantiers de la Jeunesse* (below), considered that physical culture and manliness went together. Work and play where the body was exposed to the elements elevated man spiritually. Hardening the body by the bearing of discomfort such as immersion in cold water during an activity, was good for young men. Swimming was good, life-saving exercises were better. Games strengthened the moral fibre of youth, especially if they required reflection [?]. Team sports taught the value of co-operation and the sacrifice of the self. This last was especially part of the Vichy philosophy, for individualism was condemned. Sport schooled the will, fostered group loyalties and broke down class barriers. Masculinity and competitiveness went with the overcoming of difficulties (Halls 1981, 190-1). There is a wealth of arguable points here about the values of activities but playing or practising activities for pleasure is never mentioned.

A problem was the intended, as opposed to the perceived, values attached to a particular activity. Under Borotra's regime there were rallies of athletes where they paraded and took a solemn oath that they would compete with discipline and fairness in order to become better persons to serve their country more effectively. Borotra had the Greek ideal and the Olympic oath in mind but many people saw the rallies as mirroring the Nazi sports festivals. Undoubtedly, aside from all the rhetoric about 'better' persons, Borotra, la Porte du Theil and others saw physical fitness of the young as being a step towards achieving the liberation of France – and the Germans were aware of this. Borotra introduced the idea of (optional) physical tests being credited on the *baccalauréat* (ibid, 192).

### **Public attitudes to physical activities**

Borotra wanted every *commune* to have its own playing field, sports centre and swimming pool available to populace and to school. A circular in 1940 urged *maires* to go ahead without waiting for the authorisation of credits. Sixty per cent of the cost of land and eighty per cent for its conversion for sports use was available as subsidy; this was more generous even than the Popular Front grants. However, despite government enthusiasm, the handsome grants, and some *maires* seeing a sports complex as a status symbol, most *communes* resisted stubbornly. The amount still to be found by a small keen *commune* was beyond its reach – and most were not keen (ibid, 196-8). As Halls says:

The attitudes displayed reveal something of life in Vichy France but also how officials, parents, and teachers conceived of schooling (ibid, 196).

Perhaps the above quotation would be more apt if the word 'Vichy' were omitted.

The suggestion that pupils could be used for some of the labour of conversion of land to a play area caused teachers to fear the reaction of parents who saw schools as places for hard intellectual slog. Rural communes said their children had enough exercise already in walking several kilometres to school and working in the fields when lessons were over; they played enough on Thursdays and Sundays. A multitude of reasons/excuses were put forward. One *maire* wrote that two out of the three children in the *commune* would be leaving school soon so they had no need of a sports field. *Maires* in mountainous regions said it was pointless buying land which was snow covered for much of the year and others said the land nearest the school was the best of the, scarce, agricultural land. One *commune* had a playground 8 metres by 6 metres and offered to buy a ball for the school. Another council considered it unnecessary for their children to be 'pestered' by physical education (ibid, 197). Shortages of food, clothes and footwear were put forward as arguments against more activity. By the end of 1941 only 39 out of 229 *communes* in the *Landes*, south of Bordeaux, had applied for grant aid. Prefects reported that people would rather have their war-damaged houses repaired than build sports facilities.

Borotra's successor, a Colonel Pascot, had been an enthusiastic rugby player. He pushed his predecessor's ideas so insensitively that he alienated sportsmen, academic inspectors and teachers. He subsidised sports federations so that all clubs had to join their national federation if they wished to attract any aid at all. The result is that virtually every sport in France is controlled by the appropriate *Fédération française*, every player has to be insured, medically examined and have a *licence* in order to compete. Pascot's enthusiasm aroused criticism even among the Germans. He encouraged ski-training which they saw as being closely akin to military training; they did not stop it but kept it under observation.

Some people became more anti-sport, for the time spent in travelling between school and scarce sports grounds was wasteful; poor organisation and equipment shortages increased frustration. Pétain admitted that an excess of sport could lead to intellectual impoverishment and some parents moved their children to Church schools, some of which offered absolutely no physical activity though the prefect of the Catholic Vendée thought they should be compelled to include some. The *Hébert* method was worrying to the Church; 'Exercises unbecoming to females should be avoided' said one bishop, and novice nuns taking PE tests in order to qualify as teachers were a problem.

Head teachers and parents were sceptical, ... whether the ... oblique moral education given through sport was a very efficient means of training. Why not, they said, teach directly such concepts as honour, loyalty, obedience, team spirit, and social solidarity? Teachers of 'general education' confessed themselves often baffled to know what they should be doing – and enquired why they got no extra pay for their work! (Halls 1981, 200).

Four times in 1942 the newspaper *Le Temps* criticised the time given to physical activity:

A mandarin class of intellectuals should not be replaced by a sporting one: ... it is towards mental supremacy that we must bend all our efforts, without ... neglecting physical education (ibid, 200).



Obviously, old values persisted despite the changed circumstances of defeat and Pétain's leadership, perhaps they even hardened to some extent.

### Youth Work

Besides the attempt to regenerate French youth through education the Vichy government set out to use both new and rejuvenated approved youth agencies to that end.

In the slump of the 1930s 50% of young people aged 15 to 24 were unemployed and there was little recreational provision for them until the *Front populaire* period. There was the *Association catholique de la jeunesse française* (ACJF) and there were Scouts and some political groups but none attracted a great number of young people. In 1939 only about 15% of French youth belonged to an organisation (ibid, 132).

Vichy saw youth movements as being as important as schools for shaping young people in the desired ways:

A major part of the Vichy effort to capture ... French youth went on out of school. The young individual was supposed to be conditioned ... in a healthy group experience (Paxton 1972, 160).

The number of people belonging to youth organisations more than doubled in the year after the armistice ... there were uniformed groups everywhere (ibid, 161).

Vichy did not set up one monolithic youth movement. The Catholic church resisted the idea of letting its own movements such as Scouts and the *Jeunesse ouvrière chrétienne* (JOC) [Young Christian Workers] in the overall ACJF, out of its own hands. Many of the army officers and civil servants had been scoutmasters or higher. General de La Porte du Theil, a friend of Pétain's, had been scout commissioner for the Ile-de-France. Bertier of the *École des Roches* had been Chief Scout of France, and Father Forestier, founder of the French Rover Scouts, was chaplain-general to the Scouts of France and became chaplain to the *Chantiers de la jeunesse*. Thus the Catholic church and the Scouts had well placed friends who defended their separate existence (Paxton 1972, 161).

Louis Garrone, from the *École des Roches*, was directly concerned with moral, social and civic training and had responsibility for the new *Écoles des cadres* [Schools for Leaders] (Halls 1981, 135). His presence added to the influence of the Scouts, the church, *Hébertisme* and New Education.

A support network was set up by Garrone to encourage existing youth organisations over the whole country but the Scouts, with some other movements, were forbidden in occupied France as the Germans were nervous of the patriotic spirit in movements largely staffed by ex-army officers.

## New Youth Movements

### *Compagnons de France*

Two official youth movements were created by Vichy. Henri Dhavernas, another with a scouting background, began the *Comité jeunesse de France* in 1940 for young people who were idle in refugee camps or unemployed. He linked them to work needing to be done such as harvesting crops rotting in the fields because so many farm workers were prisoners in Germany. Support came from all quarters, from acquaintances in both Catholic and Protestant Scouts, and Catholic and socialist youth movements. Young men in their teens now had the chance:

To offer help wherever it might be needed, the young men themselves also gaining in morale through feeling that they were being useful to their country (Halls, 1981, 267).

Official support came immediately and the name was changed to the *Compagnons de France* with the first work camp being 1- 4 August 1940. The spirit of the organisation was a mixture of military and mediaeval apprenticeship with the Scout code of honour and behaviour. It was anti-capitalist, anti-totalitarian but also anti-liberal democratic and therefore anti-de Gaulle since he would bring back democracy which they believed had put France in its present plight. They had a blue uniform, a colours ceremony and a salute which resembled the Nazi salute – the movement was forbidden in the occupied zone; the Germans saw it as an attempt to regenerate French youth, so endangering German control.

The work of the *Compagnons* widened in scope as the organisation grew. Units of fifty were used by the water, forestry, roads and bridges services, flood reclamation, grape picking, sports field construction and help to refugees. More skilled work included running restaurants and forming musical companies. From May 1941 Commandant de Tournemire replaced Dhavernas as *Chef Compagnon*.

Finance for the *Compagnons* was generous. With a membership of about 7 000 it received, in 1942, 54% (30 million francs) of the total Vichy youth movement subvention. The Scouts, with some 115 000 members, received only 16 million and the combined Catholic youth movements with 2.3 million members only 2.7 million francs. Jealousies naturally arose, heightened by investigations suggesting that the actual monies received in 1942 were double the official figure (Halls 1981, 148 & 278).

For the full-time *Compagnons* the day began at 6.30. Thirty minutes of *Hébertisme* followed breakfast, work from 8.30 to 12.00 and 13.30 to 16.30. Sport or vocational training, an improving lecture and 45 minutes of education filled the time to dinner which was followed by entertainment, much of it self-created.

By January 1941, with about 800 paid and 700 volunteer staff, there were some 7 000 full-time members known as *Compagnons de Chantier*, being people who were not able to find work or to make their way home again. Part-time *Compagnons de Cité* became the bigger

section, rising by the end of 1943 to 25 500, full-time membership by then having fallen to 3 500 as jobs were found or *Service du travail obligatoire* (STO) [Obligatory Work Service] took its toll of older members. STO was introduced in February 1943 under German pressure for more manpower in Germany or for building Atlantic defences in France.

The movement's image varied considerably. It was accused of being the precursor of a totalitarian youth movement but criticisms were conflicting. Membership was said to be too Christian Democratic, to be anglophile, to be Communist, to be invaded by Jews who got in through the drama groups. Of the staff, some were accused of being self-seeking or of being *attentistes* [awaiting the Liberation].

Members were a mixed lot; the original target membership, i.e., young unemployed and refugees, tended to be undisciplined because of being uprooted; and they disagreed among themselves. They were commented on critically; '... escaped from reformatory schools', 'idle fellows, ... thefts, burglaries, ... they couldn't care less.' (ibid, 270). Some displayed their political leanings – or adolescent rebelliousness – by singing the *Internationale*, many were reported to be for de Gaulle while others in 1941 blew up the synagogue in Vichy, and one member reported that he was learning how to be a layabout.

The unofficial sympathies of the movement were to aid those needing help, whether farmers or *réfractaires* [refusers of compulsory service], while simultaneously and officially, improving the physical and psychological well-being of the young men who were doing the helping. With this sort of philosophy it is not surprising that they found some, especially the anti-Jewish, Vichy laws disturbing,

During the life of the *Compagnons* thousands of young men were believed to benefit from the fresh air, the activity and, it was hoped, the vocational and general educational programmes as well as the feeling that they were being helpful. A much smaller girls' organisation, *Compagnes de France*, existed with a similar philosophy. The movement was heavily resourced, indicating strong belief in its philosophy at high level.

Some staff had fought for the Republicans in the, then recent, Spanish civil war so they were sympathetic to *réfractaires* and ready to help the Resistance. A ski camp in the Pyrenees was a staging post for escapees into Spain en route to London, and illegal tracts were printed in another centre. In November 1941 de Tournemire made contact with the Resistance and from November 1942, when the whole of France was occupied, the allegiance of the leadership to Vichy became increasingly doubtful. Many members, including some Jews, hid within the movement with false papers, but when that became untenable they joined the *maquis* [the Resistance].

The introduction of forced labour (STO) in February 1943 was the last straw. From then on the facilities of the movement were increasingly used to shelter *réfractaires* and Jews, and to help the Resistance. Quite unconnectedly, lax accounting and, allegedly, having no picture of

Pétain displayed in his office, led to a warrant for de Tournemire's arrest, driving him to join the *maquis* in autumn 1943; many of his staff followed him. The organisation was dissolved in January 1944.

The initial intention to give purpose to the otherwise purposeless lives of young people by helping society through community service was a worthy and comparatively simple concept. But as Halls suggests (1981, 282), the saga of the *Compagnons de France* and the part-time *Compagnons de Cité* illustrates the intricacies of the politics of fear, the collaborationist pressures, the fervour of some for Vichy, others for just Pétain, dislike of the Germans, and the increasing credibility of the Resistance, all highlighted a regime with shaky foundations.

The helping activities which this organisation offered to a society in need probably did generally benefit the young men involved though some also learned bad habits. One cannot agree with the anti-democratic principles behind the organisation but the mixture of educational, physical and vocational activities must have benefited most of the members.

### ***Les Chantiers de la Jeunesse***

This was the second official youth organisation founded in the Vichy era. Under the terms of the armistice France's army was limited to 100 000 men for keeping internal order. The demobilisation of millions of men could not happen at once and the youngest, called up just before the cease fire, had several months to wait. About 90 000 were in this category and some did not have homes to return to as a result of war damage or imposed national frontier changes.

General de Lattre de Tassigny organised a work camp for about a hundred of these young men and mixed them with mature soldiers, some escaped prisoners of war, and students from Strasbourg University which had been evacuated to the Puy-de-Dôme area, of which he was commandant. The camp was in a village, Opme, 5 kms south of Clermont-Ferrand, which they set about rebuilding under skilled craftsmen. So a group of men, of mixed ages and social backgrounds, experienced communal service, sport and *Hébertisme* together. But the students, even after the defeat, did not want to 'waste' their time, their examinations were more important.

This example of mixed social backgrounds was followed when founding the *Chantiers de la jeunesse*. It was to be an alternative to the military service now prohibited by the armistice terms. Another general, de La Porte du Theil, was put in charge because de Lattre de Tassigny was thought to be too ready to take up the war again, which he did when the Germans moved into the unoccupied zone in November 1942 (ibid, 285). For that he was imprisoned, escaped and joined de Gaulle.

De La Porte du Theil was another who believed that the army was an essential educational experience for every French boy. This new organisation was going to be the 'next best

thing' to the army with a similar discipline and hierarchy, obedience, duty to France, physical fitness, and Scouting ideals of honour. Conscription was at age twenty. Service was to be for eight months, the penalty for evasion, as of military service, was up to five years imprisonment. Though run by military men the movement was under the *Secrétaire-général à la jeunesse* (SGJ) [General secretary for Youth] to comply with the terms of the armistice (ibid, 285).

The Germans forbade the *Chantiers* in the occupied zone so up to 7% of the strength of the movement were encouraged to come into the *zone sud* for eight months service.

The doctrine of the *Chantiers* was based on the principles of the National Revolution. Moral training was through making boys aware of their own sense of honour and self-respect, and also the honour of their group. The movement was, officially, to be independent of any political or military spirit. Their motto was *Toujours Prêts!* [Always Ready!]; they were to live in camps as far from urban areas as possible, and they were organised in *patrouilles* [patrols] of twelve which were then grouped into larger units hierarchically up to *groupements* of 2 000. Fraternity, starting at the smallest unit of the patrol, was to be fostered so that each *Jeune* would have a fellow feeling for the others. Clearly a Scouting influence pervaded the movement; but the university students were unwilling to mix with the others, claiming that their time could have been better spent studying (ibid, 287-9).

Men in poor condition underwent a modified form of *Hébertisme* to bring them up to the norm. The others experienced a full *Hébertiste* regime at once, and all were expected to do a weekly 30 kilometre route march by the end of their service. Personal hygiene was insisted on, cold water washing every morning, stripped to the waist, was obligatory.

The *Jeunes* lived a life of considerable toughness and isolation. The first units in 1941 had to fell the trees to make spaces to then build their own accommodation. Tools and other resources were scarce so manual work in winter was especially hard. One third of each working day was spent in labouring, one third in *éducation générale*, in physical exercise, meals and leisure; the final third in sleep. The *Jeunes* provided France with much needed charcoal though this meant further hard work, and vigilance over the clamps.

General education for the *Jeunes* included remedial education where necessary and encouragement to take the primary school leaving certificate. There was also choral singing, country dancing and study of regional folklore, civic education which involved visits to localities and monuments significant in French history together with talks by visiting speakers from factory committees, peasant organisations and so on.

Apart from manual work the men were taught hand crafts such as making clogs and Christmas toys, electric wiring, and worked in technical workshops and on farms. The aim

was to inculcate manual dexterity and a respect for the skill, order and control that such work demands. The influence of New Education is very evident in this programme.

The *Chantiers* was another means through which Vichy tried to regenerate French youth. Emotional ceremonies such as kneeling while saluting the Tricolour, answering the roll call with the motto of one's group such as 'Face up!', and pointing out that there was moral education in all activities; when saluting the flag, when labouring, solving a problem or when teaching an illiterate to read, as well as when talking quietly round the camp fire. As Halls says (1981, 296), 'The poignancy of such ceremonies in defeated France could not have been entirely lost on youth.'

In 1942 163 out of 165 senior leaders were army officers, many with Scouting experience and some admiration for the English Public school, so it is not surprising that the healthy mind in a healthy body, physical fitness, honour, honesty, self sacrifice and manual work were all brought together as being 'good' for the young men (ibid, 297). The control of behaviour was prescribed in some detail yet du Theil insisted on the development of the individual, especially among the leaders, and development of leadership traits among the *Jeunes* themselves was to be encouraged, initiatives were to be respected and developed; *s'épanouir* [blossoming] of young adults was promoted. Though all round personal development of each *jeune* was du Theil's aim, what people noticed was the attention paid to physical development, which prompted *Le Temps*' critical comments.

Although de La Porte du Theil and his senior leaders undoubtedly had honourable aims for the *Chantiers*, the rank and file did not have a good reputation; there were many complaints made locally and nationally about the quality of the junior staffing. Over hasty recruiting of army personnel to the permanent staff was blamed. This was a repetition of the nineteenth century attitude of seeing the army as a reservoir of manpower regardless of quality; so tending to downgrade the work and reputation of the movement as happened with school PE nearly a century earlier.

The *Chantiers* educated their *Jeunes* culturally, vocationally and academically, as well as sending them back physically much fitter than they were on entry. Whether they were, after eight months, 'better' people is arguable since this depended on people's points of view. There were many complaints, local people were sometimes unsympathetic or distrustful:

When one unit arrived ... the local newspaper bluntly stated: 'The hordes ... have arrived' and advised farmers to bolt their doors (ibid, 299).

The collaborationists asserted that the movement was too *attentiste*, some camp *Chefs* reported that the young men were lazy and undisciplined, some liked harmonica or accordion music but not choral singing, only some liked sport and few read for pleasure. Obviously social class and age differences had their effects in these judgements; again the young were being condemned.

There were assertions that staff were sympathetic to the Resistance, the Catholics cooled in their support, the Resistance were suspicious and the Germans did not trust them. The mixed attitudes of outsiders were matched by mixed sentiments within the movement; it was possible to find evidence to support any point of view though the trend was, increasingly, towards sympathy for the Resistance and *réfractaires*.

As the Resistance movement gained credibility and the German army was pushed back on the Eastern front expectations of liberation grew. Some *Chantier* camps became supply sources for the *maquis* through armed raids which the *Jeunes* increasingly failed to resist, sometimes with the tacit support of the staff (Kedward 1993, 61-2). This trend accelerated when STO began to impinge on the *Jeunes*. By autumn 1943 the movement was seen as actively encouraging people against Vichy and the Germans though du Theil was still preaching allegiance to Pétain. He had alienated the Resistance by telling the *Jeunes* to obey the call for STO but need not show enthusiasm for it. He wanted to continue the service he believed was good for French youth, as a Catholic he feared the (communist) Russian advance, he wished to gain revenge on the German occupiers, he wanted to maintain civil order and avoid another destructive war on French soil, and he still had a personal belief in Pétain. He told his staff that if there was an American invasion internal peace would require 'the most absolute loyalty towards the marshal, the sole responsible figure ... and sole guarantor of national unity. ... , the enlightenment for that will never fail him.' (Paxton 1972, 287).

The *Chantiers de la jeunesse* kept to the official line that it was a youth movement for the good of young Frenchmen, not a military organisation nor a clandestine movement, whatever individual staff may have done. Despite that, de La Porte du Theil was deported in January 1944, though his aim had 'always been social order in a neutral France' (ibid, 164). The movement then remained as little more than a source for STO man-power.

### ***Jeunesse et Montagne***

This was an elite version of the *Chantiers de la jeunesse* run by air force and alpine army officers for those with interest in, or association with, aviation and/or mountaineering.

In September 1940, General Faure of the *Armée des Alpes* in collaboration with the *Armée de l'air* began the movement that became associated with, but not part of, the *Chantiers de la jeunesse*. *Jeunesse et montagne* always retained a good measure of independence, having its own headquarters in Grenoble; there was little reference to Vichy:

*La sélection est inspirée des contrôles médicaux exigés pour rentrer dans l'aviation, .... On trouve donc, à "Jeunesse et Montagne" ... des jeunes déjà engagés pour la durée de la guerre dans l'Armée de l'Air ..., des jeunes issus du milieu montagnard ..., et des jeunes attirés par la montagne et que ne rebute pas la dure discipline de cette forme particulière de chantiers ... . Beaucoup, ..., signent des A.D.L. (au-delà de la durée légale) pour prolonger leur séjour en montagne (Malesset 1985, 9-10).*

[Selection was influenced by the medical standards demanded for recruitment for air crew, .... One found then, in *Jeunesse et Montagne*, ... some young men already engaged in the air force for the duration of the war ..., some who came from mountain areas ..., and some attracted by the mountains and not put off by the hard discipline of this particular form of service .... Many, ..., signed for A.D.L. (service beyond the legal requirement) in order to prolong their stay in the mountains].

The aim of this branch of service was to get all the men accustomed to altitude, whether they were to be mountain warfare troops or, hypothetically under the armistice, air crew. They were physically hardened, completed an intensive apprenticeship in alpine skills, and daily saluted the flag. Malesset suggests that *Jeunesse et montagne* was preparing young Frenchmen to help when the awaited liberation came:

*La préoccupation majeure des cadres était véritablement de former des hommes dans un style des plus rudes pour les préparer aux épreuves qu'une libération hypothétique pourrait leur réserver* (Malesset 1985, 10).

[The main preoccupation of the staff really was to train the men in one of the toughest ways to prepare them for the demands that a possible liberation would bring].

And this particular service would appear to have had more discreet support than the *Chantiers* received:

Someone at Vichy was clearly interested in keeping such units out of the limelight ... when they wanted to start their own news-sheet *Le Roc*, this was forbidden. It is inconceivable that such units could have been started without the blessing of the French General Staff (Halls 1981, 304-5).

*Jeunesse et montagne* was strongest in the Alps but it soon had units in the Pyrenees with their administrative centre in Lourdes. Staff were trained in the *École de cadres de Montroc* which became the training centre for their elite *Chefs* whereas the *Chantiers* sent their elite to one of the other youth work training schools, such as Uriage in the Vercors, near Grenoble. Montroc is a small village in the valley containing Chamonix.

These schools, which were staffed by mountain guides, trained *chefs d'équipes*; an *équipe* consisting of four *patrouilles* each of twelve men. And:

*La formation morale et civique y était au moins aussi importante que la formation alpine* (Malesset 1985, 11).

[Moral and civic training there was at least as important as the mountain training].

The spirit which de La Porte du Theil was trying to instil throughout the *Chantiers de jeunesse* was considered even more important in this independent movement but was easier to achieve because members were volunteers and had signed on for the duration.



From 1943 the *Jeunes* of both organisations faced the same choices of STO, becoming *réfractaires*, or going to the *maquis*:

*Quelques-uns, rares, partent vers l'Allemagne, mais l'essentiel des jeunes comme des cadres rejoignent les maquis du Vercors, de l'Oisans et des Pyrénées* (Malesset 1985, 11).

[Some, a small number, went to Germany but most of the members, as of the staff, joined the *maquis* of the Vercors, the Oisans or of the Pyrenees].

Being sited in wilder country the *Jeunesse et montagne* centres were even more subject to raids by the Resistance than were those of the *Chantiers de la jeunesse* so from autumn of 1943 the camps were moved to lower ground further from the *maquis* bases. This move meant that *Jeunesse et montagne* ceased to have a different setting from the *Chantiers de la jeunesse* but the movement did not disappear with the *Chantiers* as Vichy increasingly lost credence. *Jeunesse et montagne* was remembered, renewed and was to live to the present day as the organisation UCPA which is discussed later (Ch 10).

### **Other youth movements using outdoor activities**

Catholic youth organisations using the open air, such as the Scouts, Guides and their youth hostel movement, were affiliated to the *Association catholique de la jeunesse française* (ACJF). Another affiliated organisation was the *Fédération gymnastique et sportive des patronages de France* (FGSPF) (ch 3 above) which had roots going back to 1814. These were the long established organisations which the church ran for the good of young people and to retain their religious allegiance, organisations it was unwilling to release into the hands of a single national youth movement. Despite its initial support for the Vichy regime the church intended to hold on to what it had and there were enough influential Catholics, including Pétain, Carcopino, Borotra, de La Porte du Theil, and others, who sympathised with that intent. There were also other, secular, youth movements which either used or were based on outdoor activities; a few are mentioned below.

### **Youth Hostels**

After a purge of 'undesirables', Vichy accepted the existing secular Youth Hostel movement. The first hostel organisation had begun in 1918 (Halls 1981, 342) but the real founding of the movement dates from 1930 when Marc Sangnier, a Catholic Christian Democrat, started the confessional *Ligue française pour les auberges de la jeunesse*, and 1933 when Marc Augier founded the secular *Centre laïque des auberges de la jeunesse*. Zoro (1986, 217) declares that the secular movement was founded by Cécile and Paul Grunebaum-Bellin. It is possible that they and Augier jointly founded the movement but Augier's name is remembered because he became a member of Léo Lagrange's staff, the under-secretary of state for sport and leisure from 1936.

With government support from 1936 both movements grew rapidly. In 1933 there were 30 hostels belonging to the two movements altogether, in 1935 there were 80, 1937 200 and in the Spring of 1939 500. The secular movement thrived particularly when the *Ligue de*

*l'enseignement* (Federation of Teachers' Unions) and the *Confédération générale du travail* (Confederation of Trade Unions) supported it. Just before May 1940 there were 900 secular hostels and 60 000 members. Lagrange tried to get the two movements to amalgamate but had not succeeded before the war intervened (Halls 1981, 342).

The secular hostel movement was banned by the Germans in the occupied zone and distrusted by Vichy but attempts were made in the Spring of 1941 to encourage the Catholic movement as a service agency in unoccupied France to provide accommodation for other youth organisations who were furthering the National Revolution.

As a follow-up to Lagrange's efforts, in August 1941 *ajistes* [hostellers] met at the *École des cadres* at Uriage to discuss refounding the movement as a joint democratic, non-racialist organisation. The stumbling block to unity was mixed hostels which the Catholics would not countenance but an overall organisation was set up, *Camarades de la route* which had 10 000 members by the end of 1942. Education was heavily represented in this movement, *instituteurs* being present in large numbers, as they had been before the war. The result was that courses in environmental studies, arts and crafts, folklore and other subjects were arranged (Halls 1981, 342-3) in addition to welcoming individuals and groups travelling on foot or bicycle.

The two founders provide bizarre examples of what civil war can do. Sangnier, the Catholic, was imprisoned by Vichy for Resistance work while Augier, once Lagrange's assistant, fought in the Charlemagne Brigade for the Germans on the Eastern front.

One unpolitical organisation *les Campeurs français* said, in 1944, that:

Physically, morally, and intellectually we wish to equip our young people for the hard struggles that await it. From them will arise men and women worthy of the oldest French traditions (Halls 1981, 343).

As Halls remarks, 'a cheerfully ambiguous note'. But it contains a reference that is common in the literature of French organisations; the mention of intellectual development.

### Scouts and Guides

This was a branch of youth work in which the Catholic church had a pronounced interest. As already mentioned, a considerable number of generals and other functionaries of the Vichy government had been Scouts and were Catholics so this movement had powerful support but youth movements wearing distinctive uniforms or badges were banned in the occupied zone unless they were approved as collaborationists. However, by meeting without their uniforms and being discreet the Scouts and Guides were generally tolerated. Those movements encouraged by the Germans who could meet freely became suspect in many people's eyes.

In March 1942 the five Scout movements went through a formal token of unity, agreeing to affiliate to an umbrella organisation *Le Scoutisme français* while retaining their separate identities (Halls 1981, 148). It continues to this day.

They were, and are:

|   |  |            |
|---|--|------------|
| <i>Scouts de France</i> -                                   | mixed, ages 6-21                               | Catholic   |
| <i>Guides de France</i> -                                   | girls 8-17, mixed under 8 years<br>and over 17 | Catholic   |
| <i>Les Éclaireuses et Éclaireurs de France</i> -            | mixed, 6-15+                                   | Secular    |
| <i>Les Éclaireuses et Éclaireurs Israélites de France</i> - | mixed, 8-17+                                   | Jewish     |
| <i>Les Éclaireuses et Éclaireurs Unionistes de France</i> - | mixed, 8+                                      | Protestant |

It is not clear what this affiliation means in practice; the five movements do not mention each other in their literature. The mixing of boys and girls in the two Catholic organisations is of fairly recent origin. A Muslim movement is not affiliated, and *Scouts d'Europe* is excluded on the grounds of its reputed Fascist leanings (Interview at HQ of *Éclaireuses et Éclaireurs Unionistes de France*, October 1993).

### Total youth organisation membership

After 18 months of the Vichy regime the total membership of post-school young people was thought to be some 3 million. Halls (1981, 148) gives numbers for the main movements for 1941-42:

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <i>Compagnons de France</i>                                   | 33 000    |
| <i>Le Scoutisme Français</i>                                  | 115 000   |
| <i>ACJF (Association Catholique de la jeunesse française)</i> | 2 300 000 |
| <i>Secular clubs (patronages laïques)</i>                     | 400 000   |
| <i>Conseil Protestant</i>                                     | 30 000    |
| <i>Camarades de la Route</i>                                  | 2 000     |

These considerable memberships, together with other small youth organisations which have not been mentioned, are thought to be only about one-third of young people in the relevant age range despite a drive to make youth movements with their associated physical activities and general education attractive through generous funding.

In 1941-42 when Britain was considering making membership of a youth or pre-service organisation compulsory for those not in full-time education it was found that only 25% of females and 50% of males between 14 and 20 were members of a recreational, social or educational movement (Gosden, 1976, 226).

### Other Youth Movements

Halls (1981) lists over forty youth organisations. With such a number, ranging in membership from one or two hundred upwards, and with religious and political beliefs ranging widely and almost independently of each other, it is hardly surprising that the single movement for all youth did not come about. Some had normal youth work programmes when conditions allowed but did valuable rescue and aid work during air raids and were

commended by Bonnard, the minister for education from April 1942, who directed that they should not be disadvantaged in their school work and examinations.

### **Collaborationist movements**

There was an upsurge of new, sometimes uniformed, movements with Nazi leanings. Some overtly favoured the Germans, for example, the *Groupe collaboration* which was in favour of scientific and cultural co-operation with the Germans in a new European order. Some had absurd aims, such as uniting all French speaking peoples wherever they were in the world into one empire. The movements with bizarre goals were usually ephemeral but most of them received government subventions while they lasted. Few of the movements had any commitment to physical activity, especially outdoor pursuits, except when they were applying for a subsidy (ibid, 330).

### ***Écoles des cadres* [Staff Schools]**

With the development of General Education, including physical activities, there was a pressing need for in-service staff courses and, especially, for trainers of leaders and instructors. Three national *Écoles des Cadres* were therefore established to develop teachers, army officers, clergy, industrialists and others, in occupied and unoccupied zones, for responsible positions. Nineteen regional schools (nine in the occupied zone) were founded to train those intended for positions in youth work of all kinds, such as *colonies de vacances*, sports clubs, *maisons des jeunes*, and vocational education centres. Organisations such as the Catholic *Jeunesse ouvrière chrétienne* had their own schools, there was one for *parents aubergistes* (youth hostel wardens) and eight specialised schools for youth centre workers (ibid, 146-7).

The three national schools, two for men and one for women, were on a more elevated plane. These were to train departmental youth delegates and staff for the regional *écoles des cadres*. It illustrates how determined Vichy was to put its policies into practice when one considers the strain on resources all this must have caused. In the first sixteen months of the campaign 16 000 key youth personnel went through training courses.

There were sharp differences of political sentiment between the two national schools for men. Bousquet, the director at La Chapelle-en-Serval, gave the Nazi salute when he addressed the Youth Commission of the National Council in 1942 but Dunoyer de Segonzac of the Uriage school was a democrat who believed in teaching the future *cadres* through discussion and living experience (ibid, 151). He was a man of integrity, prepared to speak his mind including telling the Youth Commission that most of the men coming to Uriage were not leadership material though his staff were of high quality.

Uriage followed the precepts of the National Revolution, and of New Education, by mixing physical and academic work. Blaming the top leadership for the defeat in 1940, rather than the teachers, de Segonzac set out to produce a type of leader who would think and be

independent. The mixture of sport, environmental studies, manual and intellectual work was similar to that in the *Chantiers* and the *Compagnons* but on another intellectual plane; Uriage was the *grande école* among the *écoles des cadres*. The thinking leader was not the Vichy ideal, as independence of thought was dangerous, and the school was closed in December 1942. De Segonzac's final lecture to the last course was 'on the right of disobedience, in certain circumstances, of those placed under orders.' (ibid, 323). This provoked a warrant for his arrest but he and several colleagues had joined the Resistance before it could be put into effect. So many of the staffs of other *écoles des cadres* resigned in sympathy that some schools were closed temporarily. Uriage staff included a future editor of *Le Monde*, teachers, actors, trade unionists and sportsmen so that practical work as well as intellectual development was catered for; it sounds like New Education in practice. Recruitment of students had improved after Segonzac's complaint and there were not only future youth leaders but also those 'in positions where they could influence others, from priests to school teachers' (ibid, 313). Methods at Uriage included seminar and study work groups which became popular after the war, particularly for use in *éducation populaire* [adult education], and seem to be akin to *éducation nouvelle* methods.

For the remainder of the Occupation de Segonzac led his own Resistance group consisting of Catholics, Protestants and Jews, some of them ex-Uriage students. In the course of the *Libération* he returned to the army and finished as a general (ibid, 324).

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

**Question 4** How important was New Education in encouraging ODP in French education?

It would seem that New Education was reinforcing ODP in French bourgeois education since other elite schools had been taking boys to the mountains since the 1870s. At *l'École des Roches*, mainly through the school's Scout troop, camping and trekking took place (Bertier 1936, passim). Freinet (an ardent New Educationist from the late 1920s) was known to take his elementary school children for country walks for them to then write and publish accounts of their excursions (Halls 1976, 96). There does not appear to be any direct evidence that ODP took place in French schools, in term time, except for the Freinet walks, but Zay encouraged similar sorties in the 1936 to 1939 period. The expeditions by *lycées* in the 1870s may have been inspired by Rousseau who was an influence in the growth of the New Education movement but that may be as far as the movement's influence went in encouraging these elite schools in their expeditions, which were all in holiday time. Nor can claims be made for the movement's influence in stimulating the outdoor work by *instituteurs* from the 1880s, again in the holidays. This was work with elementary school children receiving some official financial support, as long as lesson books were taken along and the children's chest measurements were recorded. In both instances teachers were responding to the possibilities and fashions of the times – and their desire to benefit their pupils.

An hypothesis could be that there was a growing awareness of ODP in society and attempts were made to introduce pupils to them as money and travel conditions became more favourable, which reinforces the evidence for the effect of social class in chapter 3.

Question 6 What were the benefits claimed for ODP at different times.

Many benefits have been claimed by enthusiasts for particular activities over many years, for example, those claimed by Töpffer in the 1820s.

Du Theil claimed that physical activities and manliness went together; this seems nowadays to be a male chauvinistic attitude but it was wartime and over half a century ago so perhaps he may be forgiven. Hardening to cold water is good for young men – a bald statement – while exposure to the elements elevates one spiritually, one has to ask what that means. Of the many virtues assumed, the one that seems most honest was that, in their situation, physical fitness was thought a necessary step towards achieving Liberation.

An hypothesis here might be that claims may differ according to the circumstances and the selective perceptions of the claimant.

Question 7 What continuity of thinking and policies was there from one regime to another?

Both the Blum and Pétain regimes provided activity facilities as never before in France and encouraged the widest possible participation yet neither seemed to make much headway in schools against entrenched opposition of teachers and parents to PE and sport; but Lagrange did make considerable progress in encouraging activities, including ODP, out of school, the policy was followed up by Borotra and Pascot

The main authority group in Vichy was largely bourgeois, Catholic, anti-democratic and wished to remake a French society in which egalitarian, Revolutionary and Republican values would be replaced by acceptance of a hierarchical submission to authority. The young were to be brought up in ways ensuring that their physical fitness countered dangers of the decadence from which their predecessors had allegedly suffered; and they would acknowledge their duty to France and the Catholic Church. Conformity to prescribed norms was to be observed, individuality was condemned. Vichy intended to redirect the course of French evolution by changing the education of the young, hoping to return to a continuance of pre-Revolutionary (1789) values.

Whether the physical activities in which Vichy believed would produce the desired personality or character changes desired is problematical, too much effect of physical activities has been simplistically attributed to them. But Carcopino, as the man he was, and as minister, took a broader view; he said *les disciplines du grand air* [activities in the open air] would help to form *les hommes robustes et équilibrés* [robust and balanced men] when allied to the intellectual disciplines of *éducation générale*. He was here extolling the value of a mixture of vigorous activities and academic work – New Education? His position is more tenable than that of those biased to just physical activities. Indeed, he and Borotra, on the whole, saw ODP and PE and sport as only part of education, beneficial to the individual

pupils almost as though it were still peacetime. But many of the army officers had a more belligerent aim though they purported to be running youth organisations solely for the good of French youth. Vichy kept this belligerency in check because the Germans kept an eye on them. Du Theil's opinion of the value of ODP is detailed on page 76 (above) while *Jeunesse et montagne* aims were fairly overt, yet the observed benefits included personal development and maturity, qualities to be desired at any time. There was both continuity and discontinuity during this exceptional period.

One may hypothesise that members of different professions will see ODP as tools to be used for different purposes, a crisis situation accentuating the differences of outlook.

## CHAPTER 5

### LESSONS AND ATTITUDES OF WARTIME TO BE CARRIED OVER TO PEACETIME

By the summer of 1943 the Resistance was increasingly gaining control and Vichy losing it in rural and mountainous areas of France. The retreat of the German armies on the Eastern front raised hopes for a not too distant end of the war.

In France, as in Britain, there were many individuals concerned to make a better life for their compatriots after the war. Common traumatic experiences had broken down old political, class, racial and religious prejudices for the time being. Meetings were held, in French North Africa, in England, in prison camps and clandestinely in France. Some, towards the end of 1943 and into 1944, seemed apparently to have official (Vichy) backing, and went ahead fairly openly in planning for the future. It is difficult to believe that any of the people at these meetings could have been thinking they were planning to operate other than after the liberation which everybody assumed was imminent. Vichy officials who attended meetings with banned organisations could have been found guilty of the offence, at least, of *attentisme*, if they had been detected. One wonders how much government departments and their officials worked pragmatically in planning for the years to come and how much risk they took in doing so.

#### Using war-time experience – ANCM founded

Among the experiences of the previous three to four years on which activists were hoping to build was the work of the *Jeunesse et montagne* movement. Though the organisation had run its course by 1943, there were those in responsible positions who did not want the lessons and benefits of the movement to be lost. Despite the difficulties of travelling, a meeting was called for 22 January 1944 in Lyon. Ministry officials calling the meeting were Mr Conti, *Chef de la section E.P.S. au commissariat aux sports* [Head of the Sport and Physical Education Section in the Sports Commissariat] and Mr Moreau, the *Chef du bureau des groupements de jeunesse*. [Head of the Office for Youth Groups] (Malesset 1985, 13). This was obviously an official meeting which may have had as its manifest purpose planning for the coming summer of mountain camps, which were in fact arranged. But the main purpose was to plan an organisation which could take the place of *Jeunesse et montagne* and which could offer all young people mountain experience. While the Resistance remained virtually in control of mountain areas the planning must have been, ostensibly, intended for after the Resistance was wiped out, or for when its existence was no longer necessary.



The meeting had for its declared objective:

*D'ouvrir aux adolescents et à l'ensemble de jeunes des voies éducatrices, les vertus de la montagne, bien éprouvées à "Jeunesse et montagne" (ibid, 13).*

[To open up to adolescents and to the whole of youth through educational channels, the virtues of the mountains, [which had been] well tested in *Jeunesse et montagne*].

The idea had been put forward by a Mr Tulpin of the *Éclaireurs de France*, Mr Chalon of the *Auberges de la jeunesse*, both of them former Alpine soldiers, and Mr Michelet of the *Compagnons de France*, an organiser and an enthusiastic mountaineer. This small meeting decided that the main hindrances to young people getting into the mountains were lack of shelter, of equipment and of instruction. These obstacles could be alleviated, it was thought, if the accommodation and equipment of *Jeunesse et montagne* could be retained; further, the two government officials promised that former instructors of *Jeunesse et montagne* who might still be available would be offered the chance to use their skills in this new organisation. So co-operation was promised between the official administration and the voluntary sector of youth work, especially by assuring liaison with what remained of *Jeunesse et montagne*. There was then a second meeting held on 24 January 1944 at which more organisations were represented. They were *le Scoutisme français*, *les Camarades de la route*, *les Amis des maisons de jeunes*, *les Compagnons de France*, *les Auberges de la jeunesse*, *la Fédération française de ski* and *l'École de montagne de la jeunesse* at Fayet, with *Jeunesse et montagne*. The last organisation was very keen to help overcome the difficulties all these organisation had in running mountain camps, and '*par-leurs préoccupations éducatives*' [by their concern for the socio-educational point of view] (ibid, 14). The Mountaineering School for Youth at Fayet belonged to the Secretary of State for Youth.

Discussion revolved around four problems which are still current though some were more acute then. Three of the problems were to find the staff of *techniciens* and *éducateurs*, to find the places to stay and to find the special equipment. The difference between the *technicien* [here the skilled mountaineer or skier] and the *éducateur* was recognised. All courses working with people of any age need, if possible, to find both sets of qualities in the one person, s/he must be master of, and be able to teach the skill, added to being a good role model with the ability to bring a professional attitude to the task of developing the members of the group. The fourth problem, then a particular wartime difficulty, was *la satisfaction des jeunes appétits aiguisés par le climat et les efforts faits en montagne* [the satisfaction of young appetites sharpened by the prevailing conditions and the efforts made on the mountains]. Malessset points out that these four problems still remain but are now routine except the *technicien et éducateur* who is always difficult to find in the one person.

The minutes of the second meeting reported that the *cadres techniques* [instructors] then available were not considered to be adequate *éducateurs* of youth. Thus it was going to be a matter of advanced skill training in the specialist schools of mountaineering and skiing for

those who were already *éducateurs*, and, on the other hand, a training *éducatif* for those already skilled in the mountain activities.

*Cette formation ne peut être donnée que dans une École répondant directement aux besoins des Associations intéressés. Il est donc nécessaire que cette École soit placée sous leur contrôle par le truchement d'une Association sorte de Fédération où chacune d'elle sera représentée (ibid, 14).*

[This training can only be given by a School responding directly to the needs of the Associations concerned. Thus it is necessary that this School should be under their control through the agency of a federation in which each of them is represented.]

Only from 1945 to 1949 was there to be a school answering to their needs, that being the *Collège des Praz* near Chamonix.

At the meeting on 24th January 1944 the *Association nationale des camps de montagne (ANCM)* was founded, an army Commandant was elected president, a Chef from *Jeunesse et montagne* was vice-president, the general secretary was Michelet of the *Compagnons de France* and the treasurer was from *Camarades de la route*.

It is apparent that some organisations (*Camarades de la route* and *Auberges de la jeunesse*), were re-emerging to work for French youth despite being still officially abolished while the *Compagnons de France* had just been dissolved that very month.

This points to the fact that government officials were prepared to meet organisations resurfacing again almost certainly with the idea that the Occupation would not be lasting much longer. By this time the course of the war was clearly going against the Germans and liberation was expected soon. There were in fact about four months to go before the invasion and nearly three months more before Paris was free but no one there could foresee that. It is unlikely that the occupying powers knew of this meeting but there must have been tacit approval by the Vichy youth and sport department for these negotiations to be taking place. One wonders if the civil servants were acting pragmatically on their own initiative without their collaborationist education minister Bonnard's knowledge.

At a further meeting on 21st March 1944 the new association detailed its educational aims, its methods, and its relationships with the State for the training of staff. The moral training of staff was to include the idea of effort, of energy, of team spirit, unity of action and the sense of risk which was to be assessed and accepted or not, and success prepared for and achieved; in addition there was the idea of responsibility. These ideas and values were to be transmitted to the young people who were being led on the mountains. There is a useful clarity here which some British movements might, with advantage, have emulated.

The Association also made clear that in the case of skiing it would not be a nursery of champions, but an instrument of personal development through the mountains. But this

would not hinder it from helping an especially gifted person (ibid, 15). These principles have remained with ANCM's successors to this day.

The Sports Commissariat were ready to supply the means for this new organisation including 170 instructors though Malesset thought many of them would be *dans la nature*, in other words with the *maquis*. Equipment and facilities of the *Jeunesse et montagne* would be available including the *École de Montroc* previously reserved for *Jeunesse et montagne* staff training. Officials at a clandestine meeting could not possibly offer such manpower and facilities without higher approval. At the end of Montroc courses, lasting three to six months for the *techniciens* (but less for the senior staff) they would leave with the title *Chef de cordée* which was borrowed directly from the *Jeunesse et montagne*. The title *Guide de montagne* was unavailable, it had carried a legal status since 1941 and a popularly recognised status for a century or more, being gained by local people through apprenticeship and experience.

The qualification, *Chef de cordée*, gained through a taught course, was the beginning of the present situation in which people from all parts of France and other countries, and all walks of life, can earn their living in the mountains as guides or ski instructors or both. It also helped to open up mountaineering and skiing as pastimes to a wider range of social classes.

The organisations represented in the ANCM accepted that Montroc could train the *techniciens* but not the *éducateurs* even if the organisations could be represented on the management committee of the school. For the time being they agreed to appoint their own staff, so bringing the spirit of each movement to its respective camps. The ANCM arranged 14 camps, 11 in the Alps, two in the Pyrenees and one in the Central Massif for summer 1944 but the invasion of 6th June caused them all to be aborted.

Activists met in Lyon in September while fighting in the Alps and elsewhere continued, deciding that delegates of their organisations would meet in Paris in November.

By November youth organisations in liberated Paris had elected a Consultative Council and a Technical Bureau which ANCM contacted. Organisations associated with the founding of ANCM and a limited number of others were invited to a General Assembly when new officers were elected and, as a mark of a new era, ANCM changed its name to the *Union nationale des centres de montagne (UNCM)*.

### **Courses for instructors and guides for mountain activities**

The training of guides in alpinism and instructor-guides in skiing was encouraged (as part of *Hébertisme*) by Vichy. The *Fédération française de ski* was founded through the CAF releasing their registered ski instructors in 1924 to become independent and then become the Federation in 1930. In 1936 mountain guide courses were begun, and in 1938 a school for instructors in skiing and mountaineering was started at Val d'Isère. In 1942 the *Fédération française de ski* and the *Fédération française de montagne* jointly founded the *École*

*supérieure de ski et d'alpinisme*, which became the *École nationale de ski et d'alpinisme* in 1943 (ENSA); thus receiving government backing as part of the *Institut national de sport (INS)* at Joinville. In 1945 the 4th Republic gave it administrative and financial autonomy. The school finally settled in Chamonix after a nomadic life of some years. (Malesset 1985, 211; Rivière & Andrieu 1988, 75). Here is a case of development through three regimes.

### Water sports

The *Yacht club de France (YCF)* was founded in 1867 and so was slightly older than the *Club alpin français*. One learned to sail then by picking it up from father or a friend until 1935 when a Commandant Rocq of the *Yacht club basque* started a school for racing and navigating. The social class of the students can be judged from the fact that naval etiquette was observed and each weekly lesson ended with a *thé dansant*, where they learned the rules *de la vieille galanterie française (qu'on doit pratiquer sous l'uniforme)* (ibid, 78) [of the old French gallantry (that one must observe when in uniform)].

*Si l'alpinisme était, avant la guerre 1939-40 [sic], réservé à une certaine classe sociale, le yachting, comme on disait, était encore plus sélectif* (Malesset 1985, 77).

[If alpinism was, before the 1939-40 war, restricted to a certain social class, yachting was even more selective].

In 1941 the Vichy government asked Rocq to found some sailing schools. The request *vibrer la fibre patriotique* [struck a patriotic chord] in Commandant Rocq (ibid, 78). Four centres opened in 1943, in Annecy, Nantes, Sartrouville near Paris, and in the buildings of the *Yacht club basque* at Socoa, though the last never functioned because of problems on the Franco-Spanish frontier. Head of each centre was a demobilised naval officer, with two former petty officers as *moniteurs*. Each centre took about 100 students per year except Sartrouville which managed 300. By 1944 fourteen centres could take a total of 1000 to 1500 students per year, sleeping in tents.

After the liberation the Socoa centre became an annexe of the CREPS of Bordeaux while most centres continued to operate under the *Direction générale de l'éducation physique et des sports*. Rocq died in 1946. An *École nationale de voile* was opened in 1965 at Beg Rohu in Brittany which built on Rocq's methods.

Can one say clearly in this case that skiing, alpinism and sailing were democratised by one particular regime? Especially there was the direct link from *Jeunesse et montagne* of the Vichy regime through UNCM to UCPA of today (ch 10 below). Here is a crucial link in the democratisation of exclusive ODP of pre-war to their popularity of the present day; undoubtedly the Occupation years hastened the change.

## Les Francas

Another organisation born of the years of occupation and the concern of French people for the well-being of the nation's children began clandestinely. The suppression of many organisations meant that secret meetings were the only way that some activists could get together to plan for a future free of either home or foreign fascism.

Shortages of food, psychological damage caused by dislocation of community and family life, first by the movements of populations in 1940 and then by arrests, hostage taking, flight to the Resistance, black market dealings, discrimination in favour of Catholic organisations, persecution of Jews, forced labour; all these disquieted large sections of the population and had ill effects on children and young people. Allied air raids aggravated matters further:

*Clandestinement, enseignants ou non, les militants des mouvements de jeunesse et d'éducation populaires laïques préparent la renaissance des œuvres péri et post-scolaires.*

*Réflexions individuelles et échanges, menés tant dans les camps de prisonniers que sur le territoire national, alimentent cette préparation. C'est un foisonnement extraordinaire d'idées qui, dans de telles circonstances, trouve aussi sa source dans le rêve (Rosa 1986, 20).*

[Secretly, teachers or not, activists of youth movements and of secular adult education prepared the rebirth of their work with out-of-school and post-school youth.

Individual thoughts and exchanges, taking place as much in prison camps as in France, reinforced this preparation. There was an extraordinary abundance of ideas which, in such circumstances, also found their origins in dreams].

In the context of such conditions the idea of *le Grand Mouvement* was conceived by a Pierre François, an agricultural engineer but running an hotel in Vichy since 1934. He had been from 1931 assistant commissioner general of the *Éclaireurs de France (EDF)* [Secular Scouts of France], president of the secular youth movement of Vichy, and after 1940, head of the EDF in the unoccupied zone. He felt that, despite much devoted work, the secular youth movements had too little educational content in their programmes. This was despite the fact that he found 60% of scoutmasters were *instituteurs*. But the Scouts attracted only a small fraction of the young population thus leaving space for a bigger secular youth movement. François said '*L'occupation est une période pendant laquelle nous avons beaucoup pensé à l'avenir*' (ibid, 20) [The Occupation was a period during which we thought a great deal about the future]. He dreamed about a great secular movement in which the boys and girls would be active in their own education. He talked with his fellow Scouts, he talked to those in other organisations and in August 1943 during the *Éclaireurs'* eighteenth jamboree he talked to representatives of the *Auberges de la jeunesse* (a banned organisation) and of the *Centres d'entraînement aux méthodes d'éducation active (CEMEA)*. The representatives:

*Quelles que soient leurs différences, leur attachement à la dignité de l'homme, au peuple et à la démocratie est exacerbé par l'oppression nazie (ibid, 21).*  
[Whatever their differences, their commitment to the dignity of man, to the people and to democracy had been strengthened by Nazi oppression].

They were all inheritors of *Front populaire* ideals; their interest in the well being of children had increased because fascism, directly or indirectly, had victimised them.

Thus:

*Le Grand Mouvement ne peut être d'emblée qu'un mouvement de masse, fondé sur la dignité humaine, respectueux de la démocratie, fait pour et avec les enfants* (ibid, 22).

[The Great Movement could only be, without question, a mass movement, founded on human dignity, respecting democracy, and made for and with children].

A year after François had broached his idea, thinking among the group had developed. By 10th September 1944 much of France had been liberated and the rule of Vichy was declared abolished. On 15th November 1944 the inaugural meeting took place in Paris at the headquarters of the *Éclaireurs de France*.

A working group during October 1944 (ibid, 29) had planned that the executive committee should consist of representatives from the following organisations:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <i>Auberges de la Jeunesse</i>                    | <i>Ligue de l'Enseignement</i>                 |
| <i>Confédération Générale du Travail (C.G.T.)</i> | <i>Amis de la Nature</i> [Friends of Nature]   |
| <i>Syndicat National d'Instituteurs (S.N.I.)</i>  | <i>C.E.M.E.A.</i>                              |
| <i>Ministère de l'Éducation</i>                   | <i>E.D.F. [Éclaireurs de France]</i>           |
| <i>Enseignements: 1 Inspecteur</i>                | <i>Féd. Française des Éclaireuses</i> [Secular |
| <i>1 Inspectrice</i>                              | <i>Girl Guides]</i>                            |

Several of these organisations were 'abolished' by the Vichy authorities but their activists were already back in action.

The manuscript minutes (ibid, 30-3), of the inaugural meeting of 15 November 1944 indicate the organisations represented on the executive committee *de droit* (by right) had changed slightly and were now:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 2 | <i>Inspecteurs généraux, dont une inspectrice</i> [one a woman]     |
| 1 | <i>représentant /s de la Culture Populaire</i> [Adult education]    |
| 4 | <i>" de la Ligue de l'Enseignement</i>                              |
| 1 | <i>" du Syndicat National des Instituteurs</i>                      |
| 1 | <i>" de la Confédération Générale du Travail</i>                    |
| 1 | <i>" de la Fédération Gymnastique et Sportive du Travail (FGST)</i> |
| 3 | <i>" des Éclaireurs de France</i>                                   |
| 2 | <i>" de la Fédération Française des Éclaireuses</i>                 |
| 2 | <i>" des C.E.M.E.A.</i>   |
| 1 | <i>" des Auberges de la Jeunesse.</i>                               |

The originator of the idea, Pierre François, was elected president.

It is very evident that the *Grand Mouvement* was intent on having both workers' unions and public education, at several levels, represented on its executive committee; the UNCM did similarly a little later but was not exclusively secular.

There was promise of considerable funding from the ministry of education, François had made contact with them and on 20th October had received a favourable response:

*Il souligne l'accueil très favorable que réserve le Ministère au Mouvement: le Ministre s'y est intéressé lui-même, et M. Geheno à la Culture Populaire presse sa mise en marche. Ces contacts nous permettent d'espérer l'obtention d'une subvention de démarrage (ibid, 27).*

[He emphasised the very favourable welcome that the Ministry has for the Movement: the Minister is personally interested in it, and M. Geheno of the [department of] Popular Culture is pressing for it to be brought into being. These contacts allow us to hope for a start-up grant].

An undated [December 1944] printed document reproduced in Rosa (1986, 37), lists the organisations *de droit* on the executive committee as in the minutes of the meeting of 15th November, calling them *membres fondateurs* [founding members] but adds one more organisation to that category, the *Groupe français d'éducation nouvelle*. Thus there is reinforcement of the thread from Abbotsholme, via the New Education Movement, and Georges Bertier, CEMEA and the Scouts. The influence is very plain to see when examining the intended activities of the Francs et Franches Camarades (FFC) as the Movement was soon to be known.

The activities were divided into six sections:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1 <i>Éducation physique</i>                              | Introduction to sports, team games, swimming, rowing, skiing, sports <i>aériens</i> [gliding? parachuting?]          |
| 2 <i>Arts collectifs</i><br>[Group artistic activities]  | Choral singing, rounds, singing games, dance, introduction to music, orchestra, theatre, mime, marionettes etc.      |
| 3 <i>Travaux manuels</i><br>[Manual work]                | Making small useful things, pottery, sculpture, models, sailing boats, furniture, gardening, rearing pets, etc.      |
| 4 <i>Découverte du monde</i><br>[Environmental studies]  | Educational walks, surveys, journeys, cruises, camps, <i>colonies de vacances</i> , foreign trips, cinema, library   |
| 5 <i>Service</i>   | Annually, groups to do good work for their locality  |
| 6 <i>Formation civique et sociale</i> [Social education] | Training to make <i>Camarades</i> useful citizens, proud of their country, conscious of their civic responsibilities |

One can see in this programme the influences of the French cultural tradition in music and the arts, and of New Education with its physical activities, manual work and environmental study, of Vichy and *Hébertiste* physical education, of the Scouts' *bonne action* (good deed) and of *ajistes* in the *Service* given to improving hostels; and the production of French citizens, a concern of French education since, at least, the era of Napoléon. Education was strongly represented in some of the founder organisations; 60% of the EDF scoutmasters and of *ajiste* officials were *instituteurs*. The impetus given to the democratisation of activities such as rowing, skiing, sailing, canoeing and other leisure activities of all kinds by Jean Zay and Léo Lagrange, and by Vichy, is evident. The Movement assumed the continuation of paid holidays in a new, more egalitarian society, that is, a *civilisation de loisir*.

FFC was to be for all from the age of six to twenty-one, it would have groups in all localities, each with its *animateurs* and would be in *Associations départementales* affiliated to the national federation. It was to be open to all young people:

*Particulièrement ... aux jeunes des milieux non confessionnels. ... Laïque, [mais] notre Mouvement est également ouvert aux jeunes croyants (ibid, 37).*

[Particularly ... to the young of non-confessional backgrounds. ... Secular, (but) our Movement is equally open to young believers].

### **Two movements, different origins, similar goals**

Two movements for youth which grew from the circumstances of the Vichy regime started from very different roots. The UNCM was an attempt to build on the experience of Vichy government sponsored *Jeunesse et montagne*, to retain its good features and to offer them to all young people. It must be remembered that membership of *Jeunesse et montagne* was voluntary so the motivation of recruits and the spirit would be very different from those of the *Chantiers de jeunesse* which was an obligatory substitute for military service. It is difficult to know how open was the founding of UNCM at first. There was evidently high level official support from early in its planning so it seems likely that the transition from *Jeunesse et montagne* to ANCM was comparatively open but discreetly so.

For the *Grand mouvement*, the FFC, the roots were in various older organisations including the secular Scouts, New Education, the secular Youth Hostels movement, and organisations influenced by them such as CEMEA, as well as in the legacy of the *Front populaire*, but inspired by the negative lessons of the Occupation and the Vichy government. Again it is difficult to know how much secrecy was involved in the framing of ideas through discussion but obviously the activists were able to meet fairly openly at occasions such as the Scout jamboree in 1943. Again discretion rather than secrecy might be the appropriate word.

Both organisations were to be for the good of young people; one aiming at offering mountain activities for holidays or short periods, the other including ODP as well as educative and recreational activities according to the New Education pattern. Les Francas was to have local youth clubs with a wide range of activities for regular [weekly?] attendance by members, as well as arranging holidays of many kinds for them.

Planning for after the war began in many circles well before the war ended. It is unlikely that the minister of education, Abel Bonnard, knew of the meetings since he was a collaborationist for whom the end of the war would spell disaster.

The values of New Education, those of the secular Scouts and secular state education were incorporated into FFC. ANCM was not specifically secular since it carried on some of the ethos of *Jeunesse et montagne* and one of its founding members was *Le Scoutisme français* which included confessional Scouts and Guides. But both ANCM and FFC had public education represented in their management committees.



## Discussion

Many of the intentions of the Vichy government were worthy and the aims of the leaders of the Vichy youth movements such as the *Chantiers de jeunesse* would be difficult to criticise in broad terms. The benefits to *Jeunes* would depend on personality, physique and background, the authority figures under whom they worked and the peers they found themselves with. It is difficult to decide what would be considered benefits other than the physical well-being which most must have experienced until the shortage of food became damaging. The *Compagnons de France* were generally willing participants, and the experience of helping others was probably rewarding, while the *Jeunesse et montagne* consisted of volunteers. General Education and the varied physical and social experiences should in most cases have been beneficial.

Assessing the overall gains by the participants would be extremely difficult considering the emotional connotations surrounding the whole situation. When it comes to considering long-lasting changes in personality, character, attitudes and beliefs through youth work or education then things become extremely uncertain. Vichy attempted to influence the values of a whole society, especially the younger portion of it, but the motives were so mixed and the recipients (or their parents) of the 'treatment' were probably so aware of the efforts being exerted, and of the political stance of Vichy, that the reaction of much of the population was cautious or negative. It was an experiment at which everybody looked from their own point of view. The Occupation aroused strong feelings from which French society learned both what might be good but also what should not be copied. As Rosa (1986, 20) says of Pierre François:

*Analysant les actions éducatives auxquelles il participe depuis plus de dix ans, observant le succès des mouvements catholiques qui en quelque sorte pouvaient servir de modèle ... pour faire autre chose.*

[Analysing the social educational work in which he had taken part for more than ten years, seeing the success of the Catholic movements which in a way could serve as a model ... for doing things differently].

François was one who had the ability to observe, to think and to work out what might be done better when the opportunity for rebuilding came. The Third Republic had been destroyed, Vichy had tried rebuilding French society but was handicapped by the constraints of occupation and by having a one-sided range of values. Many saw that there was the chance to remedy weaknesses of the old Republic and also to rebound from the almost Fascist style of Vichy if plans could be made ready. As in England, plans for a better society were being laid. Vichy and others, agreeing on the importance of the young, had different ideas of the ways in which future French citizens were to be raised.

There was ambivalence about physical activities. Any physical or 'general education' element which smacked of Nazism was rejected by opponents but how to distinguish those parts which were Nazi inspired from those which were not but were beneficial, was difficult.

Some saw Borotra's sports parades as akin to those of the Nazis despite the athlete's oath and the Olympic associations which went with them, regardless of Borotra's known enthusiasm for amateur sport and his personal popularity.

General education survived into the post-war years but linked to memories of the *Front populaire* rather than of Vichy. Bonnet, a pioneer of FFC (Rosa 1986, 6), comments on the irreversible enrichment from 1936 to the whole of education by *l'Éducation active* arising from *l'Éducation nouvelle* as a driving force behind the founding of *Les Francas* in 1944.

Vichy's commitment to the provision of sports and leisure facilities was prodigious. One result of the drive shown by Borotra, then Pascot, was the legacy of facilities which they bequeathed to the fourth and fifth republics. In 1940 France had 23 swimming pools of competition standard, by early 1944 there were 460; and thousands of schools were provided with sports installations (Halls 1981, 201). This is a remarkable development in only three to four years.

A result of the French policies was an improvement in the physical fitness of young people; 93% of the men who completed their eight months in the *Chantiers de la jeunesse* in 1941 gained 3 to 9 kilograms in weight (ibid, 202). Unhappily, the food situation deteriorated so that national gains became losses by 1942.

French villages reported that young peasants now took part in sport, and the flight from the countryside was reduced. In the country, because of the absence of over a million men as prisoners in Germany, there was work and, therefore, money to buy the locally produced food. Black-out and air-raids made town social life less attractive.

Teachers' values remained entrenched, some avoiding PE by taking their class for a walk (ibid, 202); so much for the open air half-day.

The hope that ideological and political differences would be forgotten on the sports field was not fulfilled; the idea of sport as an instrument of national unity and regeneration was found difficult to understand. Catholic youth clubs refused invitations from secular clubs to join in sporting events because 'for them, sport was only one facet of upbringing, which could not be isolated from others.' (ibid, 201). But this separatism was thought to encourage anticlericalism. Perhaps there might have been a chance of some understanding if the movements could have met for joint events, as a few Scout troops did after the founding of *le Scoutisme français* in 1942.

From 1941 food shortages became serious and a national health survey on behalf of *Secours national* was carried out by a Dr Reh of the (Swiss) Geneva Institute of Hygiene. He found widespread malnutrition and 'advised avoidance of physical exertion and even a ban on public sport.' (ibid, 210). The authorities did everything they could to reduce fatigue by shortening school hours, especially in winter, instructing *baccalauréat* examiners 'to adjust

their legitimate requirements to the necessities of the hour ' taken to mean 'leniency should be shown in marking', Catholic *lycées* excused pupils from early mass (ibid, 211). Thus Vichy's aspirations were frustrated by the food situation.

Halls considers that Vichy lacked a sense of realism in not appreciating that the means available were inadequate for the government's self-imposed task but that the aim of 'improving juvenile health and of broadening the scope of education was not without merit.' (ibid, 211). This would seem to be damning with faint praise. The means did prove inadequate but that could not have been foreseen.

The achievements of the Vichy government were considerable. If one looks only at the aims, methods and achievements in the field of education and the well-being of French young people then Vichy could claim in some respects to have been more enlightened than the Third Republic before 1936 though many ideas were lifted from the Popular Front, for example, the training of *instituteurs* was improved but for political reasons.

A legacy of material gains for PE, sport and ODP was handed on to the Fourth Republic despite considerable destruction during the Liberation; and perhaps some change of attitude about PE and sport. The break with the Third Republic in 1940, and the situation from then to 1945 stimulated new thinking, enabling radical moves to take place that would have been unlikely but for the war, especially in Catholic schools.

We see ideas of the New Education movement, of recreational outdoor pursuits even in an occupied country, and official acceptance of their educational and developmental worth for everybody. The function of schools changed to some extent from instruction of facts to the development of the pupils as whole people. In this respect there was continuity from the ideas of Zay through the Vichy period and on into more experiments after the Liberation.

Halls (1981, 403) gives as his verdict concerning Vichy youth work that 'their lasting effect upon French youth was negligible.' This may be true in the short term but adults learned from the experience and new youth organisations were an outcome. Their effect, as of all human experiences, is difficult to define or to measure but they are ongoing and appear still to be beneficial.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

**Question 4** How important was New Education in encouraging ODP in French education?

One may hypothesise from this chapter that New Education made its mark through the influence of *l'École des Roches* personnel and others influenced by that school. In addition many of the ex-army officers who were staffing or controlling the Vichy youth movements had been Scouts, a movement which included a good deal of philosophy compatible with New Education. Again socio-economic class is a factor of importance.

**Question 6** What were the benefits claimed to be derived from ODP at different times?

The benefits claimed to be derived from ODP at different times do not seem to vary very much. Zay and Carcopino wanted a population of well balanced, educated citizens instead of a servile population which, on the whole, the Vichy regime wanted but obviously did not get, judging by the exploits which the *jeunes* apparently got up to! One could hypothesise that the aims of education, including ODP, can be subverted to a variety of ends but the control would have to be extremely rigorous and all pervading, or be made so attractive and ethical that everybody united in approval, for the experience to be effective with every child.

**Question 7** What continuity of thinking and policies was there from one regime to another?

The staffing of the Vichy youth organisations discussed was largely by ex-military men and, although there was officially an armistice in force from 1940 to 1944, most of those men still thought in terms of resuming the war when the time was ripe. Thus the resources, including their personal commitment of thought and energy, were directed at enhancing the effectiveness of the young men as potential soldiers but once the war was thought to be nearing its end their thoughts, and they are described mainly in terms of their voluntary organisation affiliation rather than as soldiers, were to offer young people educational and social benefits through mountain experience in the ANCM, and via a New Education inspired programme, through *Les Francas*. Thus, although times were still fraught, there seemed to be a ready swing from an aim of military effectiveness to an educational, healthy, social and recreational standpoint. Can one hypothesise that ODP can be a universal tool to be used towards almost any end desired?

**Question 8** What measures, and by whom, are taken to regulate risk in ODP in education?

Accidents can happen at any time but care, skill, knowledge of the activity and of the locality can reduce the chances to very small proportions for educational parties. The surest way is to require that all leaders and instructors are suitable people, skilled in the activities and qualified as leaders/instructors. Up to about 1936, people leading others, young or adult, would have learned their craft by apprenticeship or by picking it up from parents or friends. From the years of the Popular Front however, training of staff became increasingly a government concern, it made sure that competent people did the training. We note that the ANCM meeting on 21st March 1944 mentioned *its relationships with the State for the training of staff*. The French government regulates and standardises qualifications; in Britain qualifications are in the hands of each governing body so there is little standardisation from one activity to another. The British government seldom intruded into this area though an ODP committee of HMIs kept an eye on it; a committee now abolished. These differences are in keeping with the traditional central control in the one country, and the 'hands-off as far as possible' tradition in the other. England has changed recently towards a much more dirigiste degree of intervention following a much publicised sea canoe tragedy with a school party. One can only hypothesise that national differences will continue but in what form it is difficult to say.

## CHAPTER 6

### HOPE FOR A BETTER SOCIETY

Both France and Britain emerged from the war having suffered considerable material and human damage but with, in both cases, the will to work towards a better life for its citizens.

As Hobsbawm (1994, 47) states, Britain:

Ended the war with a slightly better-fed and healthier population, thanks to a war-planned economy systematically slanted towards equality and fairness of sacrifice, and social justice. ... British child mortality and sickness rates fell progressively during the war. In occupied and dominated France, a country proverbially rich in food and out of the war after 1940, the average weight and fitness of the population at all ages declined.

#### Continuities from pre-war

In France expectations had been aroused by experiences such as paid holidays enforced by the *Front populaire* government of 1936; and there were many plans for positive action.

French living conditions after the war were often wretched, for war had swept across the country twice in the space of four years; in Britain bombing and a standstill in construction left many families in unsatisfactory dwellings.

Both countries set about much more than just making good the damage and backlogs, standards of living for the peoples of both countries were to reach new levels. The changes stimulated in the lives of the workers by the mandatory paid holidays and the socio-educational opportunities opened by the Popular Front were vivid memories to be carried further in the post-war years. A unity of spirit existed among citizens of many shades of thinking who had experienced occupation and the right wing undemocratic Vichy regime:

In the hopes it aroused, the controversy it created, ... the reform effort was characteristic of the Popular Front experiment. An epilogue to the interwar reform movement [*école unique* and *Compagnons de l'Université*], the Zay plan was also a prologue to educational reform undertaken after the Second World War (Talbot 1969, 207).

Continuity of ideas appear again and again. The *Compagnons de l'Université* were a group of officers on Pétain's staff during the 1914-1918 war who planned for the introduction of comprehensive schools (*écoles uniques*) after that war. Their efforts then came to nothing but:

While fighting for the nation as a whole ..., the Socialists and the Communists ... had in mind, of course, the need to further the special interests of the working class ..., particularly after the war, when they wanted to ensure that reconstruction incorporated the task of creating a just and equal society (Rigby 1991, 59).

French people in England, in French North Africa and in France itself planned for a better life for all citizens. During this time differences between Catholics, Jews, Protestants and secularists, and between those of diverse political leanings (excluding collaborationists) were of limited importance when they were living under the threat of deportation, of reprisals or other evils. In education, planning was for rebuilding the system so that origin at birth was to be neither asset nor handicap, and all French children were to grow up in a society where they would have opportunities to develop their talents. As Rosa (1986, 20) said, there were plenty of ideas for there was ample time to plan and to dream; once the Liberation came, the dreams and ideas resulted in action though internal divisions re-appeared and hindered realisation.

Nevertheless, idealistic yet realistic planning and some action before the war had ended resulted in real achievements because the political destruction of the third republic and then of the Vichy regime cleared the way for starting to build a new society. The fourth republic did not begin completely with a *tabula rasa*, for ways of thinking and basic assumptions remain as part of a culture but many mental obstacles had been removed between 1940 and 1944/5. Doing things in a certain way because they had always been done that way was now easier to avoid than it would have been less than a decade earlier. 'It took the shock of defeat to act as the catalyser for new beginnings.' (Halls 1976, 12) but:

After 1947 the optimistic and willing alliances which had been forged during the Resistance and at the time of Liberation fell apart (Rigby 1991, 59).

After the Liberation there was a honeymoon period of some two years when few openly disagreed with the intentions to improve the lot of the average citizen. There was considerable carry-over from Popular Front notions to post-1945, with Vichy memories suppressed as far as possible and their positive achievements not mentioned, yet they did leave some gains which were not discarded.

### Educational Reform

Educationists such as Paul Langevin and Henri Wallon, both *professeurs* of the *Collège de France*, had been working clandestinely as members of the Commission for the Reform of Education, the former being chairman until he died in 1946, to be succeeded by Wallon. The commission also included Roger Gal, and Gustave Monod, Director of Secondary Education under Zay and again after the war to 1951 (Dirié & Ueberschlag, 1968). All, with Zay, had attended the New Education conference at Le Havre in 1936. Monod was an old boy of *l'École des Roches* (Citation, *Médaille Militaire: Écho des Roches*, jan 1918, 9, 3, 72). Unhappily, Zay was imprisoned during the war and assassinated as it was ending.

The Langevin-Wallon Plan, published in 1947, was intended to put into practice the ideas of Zay and of the first world war thinkers, the *école unique* for all children, instead of elementary schooling for the workers and *lycée* education for the *bourgeoisie*. Langevin

was president and Wallon a vice-president of the *Groupe français d'éducation nouvelle*. They both wanted to move education away from the prestigious Classics as the solely recognised means of producing a 'cultured' person:

Our care should be to raise every branch of learning and every discipline to equal cultural dignity. .... There is no domain so technical nor activity so purely manual but that it can not have its cultural value (Langevin 1946, 1-2).

Langevin's educational thinking was like Bertier's, whom he knew well. Langevin was a communist and Bertier a Roman Catholic, but *éducation nouvelle* bridged such differences.

When the industrial needs of the country, together with the growth of democratic ideals, made the extension of popular education necessary, the schools of the bourgeoisie were not thrown open to the people. .... Each grade of schooling offered different certificates and diplomas. The primary schools, ..., admitted [a child] only in rare cases to the places of higher learning (Wallon 1946, 6).

The desire in these distinguished thinkers was to democratise French education as well as to get away from the traditional belief that practical work was less worthy of esteem than purely intellectual activity. If changes could have been effected in that honeymoon period then PE and sport, music, art, environmental studies and craftwork might each have been raised to a new status:

Amidst the rejoicing at the Liberation, the whole teaching body seemed unanimous in its enthusiasm for a far-reaching reform of the schools and universities; .... The indecisive period ... [has] given certain old opposition groups, ..., time to re-form their ranks (Wallon 1946, 5).

Wallon was himself minister of education for a few weeks after the Liberation, according to Monod (cited, Dirié & Ueberschlag 1968, 8), but no reason for the short tenure is given. Monod mentions later that from 1945 to 1951 he had to work with, and persuade, seven different ministers of education of the value of New Education methods. When the eighth minister took over he asked to be allowed to retire (ibid, 10). The fourth republic was plagued by short-term, unstable governments.

Unhappily it was elected politicians and the rapidly changing governments that blocked reforms. Many elected members came from different sectors of the teaching profession, each with its vested interests, some were products of *lycées* who did not wish to see their *alma maters* changed.

It was not until the 1958/9 interregnum between the fourth and fifth republics when General de Gaulle, as Premier, governed by decree, that Berthoin, minister of education, issued an ordinance that the school leaving age was to become 16, for those reaching the age of six after 1st January 1959, and orientation classes, as started experimentally by Zay, were to be used as sorting mechanisms from age eleven to thirteen, in order to direct children into appropriate streams, even where secondary schools were not yet available. Children in these *orientation* classes, and the *classes pilotes* of the *nouvelle éducation* experiments after the

war, experienced limited specialised teaching and there were weekly case conferences of all teachers who taught each particular child (Halls 1976, 18; Dirié & Ueberschlag 1968, 7). From 1963 a system of secondary schools (*collèges*) for all aged 11 to 15 began to take shape, the *lycées* losing their 6<sup>e</sup> to 3<sup>e</sup> classes.

Some idea of the problems facing education is given by Weiler (1946), also a member of the Langevin Commission. French youth had faced hunger, cold, many hours in air-raided shelters, separation of families, in some cases evacuated twice; tuberculosis and other maladies had reappeared. They needed a life of good diet and security, and re-education for they had become used to black market dealing:

We cannot ignore the effects of a lying propaganda, which promoted certain servile instincts, craftiness, dissimulation, hypocrisy. .... Cheating seems to be on the increase. Is it a consequence of the bad school conditions, enormous classes, less parental control, and so on? Or is it a sign that youth is rejecting studies which appear to them too remote from life, ...? (Weiler 1946, 16)

Weiler then puts the other side of the case:

Many young men occupy their leisure in different branches of French Scouts, in holiday camps as monitors, in reconstruction teams and in movements of a social or political nature. In contrast, the sports organisations ... appear to be slightly on the decline. In its urge to build again, French youth seems ... to wish to play an active part. .... It [Ministry of Education] has moreover ... set itself to build up a democratic school which shall become a true school of democracy.

One lesson a week in civics and ethics has been instituted in all classes for children of 11-15. The lessons are not mere theory but are centred round examples taken from everyday life (ibid, 16).

When the war ended there was a decline in membership of youth and sports groups once the generous Vichy subsidies were reduced. Besides movements such as *Les Francas* and *ANCM*, a number of other new organisations came into being. Rigby (1991, passim) mentions *Peuple et culture* which was the brain-child of two specialists in the field of 'leisure', Joffre Dumazedier and Benigno Cacérès who had been involved in the *École des cadres* at Uriage. And there were more founded in the euphoria of the Liberation or started afresh after being suppressed. Obviously not all French youth was given to indulging in hedonistic or delinquent behaviour, many were carrying on helping, for example, in *colonies de vacances* and with the Scouts; as before and during the war. There was much continuity of behaviour.

There was a good deal of continuity at government level too. Just as the Vichy regime had taken Léo Lagrange's idea of the *brevet sportif populaire* and called it the *brevet sportif national* so the post-war government had taken the idea of general education and called it civics and ethics. Other laws passed by Vichy, such as those requiring children to be medically examined through the education service, and restricting the drinking of alcohol by children, were also maintained, and still are.



## Central control

Although there is some room for individual initiatives in French educational work, centralisation contrasts with the English system where initiatives have often started locally. In France changes generally need to have approval and impetus from the ministry if they are to continue. The French claim that this leads to equality across the whole educational range of teaching and qualifications regardless of geographical location or social status:

The quest for equality is ... connected, as both cause and effect, with the principles of centralized direction and impersonal administration of education. ... the educational system has attempted to provide standardized curricula, facilities and examinations, and has guaranteed the formal equality of [qualifications] throughout the school system at all levels. .... Among the results of this state of affairs has been the difficulty of introducing innovations. Centralization and standardization ... have hampered the launching of experimental projects (Frankel et al, 1971, 24).

The contrast with the system in England at that time is marked. Each LEA, within broad guide lines, had freedom to experiment, and schools within LEAs had their degrees of freedom to innovate. This resulted in a richness of enquiry with, usually, benevolent surveillance by LEA advisors (who were often key initiators), with Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) keeping an eye over-all. The latter, in 1975 organised a conference at Dartington of some thirty leading educational workers in ODP and field studies (DES 1975) and then carried out a survey of a 10% sample of centres to assess the quality of teaching and facilities being offered to pupils (DES 1985). In France, with few exceptions, innovations are imposed on teachers from above – which can lead to teacher resistance. But once an innovation begins it has the weight of government behind it, as long as inspectors, monitoring progress, persuade the minister that support should continue.

## Éducation nouvelle

Some reforms of education which did not need legislation were put into effect very quickly. From 1945 190, and from 1946 210 *classes nouvelles 6<sup>e</sup>* were instituted in *lycées* by Gustave Monod, Director of Secondary Education in the ministry of education (Boyd & Rawson 1965, 133; Dirié & Ueberschlag 1968, *passim*). These then worked their way through to 3<sup>e</sup> and rejoined their conventionally taught contemporaries in *seconde* for the remainder of their time to *baccalauréat* (Bideau 1951, 48). These were a resumption of the fifty experimental classes which had been started by Jean Zay in 1937 and which he had wanted for all French children in their first two years of orientation in secondary education. The children were to be observed, counselled, their progress assessed by all their teachers in case conferences with their parents before they were assigned to appropriate courses for their final school education. Class councils, consisting of the teachers concerned with a class and two elected pupil representatives were to meet weekly for discussion.

Teachers involved in *classes nouvelles* went to in-service courses at Sèvres where a centre for the purpose had been set up; the first *stage* taking place 17 – 27 September 1945 (Dirié &

Ueberschlag 1968, 7). Called *le Centre international d'Études pédagogiques de Sèvres*, it still operates.

During the first year in secondary school (*sixième*), and second year (*cinquième*), each class had only three teachers so that it was a half-way stage from the single teacher primary school experience to the full specialisation of subject teaching which they would meet later. The three teachers were required to co-ordinate their efforts and their knowledge of each individual child so that the case conferences would be fruitful. Part of the teaching of French, a foreign language, mathematics, *éducation plastique* [modelling, sculpting?], and music were done in half-classes, Latin was available as an option. The other subjects making up the curriculum were civic instruction, history and geography, *science d'observation*, handicraft, environmental studies, and PE which was allocated two hours (Anon 1968, 17). Participation in the *éducation nouvelle* experiment 1945–51 was voluntary for both teachers and children (and their parents) but the numbers participating increased considerably though hindered by political, religious and financial problems. The fact that Langevin and Wallon were communists 'of an idealistic kind' (Boyd & Rawson 1965, 134), and Zay too, as well as having been a Jew, gave many people an excuse to distrust the new experiment, though within the movement there was co-operation between people of different faiths – Roger Gal, a firm Catholic, was a pre-war teacher in Zay's first orientation classes. He became *conseiller technique* under Monod from 1945 in setting up the experimental schools and *classes pilotes*; his support continued when he became *Directeur* of the *Institut pédagogique national du service de la recherche*. He was also in the group producing the Langevin-Wallon report of 1947.

In the years *quatrième* and *troisième* all children followed a common curriculum, known as the *tronc commun*, with less teaching in half classes. The time thus released was available for options which would be chosen according to the assessment of aptitudes and abilities shown in *sixième* and *cinquième* and the wishes of pupil and parents. These classes used activity methods of teaching, getting away from traditional chalk and talk. Handicraft, learning how to study, applying what had been taught to real situations, team work and the use of work sheets and audio-visual aids were all included in this experiment. Similar *classes pilotes* were set up in various schools in parallel with conventional classes so that comparisons could be made and so that teachers and parents could see the method in action (various *Cahiers pédagogiques*) 'The "classes nouvelles" experiment, ..., had an influence quite disproportionate to its size.' (Halls 1976, 15 – 9).

*Cahiers pédagogiques* was founded in 1945 to promote the methods of New Education in France. Issue no. 30, November 1961 covered *Méthodes actives*, issue 37, October 1962 dealt with *Coordination des disciplines* while other issues covered separate disciplines. There is barely mention of either sport or PE in the journal from 1945 to 1958 though *classe de neige*, *scoutisme* and *auberges de jeunesse* appear a number of times. Those three, it seems,

were esteemed as the *lycée professeurs* esteemed their *caravanes scolaires* and *voyages en zigzag* – but not PE or sport.

The omission came to an end with the issue of April 1959 which was devoted entirely to physical education. The earlier neglect, despite the enlightened attitudes of most teachers committed to the *classes nouvelles*, may still have been related to the low status of PE and Sports teachers in schools, and to the fact that up to 1981 PE teachers were not employed by the ministry of education but by the ministry of youth and leisure, or youth and sport. Despite the association of physical education with medical departments in universities, the physical education teacher had long had a

*Problème de statut psychologique: l'enseignant d'éducation physique, ..., est souvent considéré comme un enseignant de rang inférieur, .... Il n'est pas un enseignant comme les autres. Son habit, le survêtement, .... Longtemps doté d'un statut administratif inférieur, il a réussi à obtenir l'égalité avec les autres enseignants grâce à son insertion au sein du ministère de l'Éducation en 1981 et à la création d'une agrégation et d'un corps universitaire en 1982. Mais il voudrait plus, son profond désir serait d'accéder à une égalité de reconnaissance, ce qui n'est semble-t-il pas le cas (Thomas 1990, 3-4).*

[Problem of psychological status: the teacher of physical education, ..., is often seen as a teacher of inferior rank, .... He is not a teacher like the others. His clothes, the track-suit .... For long given an administratively inferior status, he has succeeded in obtaining equality with the other teachers due to his attachment to the ministry of education in 1981 and the creation of an *agrégation* and university recognition in 1982. But he would like more, his profound desire would be to be recognised as an equal, which does not seem to be the case].

The inferior status of teachers of physical education in France was paralleled in England. Anecdotal evidence of it is common among PE teachers and is supported by work by Hendry (1973-4, 115-21), despite the inauguration in 1946, of a degree at Birmingham University which included physical education, and at other universities more recently.

This separateness of the PE teacher is mentioned in the editorial of the April 1959 issue of *Cahiers pédagogiques* cited above:

*Ce cahier voudrait aider à faire cesser l'espèce de séparation qui, dans les idées et dans la pratique, isolé encore trop souvent l'éducation physique, en fait une province à part de l'éducation.*

[This issue is intended to help end the separation which, in thinking and in practice, still too often isolates physical education as a domain separate from education].

The low status of PE is illustrated by the above few paragraphs though the ex-NCO stigma is no longer mentioned.

The ministry was supporting the experimentation with New Education methods and principles; the journal was mainly written by secondary teachers already practising these principles. Experiments on such a scale could only be carried out with central approval and support but Monod makes it clear (Dirié & Ueberschlag 1968, 7 – 18 *passim*) that he was fighting for this experiment against a rapid turnover of sometimes unsympathetic ministers

of education and against the Treasury who saw *éducation nouvelle* classes as expensive in staffing (1:25), in material for craft work, and in overtime payments for teachers attending weekly class-council meetings. PE teachers attending these class councils were not paid since they were not employed by the ministry of education but they brought much appreciated evidence about pupils which other teachers had missed or ignored because behaviour in this subject can be different, and they were the only ones with *une formation psycho-pédagogique* [training including educational psychology] (Anon 1968, 84).

Monod had many colleagues supporting him in the ministry, it was the politicians and the finance people who were the problem. However, continuing support of the ministry was evidenced, for example, by the fact that from November 1951, when Monod retired, to January 1954 some fifteen official circulars were issued explaining the required co-ordination between the teachers of any one class, relations with the parents, study of the environment, educative manual work, physical education, moral training, pupils' clothes, diet, and the pupils' individual dossiers in *classes nouvelles* in *lycées* and *collèges* (SEVPEN 1954). Reddie had been similarly concerned about the details of pupils' dress, bed linen, diet, hours of sleep and so on (Reddie 1900, *passim*).

The issue of *Cahiers pédagogiques* of April 1959 includes articles on activity for improving health in the manner of Fourestier at Vanves, (Ch 7 below) and activity in *air pur* for a cure or prevention of tuberculosis. There are articles on the history of PE, PE and parents, doctors, research, and reminiscences by *professeurs* of their school time PE, music and PE and so on. The whole issue is sympathetic to the subject.

### Application of New Education methods

Tavaillot (1959, 39) exhibits the application of New Education thinking. A *lycée* in Saint Étienne organised annual camps in which increasing responsibility was placed on pupils who attended in successive years. The initial venture was a staff and parent effort but as boys gained experience of being responsible for catering, communication, transport, and camp programming they could become *chefs d'équipe* of a group of twelve and then *chefs de camp* in charge of three *équipes* camping independently. There is continuity of vocabulary here from the official Vichy youth movements, and a Scouting flavour. The boys planned the wide games and the *explorations* which teachers would have called *études du milieu*. After a number of annual camps they had enough *chefs* (of *Troisième* and *Seconde*) to run many individual and small group activities so parents became redundant. Baden-Powell would have approved of this utilisation of his patrol system and Reddie would similarly have approved the idea of older boys not commanding but being responsible for younger ones.

But now staff had to persuade boys that they should entertain their parents on the last night round a camp fire; the independence they had been developing during the camp did not fit easily with performing in front of their parents.

The above example illustrates that schools had some freedom to experiment as long as their experimentation was broadly in line with ministry ideas. It also seems that ODP were not necessarily the province of PE staff only since most staff members were involved.

### **PE still hardly accepted**

Despite the efforts of Latarjet, Zay, Borotra, David, Monod and others, before, during and after the war it seems that the practice in many schools remained little changed. An American researcher in the late 1940s and early 50s wrote:

Other legislation in keeping with the spirit of the reform concerned the **introduction** of physical education as a required part of the curriculum, a bimonthly afternoon of supervised leisure time, a reduction in pupil homework, and the limitation of class size. ... recommending a spirit of collaboration and co-operation, ... and advocating a wider application of activity methods (Miles 1953, 42) [emphasis NWD].

So a century after the government had ordered in 1851 (ch 2) that gymnastics and drill with an NCO should be obligatory, Miles talks about 'the **introduction** of PE as a required part of the curriculum'. Other New Education apparent innovations in this quotation are the mention of 'leisure' in school time, reduction of homework, a reduction in class size and a spirit of collaboration and co-operation. These are all mentioned in experiments of this period and Monod made sure that no *classe nouvelle* had more than 25 pupils in it (Dirié & Ueberschlag 1968, 7-18 *passim*). The continuity of attitude concerning physical education implied by Miles is especially outstanding as an example of how difficult it is to change entrenched attitudes. And the attitude remained for more years after Miles was writing. Turnbull, headmaster of an English comprehensive school, visited several French schools under the ægis of the Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges, then wrote:

The curriculum has a heavy emphasis on French, mathematics and modern languages. Natural sciences and the humanities have a less important place in the curriculum and little time is given to the creative and practical subjects. A reasonable amount of time is allocated for physical education but I gather this part of the curriculum has a low standing with parents, pupils and staff alike (Turnbull [1974], 18).

New Education ideas would still seem to have had some way to go, not least in PE.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

**Question 4** How important was New Education in encouraging ODP in French education? New Education had some limited impact on French educational practice from the example of *l'École des Roches* and from the work of Freinet but it was in the time of Zay (1936 to 1939) that New Education really became prominent. During the Occupation some of the movement's ideas were used though the motives were not always democratic. After the Liberation thinking, radicalised by the experience of the war, made a favourable setting for the ideas of the movement. Monod, who had undergone a New Education schooling, was in a position of considerable influence though he did not have a completely free hand to inaugurate as much as he would have liked. *Éducation nouvelle* became *éducation active* and

incorporated some of the principles of Reddie. The work of Tavaillot (1959) indicates clearly that New Education principles were being practised though it was equally clear that old methods and attitudes still prevailed in some schools, as Miles (1953) and Turnbull (1974) show. A hypothesis could be that once New Education ideas have been introduced into a system the name and the exact methods may change with time but recognisable traces of the ideas remain to enrich the education they provide.

**Question 7** What continuity of thinking and policies was there from one regime to another?

Continuity of thinking and of practice prevailed in education although evolution also took place over the years. Traumatic periods such as the two world wars stimulated thinking and speeded up changes but underlying cultural values tended to prevail though adapted to new conditions. As Talbott (1969, 207) suggests, the Popular Front years were an epilogue to the hopes of the *Compagnons de l'Université* and the *école unique* but also a prologue to the educational reforms undertaken after the Second World War. This indicates to a considerable extent the continuity prevailing but ignores the century preceding the first world war and also the important, and until fairly recently, the deliberately 'forgotten' changes of the Vichy years.

The war and Occupation had occasioned turmoil and re-thinking, and some quite profound physical changes had occurred such as the provision of activity facilities for schools and communities on a scale that outdid even the *Front populaire*, for example, in the provision of swimming pools. Yet it seems that schools generally continued for some decades in their resistance to giving any school time or esteem to PE.

Outside schools however there was a development of ideas from pre-war through to post-war resulting in increasing popularity of ODP. Skiing and mountaineering began to be more practised in the 1930s, though they remained the domain of the comfortably off, but their encouragement by Vichy, for example through *Jeunesse et montagne*, meant that thousands of young men experienced them who would not otherwise have done so. Safeguarding the quality of teaching of mountaineering and skiing was done by standardisation, then Vichy nationalised both. The 4th Republic ministry of education took over the whole framework of qualifications of guides and *moniteurs* and it remains so to the present day. Almost the same happened with sailing though substantial government input into encouraging that recreation only began with Vichy. The *Brevet sportif populaire* started by Léo Lagrange became the Vichy *Brevet sportif national* then the 4th Republic's *Brevet sportif scolaire*.

There were innovations as we see but there was considerable continuity of values and practice from the 1850s to the 1950s. The tentative hypothesis from chapter 2 that continuity of thinking of teachers and parents would take a great deal of moving is supported by the evidence in this chapter but there is a hint that with time they might bend to some extent as conditions in society changed.

**Question 9** What part has social class and growing affluence played in society's attitudes to leisure and ODP?

The Langevin-Wallon plan intended that a pupil's social class of origin should be neither an advantage nor disadvantage throughout his school career – and beyond. The old system still in existence at the end of the war ensured that the elementary school child had little chance of being able to take the *baccalauréat*, the passport to higher education and the chance to enter the liberal professions or higher echelons of industry. Thus he would be unlikely to be in a position to take part in expensive and time consuming outdoor pursuits while the workers who had come through the elementary schools were, despite the laws resulting from the *Front populaire* era, much less likely to be able to afford, or to feel socially comfortable participating in, expensive ODP. Though prosperity began to be evident within a very few years after the war the education system only prepared a minority of pupils for a *bourgeois* life style. This would restrict the number of people with the confidence to try ODP unless they were introduced to them by their elementary school as did happen for some children. (chs 7, 8, 9 below). One could hypothesise that ODP were to experience a greater boom in popularity than would have been the case because social class divisions were reduced through the spread of the comprehensive system from the 1960s.

## CHAPTER 7

### THE VANVES EXPERIMENTS

The ferment of change after 1945 encouraged the initiation of research projects, some being related to the *éducation nouvelle* work described above. In England there was also an atmosphere of enquiry enhanced by the inevitable changes occasioned by the 1944 Education Act.

In France the regulating of all sports including mountaineering and skiing (but excluding the armed services) was, by an ordinance of 28 August 1945, to come under the ministry of education as the final authority. As Guillaume (1990, 6) suggests, this is an acknowledgement that sport was already accepted as an educational factor in pupils' lives, and that the works of Lagrange and of Borotra were to be seen as the foundation of the present situation though care had to be taken that totalitarian motives were avoided. Sport was to be educational, not narrowly patriotic as had been the aim of the Hitler *Jugend*, [and of the Vichy regime?]. This move by the ministry of education was a big change from 1925 when sport, being leisure, was declared to have nothing to do with education. There had been a growth in popularity of sport in French society accentuated by the Popular Front government with its pro-leisure policy, including ODP. One must then also wonder how much had Vichy contributed to changes in people's assumptions of sailing, climbing and skiing being linked to a particular social class.

This ordinance confirmed the growing acceptance that sport should be part of the educational and developmental process for French people of all ages. Yet sport and PE remained administratively separate from Education for some years, and from each other in many people's minds while ODP were seen to be separate again and of another status. The ambiguous, even amorphous, public image of physical activity vis à vis Education, was maintained and often reinforced because youth and sport, youth and leisure, leisure and sport were to have, at different times, their own minister, or a secretary of state whose position varied in being answerable to the minister of education or sometimes to the prime minister. It was this ill-defined section of the government which employed and paid PE teachers.

Other organisations in the educational world at this time of fluidity were changing their thinking. Teachers' were seeing the school's role as having a pastoral element in keeping with Monod's New Education thinking, and Borotra's efforts may have left a trace. A mark of this in 1946 was the change of name of what had been the *Fédération générale de*



*l'Enseignement to Fédération de l'Éducation nationale*. It accepted that teachers were now more than just instructors and that other people who dealt with pupils were also educators; thus the federation now has some forty unions federated to it, covering caretakers, cooks, school secretaries, administrators and so on (Halls 1976, 154). An outcome of this thinking, and the experimentation in which the ministry of education was involved, for example, through the work of Gustave Monod (ch 6), was a development of the work of Latarjet, Zay and David in an experiment in Vanves on the southern outskirts of Paris.

### **The Vanves Experiment** *(l'Expérience de Vanves)*

This experiment had profound effects on education in elementary schools. It involved the co-ordination of the disciplines of medicine, school class work, and physical education including outdoor pursuits. It is best known for its development of two important ideas. The first, the basis of the experiment, was a plan known as *le demi-temps pédagogique et sportif* [half-time teaching and half-time sport] (generally known as *le mi-temps*) and the second was the inauguration of the first *classe de neige* [snow class] in a state school (Fourestier 1953a). *Mi-temps* was clearly an extension of the Lyon enhanced physical education timetable of Latarjet (ch 2 above) and the snow class was an adaptation to an elementary school of the idea of the snow sojourn from the Paris IREP (ch 2 above) of the 30s and Latarjet's work for Paté in 1928. The Vanves experiment went on for longer and spread more widely than the pre-war experiments (Andrieu 1990, 92-120).

The collaboration of a considerable number of people was needed when the experiment began in 1950. The minister of education approved it in conjunction with Gaston Roux, director general for youth and sport. Maurice R David, director of primary education for the Seine department, and R Huguet, inspector general for youth and sport, were closely involved. David had been the editor of *Les Demi-Journées de Plein Air* during the Vichy regime (ch 4 above). Although this was to be an elementary schools experiment Monod must surely have put in an occasional word of encouragement. Heads and staffs of schools also needed to be co-operative. Finally, the *Maire* of Vanves, in addition to a number of *commune* and *département* councillors, backed the scheme. Vanves is a largely residential *commune* on the southern outskirts of Paris, now just outside the *périphérique* [ring road]. The person most closely involved, and in the public eye, was a Dr Fourestier, medical schools inspector for the Vanves area. The growth of sport and ODP and fresh attitudes in French society after the war accepted skiing, a *sport d'élite*, being offered to elementary school children compared with the IREP rumpus in Paris only twenty years earlier.

## Reasons for the experiment

Fourestier (1953a) says that the aim of *l'école primaire* is to give the children sound elementary instruction and, whatever their age, to provide this instruction in the best conditions for their physical and intellectual blossoming (*s'épanouissement*) which is best achieved in a 'biologically well balanced human machine'. He thought conditions for French pupils were not conducive to producing this well balanced machine, citing the weekly programme for an eleven year old then to be:

25 hours of intellectual class work

10 hours of homework

5 hours of physical exercise, of which 2½ is recreational, 1 hour (2 x 30 min) is PE and 1½ hrs is in the open air. [This last 1½ hrs is not explained].

This gives a ratio of 5 hours of physical activity to 35 of intellectual work, that is, 1:7, if the PE actually took place. Fourestier claimed that five hours of physical activity each week was insufficient for a child's optimum bodily development, particularly since the physical activity periods were so short that there was insufficient time for proper relaxation to take place before the next intellectually demanding session.

His enquiries found a better distribution of time in the Nordic countries and in Switzerland where the ratio of physical to intellectual time allocation was 1:5. He therefore wanted more time for physical activity, and for it to be more effectively distributed. This is a reminder of French educationists' interest in the *rythmes de vie des enfants* (life rhythms of children) which means the distribution of free and occupied time during the year, the week and the day; the occupied time being that which is required for school, daily travel, eating, sleeping, personal needs, and recreation (Dechavanne 1990; USEP 1989 ).

Dechavanne (1990, 363) discusses the problem, *Depuis de nombreuses années le problème des rythmes de vie des jeunes est posé en France* [For many years the problem of the distribution of time and effort for the young has been considered in France]. She shows that French pupils, with Belgium and Austria, have the longest (6 hours) school day in the world and, with Holland, the longest (2 hours) midday break which makes an eight hour day, plus homework, plus up to three hours travel each day. Yet they have the smallest number of hours (935) per year in the world in school because of the long holidays. By comparison Britain has the shortest (4 hrs 55 mins) school day in the world, a 75 minutes lunch break and a school year of 952 hours. (Japan 1312 hours, the longest). People are concerned about the health of French children and look into *les rythmes de vie* and *surmenage* [overload] (Gevrey 1994).

## The Experiment

A Vanves elementary school, *l'école Gambetta*, was used for the experiment. A class of 31 boys of average age 13 years 5 months 6 days, on the 1st November 1950 (Hervet 1952, 4) was chosen as the *classe expérimentale* (experimental group). A parallel class in *l'école Antoine Fratacci*, also in Vanves, was the *classe témoin* (control group). Their average age was 13 years 5 months 18 days. Membership of both classes was just as it would have been if the experiment had not been scheduled.

The control class followed the normal programme while the Gambetta class had reduced hours for their academic programme but more time for physical activity. There was more additional time for physical activities than reduction of time for academic work.

The weekly regimes were:

|                                      |                               | <u>Normal</u>            |          | <u>Mi-temps</u> |          |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|
|                                      |                               | <u>Hours and Minutes</u> |          |                 |          |
|                                      |                               | <u>h</u>                 | <u>m</u> | <u>h</u>        | <u>m</u> |
| <i>Morale et instruction civique</i> | [Moral and civic instruction] | 2                        | 00       | 1               | 15       |
| <i>Français</i>                      | [French]                      | 6                        | 00       | 5               | 30       |
| <i>Histoire et géographie</i>        | [History and geography]       | 3                        | 00       | 3               | 00       |
| <i>Calcul</i>                        | [Number work]                 | 5                        | 00       | 4               | 30       |
| <i>Sciences appliquées</i>           | [Applied sciences]            | 3                        | 00       | 2               | 00       |
| <i>Travaux pratiques</i>             | [Manual work]                 | 1                        | 30       | 1               | 15       |
| <i>Éducation musicale</i>            | [Music]                       | 1                        | 00       | 0               | 45       |
| <i>Dessin</i>                        | [Art]                         | 1                        | 30       | 1               | 15       |
| <i>Activités dirigées</i>            | [Discussion & study skills]   | 2                        | 00       | 0               | 00       |
| <i>Plein air</i>                     | [Free time]                   | 1                        | 30       | 0               | 00       |
| <u>Totals</u>                        |                               | 26                       | 30       | 19              | 30       |
| <i>Éducation physique</i>            | [Physical education]          | 1                        | 00       | 12              | 00       |
| <i>Récréations</i>                   | [Recreation]                  | 2                        | 30       | 1               | 30       |
| <i>Siestes et goûter</i>             | [Siestas & afternoon snack]   | 0                        | 00       | 4               | 00       |
| <u>Totals</u>                        |                               | 30                       | 00       | 38              | 00       |
| <i>Études du soir + récréations</i>  | [Homework & play]             | 6                        | 00       | 0               | 00       |
| <i>Études du soir - supervisées</i>  | [Supervised homework]         | 0                        | 00       | 4               | 00       |
| <u>Totals (heures) [hours]</u>       |                               | 36                       | 00       | 41              | 00       |

(Adapted from Encausse 1957, 13)

These twelve to thirteen year old boys apparently thrived on this intensive programme.

### The aims

The aims of the research were, at the end of the academic year, to compare the results of the two classes (1) in the *certificat d'études primaires* (CEP) [primary leaving certificate],

(2) their bodily developments, their health records, their sporting abilities and personality developments,

(3) to make school life, especially the physical activity part of it, enjoyable (Hervet 1952)

That last point echoes Ferry of 60 years earlier, with little progress in between (ch 2 above).

PE was taken by a *professeur spécialisé* [specialist in the subject]. The content appears to have been both Ling's Swedish gymnastics for remedial work, and *Hébertist* material.

Distinction was made between *gymnastique de maintien* (maintenance exercises) and *gymnastique corrective* which 15 of the boys received for remedial purposes.

A swimming pool, the municipal stadium, a sports hall and a gymnasium with remedial equipment were made available. The municipality provided a vehicle to take the boys swimming twice a week. They also lent the necessary equipment such as mattresses for the boys to take two daily siestas within the school, and provided a daily half litre of milk for each boy, fruit in season, and a dose of multi-vitamins.

The morning of each day, Mondays to Saturdays, including the traditional free day Thursday, was spent in normal class work from 8.00 to 11.30. Monday afternoons were occupied with art, music and weekly briefings. The other afternoons from 13.30 to 16.30 were spent in a variety of physical activities, swimming, athletics, learning and practising different games, except Saturday afternoons which were for activity on varied wooded country terrain. Getting there required an hour's walking each way leaving only one hour for the activities, but two hours of (brisk) walking would be a valuable, though not necessarily exciting, physical activity. There was clearly Hébert influence here. On other days 15 to 30 minutes walk each way was needed for getting between school and the particular facilities being used but for swimming, 15 minutes was allowed for the journey by vehicle. From 16.30 to 17.00 was time for the second siesta, their milk and their vitamins, 17.00 to 18.00, was for supervised study in place of home work. If the pupils had 30 minutes of siesta twice each day it would appear that 4 hours per week as designated in the programme was an underestimate – similarly for supervised homework – for they had a six-day week.

### **The results**

Every boy was medically examined and measured at the beginning of the school year and monthly until its end. The averages for the experimental class showed greater gains in height, weight and lung capacity than those of the control class; and there was a diminution of 1.4 cms in waist measurement while the control group showed no change. The Gambetta performances in sports tests also showed greater improvements. The tests were: 50 metres sprint, 300 metres run, high jump, long jump, putting the 3kg shot and timed climbing 3 metres up a rope using arms and legs.

In swimming there was a marked improvement through the year but the two classes could not be compared since the controls were not taken swimming. At the beginning of the school year half the class had never been in a swimming pool and only 6 boys could swim 25 metres. By July twenty-nine did so, the remaining 2 swam 10 metres; 24 covered 50 metres and 18 gained the life-saving certificate.

The results of the examination for the *certificat d'études primaires [CEP]* were claimed to be comparable with those of the control group, although it was thought at the beginning of the year that the experimental class was intellectually a rather weak one.

Apart from the measurable changes outlined above, the regular class teacher reported that the boys were more attentive and their reflexes quicker, there was less misbehaviour, and there was a more open *camaraderie* among them. They were also much cleaner because some, who had previously washed badly or not at all, were ashamed to be seen dirty at the sports field or swimming pool. They showed more self confidence when with their families (Fourestier 1953b). These assessments are subjectively based but are not necessarily invalid for that reason.

Despite the increased hours of attendance demanded, the whole Gambetta class completed the year's experiment. Attendance was better and their parents reported them to be more resistant to fatigue. This is attributed to a better distribution of intellectual work, of physical effort, and of siesta.

Improved fitness and muscle tone must have been contributory factors to the reduced fatigue. Perhaps also enjoyment of this different kind of regime reduced the boredom which often manifests itself as fatigue or in looking for an excuse to miss school; Fourestier saw enjoyment of school as one of the experimental aims. *Le Plan d'Alger* of 1944 (one of several plans for post-war education) included the words *le grand devoir de l'école élémentaire est de donner le goût d'apprendre* (Decaune & Cavalier 1962, 118) [the main task of the elementary school is to give the children the taste for learning]. And at that time the elementary school gave the only schooling most pupils received in their lives. For these Vanves pupils, in *fin d'études primaire*, this was their last year of organised education unless they were accepted for commercial or technical courses.

In his report, Mr Watteaux, the divisional inspector for youth and sport said that:

*Ils ont goûté à une vie saine et hygiénique en plein air qui influera certainement sur leur règle de vie future.*

*Enfin, certains enfants, faibles et timides, ont acquis une confiance en eux qu'ils conserveront car, maintenant, ils sont capables de courir, sauter, nager, lancer ou grimper alors que beaucoup de personnes autour d'eux en sont incapables* (Cited, Hervet 1952, 5-6).

[They have had a taste of a clean and healthy life in the open air which will certainly influence their way of life in the future.

Finally, some of the weak and timid boys have achieved a self-confidence which will last because, now, they can run, jump, swim, throw or climb when many people around them cannot do so].

Certainly those boys had their range of abilities extended and would have acquired more self-confidence. It seems that the French educationists' and parents' unwillingness to value physical activities had persisted from the previous century. Only 6 out of a class of 31 boys aged 12-13 could initially swim 25 metres yet they were living in a residential suburb of Paris with a public swimming pool available.

What effect had the work of Lagrange, then of Borotra and his successors in the very recent period of the Occupation had on public attitudes? The Vichy efforts may have been counter-

productive in some quarters and teachers still resisted sparing time for physical activity. Clearly Watteaux really did mean that other boys aged 12 or 13 could not swim or climb a rope, nor run, jump or throw so well.

Encausse (1957, 14)) ends his account of the first Vanves experiment:

*Il faut ajouter que non seulement les élèves ont obtenu leur Certificat d'études dans les mêmes conditions mais que, d'autre part, ils ont mieux réussi dans les concours (écoles commerciales, écoles techniques). Peut-être sont-ils non seulement plus résistants mais aussi plus combattifs.*

[One should add that not only did the pupils obtain their certificates under the same conditions (as the control group) but they did better in the competitions for places in the commercial and technical schools. Perhaps they were not only stronger but also more determined].

It is not surprising that the boys were more determined, or confident, for they had experienced an academic year in which they were the subject of a great deal of attention. They were following a unique programme and many important people would have looked in on them, they were being weighed and measured monthly, they had extra milk and fruit, and they had a special room in which to take their siestas. They would undoubtedly have gained confidence just from the 8 to 9 months of special treatment and they would have been motivated to do well because they were receiving this exceptional attention – the Hawthorne Effect again (Rosenthal & Jacobson 1968, 164-73), as with the Latarjet experiment. And perhaps the fame of the Vanves experiment encouraged selectors to choose Gambetta boys for further courses if only out of curiosity.

Hervet also mentions that the class was taken by:

*Un jeune Professeur d'Éducation Physique, M. Jean Barnier. Il a su créer le climat de confiance, voire d'affection, indispensable entre le maître et les élèves pour la réussite d'un essai de cette nature (1952, 5).*

[A young teacher of physical education, Jean Barnier. He was able to create a climate of confidence, indeed of affection, indispensable between the teacher and the pupils for the success of such a venture].

There is no doubt that when such a relationship grows between a class and a popular teacher, whom here they saw for at least 12 hours each week, there is a heightening of motivation to do their best for and with that teacher.

Hervet indicates that parental reactions to the year's programme were largely favourable. Twenty-nine parents returned a questionnaire. Seventeen were satisfied and 10 very satisfied, only two preferred the normal regime. Eight parents deplored the loss of the traditionally free Thursdays and five found it difficult getting up early for the 8 am start instead of the normal 8.30 but they all remarked on the lessened fatigue in their boys at the end of each day.

The results were thought to be so encouraging it was decided that a second and longer Vanves experiment should be staged but it should also be generalised in other schools.

## The Second Vanves Experiment

In October 1951 the second Vanves experiment began, this time to last for 3 years. The classes chosen were from the same two schools as before but of boys aged 10 -11 years. Both classes were to continue with their respective regimes till the end of their obligatory school careers.

Hervet (1952, 6) indicates that several classes in different parts of the *département de la Seine* were also to follow an experimental regime, so the Vanves experiment was being generalised; Fourestier (1953b, 3) mentions that in October 1952 a class of 7 year old girls was to begin a *demi-temps pédagogique et sportif* programme in Vanves. Majault (1973, 104) reports that they continued with it to June 1956. These follow-up experiments differed from the original Gambetta one only in detail. Here is a clear-cut example of the French way of piloting an experiment then generalising it to a greater number of classes, just as Zay and Latarjet did before the war. Encausse (1957, 26) reports that favourable results were obtained from four boys' and two girls' schools in the *département*:

*Les résultats furent excellents tant pour les poids, la taille, la capacité vitale, que DANS LE DOMAINE DU TRAVAIL SCOLAIRE PROPREMENT DIT. [Encausse's upper case.] Il a donc démontré que ... il est absolument inutile d'enfermer des enfants dans des locaux scolaires deux fois plus de temps qu'il n'est nécessaire.*

[The results were excellent as much in the matter of gains in weight, height and vital capacity as IN THE AREA OF ACADEMIC WORK. It has thus been demonstrated that ... it is quite useless to shut children up in classrooms for twice as long as is necessary].

This claim by Encausse that academic results were improved too invites a touch of scepticism. Perhaps they were but it could have been both the enjoyment of school and the Hawthorne Effect which prompted more academic effort.

The timetable for the boys in the second Vanves experiment was lightened by allowing Thursdays to be free, as was then normal, but otherwise the programme was much as it had been in the previous year and was to remain so for the full three years, but an important variation was to be a *classe de neige* in February in the second and third years. This is dealt with separately below. The changes in the two classes during three academic years (32 months) were disproportionately more marked than for the first experiment of 8 months between first and final measures. In the first experiment the average gains in height of the two classes were 4.4 and 4.2 cms but in the three year period the gains in height were 20.2 and 13.3 cms, a more than 50% greater gain by the Gambetta boys which is clearly significant. In weight however the mean differences were small, 3.50 and 3.14 kgs in the one year, and 15.51 and 13.80 kgs in 3 years, small differences but all in the same direction:

*Sur les enfants de cet âge, le sport accroît proportionnellement davantage l'activité des cartilages de conjugaison (taille) qu'il ne favorise l'anabolisme de formation (poids) (ibid, 16).*

[For children of this age, sport encourages the development of connective cartilage (height) proportionally more than it does the development of body tissue (weight)].

See boys' weights, heights, vital capacities and chest expansions (Appendix 1) (Encausse 1957, 18-21).

### Generalisation of the Vanves experiment

The generalisation of *mi-temps* varied in the exact arrangements, they were attempts to discover the important and less important variables, and to find financial economies.

Lorrain (1956) outlines an experiment at Noisy-le-Sec. In 1955 five classes in one elementary school were subjected to the *mi-temps* regime, the control classes being in the same school. The classes were from five succeeding years from *préparatoire* (aged 8-9) through *course moyen 1*, *course moyen 2*, *fin d'étude* to *pré-apprentissage*. Each class followed its normal academic work, for example, the CM2 class was preparing for the selection examination for the 6<sup>e</sup> class in the *lycée*. Here there really was something to lose, the chance of following the *baccalauréat* route but there is no mention of parental objection; either objections were hushed up or the image of the *mi-temps* regime was already good enough to assuage parents' concerns. The claimed results at Noisy-le-Sec were satisfactory with better spirit and *équilibre* of the boys. In this experiment each *instituteur* took his own class for physical education, with guidance only from the *professeur d'éducation physique*. Lorrain, at the time *Directeur de l'École nationale supérieure de l'éducation physique et sportive*, said that the results *établit que l'Éducation Physique est bien un stimulant des études* (ibid, 23) [established that physical education is a great stimulus to study]. In his position he would be favourably inclined to that view.

The *cours complémentaire* at the Gambetta school in Vanves ran a *mi-temps* experiment from 1955 to 1959. This secondary age course was claimed to be even more successful than the school's primary age experiment. Modification were necessary because of specialist subject teaching; the experiment appears not to have been taken further.

By 1960 the ministry of education with the High Commissioner for Youth and Sport was encouraging the development of at least one *mi-temps* experiment in each *académie*. By 1962 there were 156 such primary age classes and 400 by 1968 with 170 at the secondary age. But by now *mi-temps* had been so diluted that 5 to 7 hours of physical education each week earned the title of *mi-temps*.

One modification, in which 7<sup>1/2</sup> hours of activity including playtime, called *horaires aménagés* [arranged timetable], was tried. This was one quarter of the total weekly timetable and was another attempt to find the most effective balance of physical and academic activity – the *rythme de vie* which concerns the French greatly (Dechavanne 1990, 363: USEP 1989, passim). An equal amount of time was given to history, geography and life sciences where guidance around suitable themes would be likely to awaken children's curiosity. This led in



1962-3 to the first experiment in the *Département du Nord* of *tiers-temps pédagogique* which differed from *horaires aménagés* very little. The timetable was divided into three unequal sections, 15 hours for French and number work, six hours for artistic and manual activities plus *disciplines d'éveil* [awakening (of interest) disciplines], that is history and geography, and six hours for physical activity. By 1967-68 there were 200 classes of *tiers-temps* in the *Département du Nord* and 500 in the next year (Majault 1973, 103-8).

The original Vanves experiment was inevitably expensive. The regular class teacher was supplemented by a nearly full-time PE specialist, there was supervised study time in lieu of homework, and the vehicle for the swimming periods, the mattresses, milk, vitamins and other incidentals would have been further additions to normal educational expenses.

### **Tours experiment**

The *académie de Poitiers* recommended that a *mi-temps* experiment should, from September 1954, take place in Tours where the necessary services were in agreement and the municipality was prepared to fund it. Primary education was then largely a *commune* financial responsibility, in 1992 it was still so to the tune of 54% (Mermet 1992, 108).

Mr H Constant, inspector for youth and sport for the *académie de Poitiers* claimed that despite the teaching by many pioneers in education for at least a century, including Arnold of Rugby, Dewey, Demolins and Bertier in recommending active education, it was force of habit and dislike of the extra work involved in making changes that maintained 'an out-dated education' [Cited in Encausse, 1957, 28].

In the Tours experiment the whole programme was taken by the *instituteur* of the class, only advised by the *professeur* of PE from the local teacher training college, and homework was not supervised. These changes made the programme less expensive but the school had no ground for sport or physical education so a bus had to be used every day. The youth hostel near the sports ground provided facilities for the siesta and snack, and also for the obligatory twice weekly shower.

The results obtained in the tests were ambiguous. Body measurements showed a gain in height of the experimental class slightly greater than that of the control class, slightly greater gains in weight and in chest measurement, and a loss in waist measurement; the only marked gain by the experimental class over the control class was in lung capacity, 0.75 litres compared with 0.41 litres. In the tests of competence there was little to show for the extra hours of physical activity. In the 50 metres sprint both classes improved by 0.5 of a second, in the high jump the experimental class improved by 13 centimetres compared with the control's 11 cms. In throwing the tennis ball the control class improved more than did the experimental class. Only in timed climbing 3 metres up the rope did the experimental class really improve, 9.7 seconds reduction compared with 5.1 seconds.

The results of this experiment in Tours appear to be very uncertain; the absence of a trained PE teacher and the lack of enthusiasm of the *instituteur* probably accounts for some of this despite support from the teacher training college. But as can happen when experimental results do not go the way the initiators wished there was a lack of clear comment on the weaknesses and a transfer of attention to the favourable points. In this case *'il est donc incontestable que du point de vue de la santé et du développement l'essai a été une réussite* (Encausse 1957, 41) [there is thus no doubt that from the point of view of health and development the experiment has been a success]. Absenteeism was much less in the experimental class and no boy had a serious illness but no comparative figures are given.

In the uncertain areas of morale and character Encausse thinks the Tours experience was particularly successful. In such a short time, he says, the boys could not be transformed but they were better in ways that are difficult to define. One had to see the boys in all the different situations of the year, to note the degree of *joie de vivre*, to see their desire to improve their performances for the team, for the teacher and for themselves. They showed responsibility, sharing the academic and physical work, an *épanouissement* of the withdrawn and the timid, and a stabilising of the unstable. The boys carried themselves better, looked straight at one and had an open manner:

*Ces impondérables que nous avons du mal à expliquer, qui sont pourtant des réalités et qui leur ont, en huit mois, apporté quelque chose de plus "que du savoir" et des muscles (ibid, 41).*

[These imponderables that we have difficulty in describing, which are however realities and which have, in 8 months, brought them something more than just knowledge and muscle].

Encausse is here finding the same difficulties that teachers meet repeatedly when they spend some considerable time with a class on a joint project, when a degree of identification grows between the teacher and the members of the class. Then the manner of the pupils to the teacher (and teacher to pupils) changes, eye contact becomes comfortable and an easy familiarity can develop. This change is real and is likely to continue when back in the classroom but how permanent and how general the change is in dealing with other adults is difficult to assess. Changes such as in self-confidence are very difficult to measure so that impressions often become the sole measures. The teacher thus has to be subjective but professional in his/her judgements.

Encausse (1957, 42-9) describes a Vanves type experiment in Montauban in 1954-56. It also had its individual differences from the original in attempting to reduce personnel demands further and in accommodating the Church's twice weekly catechism classes in the mornings. Assuming it was a church school this marks a considerable change in attitude to physical education. The familiar physical and personal developments were claimed. One result, attributed to the growth of camaraderie through playing team games, as well as increased respect for both their peers and the teacher, was a claimed reduction in cheating. This was

tested by a Mme Andréa Jadoulle, for her own research at the *laboratoire pédagogique d'Angleur*. One can imagine former Vichy activists being pleased to hear of such findings.

Some difficulties were encountered but parents reported highly favourably on the effect of the experience. 'More dynamic, extremely interested, shows enthusiasm, goes happily to school, loves school, is more courageous, loves playing with the group, understands more about comradeship, works better, is more sociable, talks well of his teacher' were expressions used by parents in the questionnaires which they returned.

The *instituteur* available in the second year was unadaptable, especially in the low status subjects art, singing and handicraft in which he had little interest. As Andrieu (1990, 96) says,

*L'instituteur d'une classe ... doit à la fois opérer une conversion personnelle dans son attitude devant l'enfant et posséder une certaine maîtrise des techniques à employer.*

[The teacher of a class ... must at one and the same time present a personal belief in his attitude in front of the children and be reasonably master of the techniques which he is using].

It could be suggested that what were known as the 'Vanves experiments' were attempts to put into practice, in elementary schools, scaled down versions of the New Education programmes followed by such schools as *l'École des Roches* and Abbotsholme. The attempt to give the children of the working classes something of the benefits enjoyed by those of the radical [eccentric?] well-to-do was accompanied by medical, academic and physical achievement assessments. But assessment of personality developments resulting from the experiences relied, apart from the Montauban test of cheating, on subjective judgements which are influenced by relationships, and by the value systems of the assessor and of the assessed. Again we should not decry the importance of relationships built up in such circumstances for only if a satisfactory relationship is achieved will the leader/teacher be likely to influence the group in the desired directions by consciously teaching and, less consciously, by being a role model.

The results of the *mi-temps* experiments recounted seem to have been thought positive, even where facilities or personnel were not of the desired quality.

Those responsible had both an emotional and a professional commitment to the success of the experiments and it would have been difficult to slough off years of such commitment. Nevertheless, their professionalism doubtless ensured that the soundest possible judgements were made as to the efficacy of the projects.

The additional work and expense of these experiments reflect the nation's commitment to improved education for all children. The cases outlined by Encausse suggest that economies resulted in less positive results though he and Fourestier remained enthusiastic for the *mi-temps* idea.

### *Classes de neige* [Snow classes]

The *classe de neige* which appeared in the second Vanves experiment in February 1953 and 1954 was a transplantation of the whole experimental class to the Alps for a month where the *demi-temps pédagogique et sportif* programme continued but with cross-country skiing replacing the physical education part of the regime.

The boys took the train from Paris on Saturday evening, 31 January 1953 en route for the hamlet of La Féclaz, 17 kilometres from Chambéry in the *Massif des Bauges* in the Savoy Alps at an altitude of 1400 metres. They had with them their school books and borrowed skis. Next day, Sunday, 1 February they arrived:

*Dans un pays de rêve avec des yeux tout grand ouverts, remplis d'émerveillement* (Fourestier 1953b, 4).

[In a dream country, their eyes big and full of wonderment].

In La Féclaz they occupied the chalet *l'Aurore* [The Dawn] belonging to the *Fédération des œuvres laïques de la Savoie* and which had, until then, only been used in the warmer months of the year for *colonies de vacances*. With the class was their regular *instituteur*, Mr Discours (who was to retire the next year) and Mr Barnier, the popular physical education teacher from the first experiment. The chalet needed only the furnishing of one room as a classroom, these items being lent by the *académie de la Savoie*:

*Le lendemain lundi, ils trouvaient une salle de classe nouvelle. ... sur le tableau noir, se lisaient les indications du devoir d'arithmétique qui leur avait été donné le samedi à Vanves* (ibid, 4).

[Next day, Monday, they found a new classroom. ... on the blackboard were the marks for the arithmetic exercise they had been given on Saturday in Vanves].

As far as possible the daily routine was as when the children were in Vanves:

|               |                         |               |                        |
|---------------|-------------------------|---------------|------------------------|
| 7.15 – 8.15   | get up, wash, breakfast | 16.00 – 17.30 | snack, siesta hour     |
| 8.15 – 11.45  | class work              | 17.30 – 19.15 | class work             |
| 11.45 – 13.00 | lunch                   | 19.15 – 21.00 | dinner, reading, games |
| 13.00 – 16.00 | skiing                  | 21.00 – 21.45 | toilet, bed            |

It is noticeable that the time devoted to class work was greater than when they were at home where it was 19 hours 30 minutes each week but now it was about five hours each day for, presumably, five days; an advantage shared by all residential educational establishments.

For the first two days the afternoons were occupied with easy walks in the snow to adjust to the altitude. From the third day they were on skis every working day. Easy tours on flat and moderate ground filled the first two weeks; each day they discovered afresh the beauties of the mountains. The boys quickly adapted to the sport and to communal living; the benefits of their previous activity programme showed, there were no serious mishaps.

[They enjoyed] *l'enchantement, les surprenants bienfaits de la vie communautaire. L'adaptation de ces enfants à la montagne étonna leurs éducateurs et aussi leur médecin, Mlle Margueritat* (ibid, 4).

[... the enchantment, the surprising benefits of the communal life. The ability of these children to adapt to the mountain life surprised all the adults, including the doctor, Mlle Margueritat].

*En quelques jours ils se révélaient de <<petits champions en herbe>>* (ibid, 4) [In a few days there showed some budding champions]. Soon they took the steepest slopes at full speed, the christiana turn and going uphill were quickly learned. The ski *moniteur*, when first asked to teach a class of boys, complete beginners, to ski in a month was *un peu dérouté* [a bit thrown] but he quickly changed his mind. On the evening before their departure they went up the steep climb to *le Signal du Sire* [the King's Beacon] showing no sign of fatigue, and the long direct descent did not frighten them unduly. This rapid progress in skiing is attributed by Encausse to the previous 18 months of enhanced physical activity improving their suppleness and robustness. There were only a few slightly twisted knees and ankles, putting the sufferers out of action for four or five days.

The boys adapted easily to the residential situation. Encausse suggests that the boys understood the need for a paternal discipline, and this, amid an atmosphere of good humour and happiness *a donné les meilleurs résultats dans le domaine intellectuel* [gave the best results in class work]. Some boys showed different tastes and behaviour from when at school; the teachers felt that they knew the boys much better than they had ever done before. These are common observations by teachers who take groups for residential experiences.

Since the boys were following a strict schedule from getting up in the morning it was thought wise to allow them the time from the end of the evening meal until bedtime *de se détendre, de méditer, de réfléchir, d'être, au moins pendant quelques instants, seul avec lui-même* (Encausse 1957, 52) [to relax, to meditate, to ponder, to be, at least for a few minutes, alone with themselves]. The regular teacher, Mr Discours declared that he had found sustained attention and concentration in class; the boys put as much effort into their class work as they put into the sessions on skis.

A number of visits were made to places of interest and the whole group was entertained by the *maire*, an experience which probably added to their self-confidence.

The return journey was effected during the daytime on 28 February so that the boys could enjoy the scenery. They arrived at 23.00 hours at the *Gare de Lyon* in Paris, to be greeted, according to Encausse, by representatives of the Director of Youth and Sports, of the Director of the Educational Services of the Department of the Seine, of the municipality of Vanves, and by the press. No mention of the parents! Fourestier, however, gives a more human picture of the welcome:

*La mine des enfants après un mois de ce régime était vraiment extraordinaire. Les parents ont été enthousiasmés de retrouver leurs enfants transformés, pleins de vitalité, aux joues magnifiquement brunies par le soleil de neiges. Ils avaient vu partir des garçonnets, ils retrouvaient des adolescents* (Fourestier 1953b, 5).

[The appearance of the children after a month of this regime was really extraordinary. The parents were absolutely delighted to find their children transformed, full of vitality, their cheeks magnificently tanned by the sun and the snow. They had seen little boys depart but had received back adolescents].

It would seem, from the accounts by Fourestier and by Encausse, that the boys did not suffer in their academic progress, and they benefited physically and socially from the month together.

### **Social development**

Fourestier (1953b, 4-5), under the sub-heading *Sur le plan éducatif* (as opposed to *le plan pédagogique*), points out that these boys aged 12-13 were beginning to have a greater awareness of the importance of social relationships and that they had, for a month, the experience of living in a community small enough for them to be able to comprehend it as a whole. Small hostile groups broke up and the isolates were absorbed by the fraternal community. It had become a *bloc sans fissure*, cemented by the common experience of studying and playing together, creating an enthusiasm without reservation; but especially, the over-riding element was happiness. He goes on: *Jamais une telle expérience n'avait été tentée dans le cadre de l'enseignement primaire laïque en France* (ibid, 5) [Such an experiment had never been attempted in state primary education before]. *Lycées* had taken pupils on mountain expeditions during the holidays but there is no record of elementary schools doing so in term time.

### **Features of colonies and classes de neige**

Summer *colonies de vacances* had been the nearest thing to *classes de neige* for children of whatever age coming from elementary schools. Though some of the physiological and *éducatif* effects of *colonies* were doubtless similar to those of the Vanves *classe de neige*, they were seldom systematically noted, though *colonies* did have a distinctly therapeutic element in their *raison d'être* from the earliest days but the educational [*pédagogique*] element was outside the *colonies'* remit. The *classe de neige* had some properties of a *colonie* but had the additional pedagogical elements of regular class work in basic subjects and it was a complete class with its usual teacher. The Scouts, *Les Francas*, and other movements such as CEMEA were doubtless interested in this experiment for here was a conjunction of the social/residential and physical activity factors in which they were experienced plus monitoring of medical and formal education, all brought together for a month.

### **The roots of *mi-temps* and the *classes de neige***

The work of Latarjet, Zay, Lagrange and Bertier, then Borotra and other Vichy supporters, then Monod and others will have had some influence on thinking, as must David, when this experiment was being planned, for they were all contemporaneous to some extent. One wonders whether Fourestier was the initiator or just one of those who showed deep interest and had the necessary background in medicine plus an interest in physical education. Had he trained in medicine where PE was a subject of research, such as at Bordeaux II or Paris-Lacretelle? Maurice David was now inspector-general for public education and director of

primary teaching services for the *département* of the Seine in which Vanves lay. He had followed Latarjet's *classe de santé* with his own experiment in 1936 (p 33 above). Other supporters must have been working in education or in youth and sports during the war and been affected by the Vichy enthusiasm for physical activity. Local councillors would have been aware of the poor condition of young French men when they were called up in 1939-40, and the early planners would have had in mind the deprivations suffered recently by the children during, and for a time after, the Occupation. The project was in fact building on related experiments and experiences of the previous twenty or more years, especially those of Latarjet and of David, the *classe de neige* had its forerunner in the Paris IREP winter sports experience and the work by Latarjet for Henry Paté from 1928 (p 30 above).

Once the one year pilot experiment of 1950-51 had apparently shown that the boys' academic education had not suffered, anxieties of parents on that point would be largely assuaged. But whoever was most effective in getting the Vanves experiment accepted it seems that the *classes de neige* were associated most strongly with the name of Fourestier:

*C'est en effet en 1953, à l'initiative du docteur Fourestier, que les élèves de l'école Gambetta de Vanves partent pour la première classe <<ailleurs>>* (Pierre 1979, 5).

[It was, in effect, in 1953, on the initiative of Dr Fourestier, that the pupils of the *école Gambetta* in Vanves left for the first residential school visit].

Fourestier and his supporters, like Longland, who started White Hall Open Country Pursuits Centre in 1950, were rather pushing at open doors at that time, for discussion about education was still fairly fluid. The Langevin-Wallon supporters were pressing the ideas of New Education, that is, an active, child centred, less encyclopaedic curriculum, and for comprehensive schools.

Much of French opinion was open to trying something different from the pre-war arrangements, particularly in breaking down the gulf between the working class and their chances of a secondary education, and to giving children experiences that had previously been the prerogative of the well-to-do.

Zay had provided a blue-print which did not have time to be fully tested. But the ideas thrashed out in clandestine groups, in the *Résistance*, in North Africa, and in England among the Free French, especially the more politically left inclined ideas of equality of opportunity for all, were developments along Zay's lines.

There may not have been much need for persuasion, for experimental ideas were clearly welcome, though Monod's difficulties must not be forgotten. The loosening of the grip of tradition on education may have meant that the parents of elementary school children of twelve years and over were more open to being persuaded to allow their children to be experimented upon. They had comparatively little to lose, their children had no access to the *baccalauréat* under the existing arrangements having failed to move into 6<sup>e</sup> at age eleven. For

them there was the *CEP* (*Certificat d'études primaires*) [Primary Leaving Certificate] which was important for those hoping, for example, to obtain a civil service position such as that of a postman.

The success of the first year justified parents' confidence in experimenters such as Fourestier when they saw how their children so obviously blossomed. *S'épanouir*, to blossom or to develop, is still a popular concept among *éducateurs* just as 'character development' was then the popular phrase in England. There was a moralistic overtone in the English expression about character development while 'leisure' was looked upon with suspicion as implying idleness; but the French saw, and see, leisure as an opportunity to develop the self. From the *Front populaire* epoch the State's obligation is seen to be to encourage provision of time and facilities for 'blossoming' through leisure but *oisiveté* [idleness] is deplored.

### **Personal development and education**

Some individuals in educational administration such as David, Monod, Fourestier and others clearly saw the educational service as an agent helping towards children's personal development (*épanouissement*) in addition to its traditional instructional role. To some extent this was beginning to overlap with the work being done by *Les Francas*, the *Union française des œuvres laïques d'éducation physique (UFOLEP)* and the *Union sportive de l'enseignement du premier degré (USEP)* as well as other agencies such as the Scouts. Thinking at upper levels in education was accepting that schools should be more than just instructional agencies. No doubt some could see that an age of leisure was coming and wanted the schools to be beneficent influences in this; there had been empty minds needing 'furnishing' in 1936.

### **Implications of the Vanves experiments**

The original Vanves *mi-temps* experiment only had some effect on thinking about the possibility of reducing time for academic work and allowing more physical activity in the weekly programme. Such a proposed change met resistance from many teachers and parents fearful for the academic standard of French education, especially in secondary schools, despite its declared initial success at Vanves. Although the number of long-term elementary *mi-temps* classes increased over the next decade to about 400 this was a tiny percentage of the total classes in France where there were 51 900 primary schools in 1972–73 (Halls 1976, 523). Logistically, if *demi-temps pédagogique et sportif* was to be generalised throughout France, the *sportif* part would need thousands more trained PE personnel and more playing fields and gymnasia. The take-up, unless generously supported with finance, facilities, personnel and administration was inevitably going to be limited, regardless of parents' and teachers' attitudes.

However, the *classe de neige* was different. It was for a limited duration, the finance needed was defined, the commitments of time and work for the teachers were considerable but not unreasonable and the activity had an attraction, even a glamour, for adults and for children.



And it did not have to be limited to schools involved in the long-term *mi-temps* work. Furthermore, it stemmed from teacher, school or *collectivité* initiative, not from an anonymous entity in the ministry of education. Society had now reached a stage of prosperity, and an attitude of mind that considered pupils from the *école élémentaire* to be worthy of subsidy and the chance to 'blossom' by being sent on excursions involving what had been a *sport d'élite*. The financial threshold for indulging in former activities of the well-to-do had reached the young ordinary citizen; they were being allowed time in large chunks and considerable funds.

### **Growth in numbers of classes de neige**

The idea was so attractive that the 32 children of 1953 became 750 in 1954, 1 500 in 1955 and in 1956 four thousand *petits Parisiens* followed the *demi-temps pédagogique et sportif* regime for a month amid the snow (Encausse 1957, 56). Several other *départements* were taking up the idea too so the numbers grew rapidly. Encausse also reports that he knew of a case in 1956 when 80 pupils from a private secondary school in Paris spent four weeks of *mi-temps* in the Alps.

In 1954 Saint-Ouen, a suburb to the north of Paris, sent one class to the snow but in 1955 they sent twelve classes, 6 of boys with their regular *instituteurs* and 6 of girls, three with their regular *institutrices*, the other three women had withdrawn *des motifs sérieux de santé* [for serious health reasons]. All twelve classes were in *fin d'études* [last year of school] and constituted 90% of the children of Saint-Ouen of that age. The boys (187 of them) went from 22 January to 20 February and 159 girls from 27 February to 26 March. Each group of six classes had a PE teacher and a nurse or assistant nurse with it (Bouquet 1955). This was only part of the exodus of 1434 children of Paris who enjoyed *classes de neige* that winter. Bouquet says the experiment was a success in every way – but it depended on the teachers taking on the necessary preparatory work then being away for a month, difficult for some; and being responsible for 24 hours of every day.

The presence of a PE teacher with each group of six classes is not explained. He or she, even if a skier, certainly could not teach skiing to all six classes, there must have been locally hired instructors for that; perhaps it was the apparent affinity of skiing to PE or it was thought such a trained person could assess the state of fatigue or otherwise of the children or again, perhaps PE teachers were the most easily spared from their regular duties.

### **A girls' classe de neige**

Mlle Maes, an *institutrice* in Créteil, at that time in the *académie* of Paris, accompanied her class of 28 girls (ages not given) for a month of *classe de neige* (Maes 1955, 22). The girls did not settle as quickly as had the Gambetta boys; they had not experienced *mi-temps* at home! The results of the first week were bad. The girls were excited and there was a general reduction in attention; there was a near refusal to work by some girls who found the similarity to a *colonie de vacances* so close that they only did school work very grudgingly.

By the second week however the output of work was better than that normally produced. Attention was perfect throughout the morning and evening sessions and some of the girls surprised themselves by the standard of their work even though working conditions were not very satisfactory – the class had to work in the refectory.

Mlle Maes was struck by the way the girls adapted. For some it was the first time away from their parents but none showed signs of home-sickness though some recreated an object of affection. For one the centre's cat substituted for her pet at home, and another transferred her love for her five year old brother to the son of the director of the centre. Others showed changes of personality when released from the responsibilities of caring for younger siblings, or the pressures of over-bearing parents. There were signs of autonomy, of individuality and of ambition. In the skiing she was surprised at the way the girls, not treating it as just a recreation, became competitive. Only one case, *trop gâtée chez elle* [too spoilt at home] did not mix socially with the others, while one was lazy and simulated illness when it was time for skiing. It seems they were a normal group of girls.

Under the heading of *La santé morale* Mlle Maes said that the class was now living in better conditions than when at home. Instead of rooms with restricted light or outlooks they had marvellous views of the mountains; to replace their illustrated magazines she had brought for each girl a book from the class library! Mlle Maes finishes her article with:

*J'ai pu remarquer que les mots vulgaires souvent entendus aux récréations ou à la cantine de l'école avaient disparu de leur langage* (ibid, 22).

[I noticed that they had stopped using swear words which normally were often heard during breaks or in the school canteen].

The increase in the number of *classes de neige* did not imply a corresponding increase in *demi-temps* classes when at home; most classes experienced that regime only during the time they were in the mountains. Encausse points out that the ski accident rate among those following the *mi-temps* programme at home was 0.8% but among the others it was 1.8%, an excellent illustration of the need for getting fit before skiing.

### **Popularity of *classes de neige***

*Classes de neige* struck a chord with schools and administrators so that subventions became the norm. No early class from public schools paid the full cost of their sojourns – which for several years were all of one month's duration.

The Paris *classes de neige* were supported financially by the *Conseil général de la Seine* and the *Conseil municipal de Paris*, while other municipalities also supported their classes with subventions. The *Direction générale de la jeunesse et des sports* made annual grants. The cost of a child in a *classe de neige* was about 700 francs per day to which had to be added the cost of the journey and the expenses of the adults with the party *au moins trois pour 35 gosses* (Encausse 1957, 56) [at least three for 35 youngsters]. In addition the cost of boots, anorak, ski-pants, etc. for each child was about 10 000 francs, plus the cost of skis and sticks. The amount asked of the parents was a modest 200 francs per day, about the amount

they would save through not feeding their child at home. [Costs given in francs of the day can only indicate the proportions of the costs of some facets of the enterprise].

### Finance and the future

Fourestier looked with an enthusiast's eye to the future and the financial implications of *classes de neige* (ibid, 55-9). He argued that to reduce dependence on government and local authority grant and to increase the possibility of a *classe de neige* for every child:

1. Parents should pay according to their means as was the common practice for *colonies de vacances*
2. *Classes de neige* were part of the equalising of opportunities for all young French citizens so state and local grants should be available
3. Since *classes de neige* are a socio-educational institution encouraging the blossoming of each child so French railways (SNCF) should offer them free or cut-rate fares
4. A *classe de neige* gives each child a calculable credit balance of health thus saving on illness treatment costs so *Sécurité sociale* should contribute to the expenses
5. If hundreds of thousands of children visit the mountains each winter for *classes de neige* and came back again when adult there would be a transformation in these often economically backward areas so the *Conseil généraux* and the *syndicats d'initiatives* [Tourist Offices] of the reception areas should contribute
6. Buildings being used as sanatoria for those suffering from tuberculosis would be freed because the new vaccines were defeating the disease; they could then accommodate French and international *classes de neige* and *colonies de vacances*.

Thus Fourestier saw the future in what some people must have thought was a rosy, far-fetched day-dream, yet much of what he foresaw came about. Small mountain villages have become quite large towns and new winter sports centres have been created in virgin areas. By 1975 there were 500 000 licensed skiers in France with, it is estimated, several times that number unlicensed (Bozouls et al 1981, 12). Parker & Meldrum (1973, 143) estimate the number would be some two million by 1980 compared with a comparatively steady number of about 50 000 before the war. Undoubtedly the *classes de neige* considerably influenced this increase but the growth of free time and disposable money were the enabling factors coupled with changes of attitudes in society.

### Variations of *classes de neige*

A development in 1956 in Nancy was *jeudis de neige* [snow Thursdays]. As Nancy is about 90 kilometres from the Vosges mountains it was possible for schools to arrange Thursday day visits while snow cover lasted. Improved roads have now considerably extended the areas which are within reach of a day's skiing. Apart from such day trips, tens of thousands of children are now taken skiing each year – not for four weeks but for longer than is the norm for school visits in England (ch 9 below).

There was encouragement of occupational groups to go skiing, Simca, Renault and others were, by 1957, sending their apprentices to ski schools; and the medical profession

approved the activity. In the winter of 1956-57 the ministries of education, and of youth and sport, gave more than 2000 *bourses de neige* [snow bursaries] to workers aged 18 to 25 for performance in sport, in further education, in youth work, and to university students (Encausse 1957, 54). All this reflected the growth of affluence and influenced the spread of skiing in French society.

The popularity of skiing, once it had lost its image of being only for the well-to-do, is understandable. Few people in the writer's experience do not like the activity once having tried it, and few can be impervious to the surrounding beauty. As a boy from the *école Gambetta* wrote:

*Maman, ... c'est plus beau que tout ce que je pourrais te dire, c'est plus beau qu'un conte de fées* (Fourestier 1953b, 5).

[Mummy, ... it's more beautiful than I can possibly tell you, it's more beautiful than a fairy story].

### Physiological effects

Encausse (1957, 55) quoting Fourestier, says that '*ce mois de Savoie a été plus efficace que six mois d'éducation physique à Paris* [that month in Savoy was more effective than six months of physical education in Paris, (that is, Vanves)]. This is the positive credit balance of health that the boys brought back with them. Malesset (1985) in connection with the development of UCPA (ch 10 below) found that hard-headed financiers and actuarial specialists of insurance companies agreed with the principle.

The ski month temporarily restrained weight increase since the boys were exerting themselves in learning a new skill at high altitude in cold air; they burned up calories rapidly and the enhanced metabolic rate would build up an appetite which parents would have difficulty in satisfying. On the day of arrival the consumption of bread by the boys was 18kg but six days later it had risen to 27kg and stayed at that level to the end of the month. Weight gain caught up within the month after return. (See appendix 1). Encausse attributed much of the height gain to the ultra-violet rays in the mountain air:

*Après chacun des deux séjours en haute altitude (au retour des <<classes de neige>>), on note un accroissement brusque de la taille (action certaine des radiations ultraviolettes)* (ibid, 16).

[After each of the two periods at high altitude (on returning from the snow classes) there was a sharp increase in height (certainly the result of the ultra-violet rays)].

Appendix 1 suggests that the first *classe de neige* had a more marked effect on the boys than did any other single month, perhaps by the third year they were so fit that even another month of skiing added little further fitness. The graph of chest perimeters shows that some gains through regular exercise are quickly reversible; there were distinct losses during the summer holidays when activities did not have to be experienced. Even the control class showed this effect – they missed whatever PE their school gave them in term time and they did not even have to walk to school.

The class teacher, Mr Discours, in his final year before retiring, said that the boys had never been so calm, attentive and keen to work; *la productivité scolaire, même des paresseux les plus notoires, était à multiplier par deux*. (Anon [Fourestier?] 1955, 23) [the academic productivity, even of the most notoriously lazy, was doubled].

### Academic results

The results of the three years of experiment are ambiguous. Of the experimental class 13 were entered for the *Certificat d'études primaires (CEP)* of whom 11 were successful, a claimed success rate of 84% [but in fact a 34% success rate when taking the whole class into account]. In the control class 32 of 32 were entered and 25 were successful, a real success rate of 78% (Encausse 1957, 24). Claiming an 84% success rate from a selected sample can deceive people into thinking that the experimental class did better than the control class when the reverse was true. How many parents were misled by this? How many officials? The hundreds of *mi-temps* classes should have enabled useful analysis to be done but Encausse seemed to ignore apparent experimental weaknesses. This is a reminder of the doubtful Latarjet results of the 1930s (p 30-2 above).

The Vanves experiment with its snow classes was such a well known essay that Paul Reynaud, a former prime minister, (*fervent culturiste lui-même*) [keen physical culturist himself] (Anon 1955, 65) in December 1954 wrote to *Recteur Jean Sarrailh* advocating more sleep, less homework and less overload (*surmenage*) for pupils. The result was that homework was forbidden in the *Département de l'Eure* for nearly four years. It became normal, for the time being, in other *départements* to set homework only on Wednesdays and Saturdays giving the children the whole of each following day in which to do it. But physical educationists were pessimistic about the long term outcome considering the attitudes of most teachers and parents about the importance of examinations for future life chances.

Jean Paulhac (*l'Éducation physique*, no 1, 1955, cited in Encausse) says:

*[Les parents] n'envoient leurs enfants au lycée qu'en vue de la situation future .... Toute action éducative qui n'a pas pour but l'examen les effraie, ils taxent de perte de temps. Ainsi sont jugés le chant, le dessin, la gymnastique, l'éducation physique et morale. La valeur d'un professeur est proportionnelle au nombre de devoirs dont il accable ses élèves* (Encausse 1957, 66).

[(Parents) only send their children to the *lycée* with a view to the future .... All school activity which is not directed at examinations frightens them, they consider it a waste of time. Singing, art, gymnastics, and physical and moral education are judged alike. The effectiveness of a teacher is judged by the amount of homework he heaps on his pupils].

Paulhac is here talking about the secondary school situation where the *baccalauréat* is so important but the attitude infects primary schools too since progress to the next class in the following year depends on achieving a satisfactory standard, that is, there is assessment every year from the age of six.

This gives some idea of the obstacles that ingrained social norms and the structure of the educational system put in the way of anyone hoping to reform French education. In 1953

well under 20% of the children of agricultural and factory workers went on to secondary education but nearly 90% of the children of the liberal profession and higher administrative parents did so. By 1962, reflecting growing affluence, changes of attitude in society, and progressive restructuring of the education system, those figures had risen to 40% and about 93% respectively (Crémieux-Brilhac 1965, 37). In 1950 only 4.8% in the appropriate age bracket gained the *baccalauréat* (Halls 1976, 129). but 20% in 1970 and 45% in 1992 (Mermet 1992, 108).

### *Classes de neige and instituteurs*

Schools, individual teachers, or *collectivités*, could take the initiative in raising money themselves for a one month *classe de neige* by, for example, *vente de gâteaux* [sale of cakes, the equivalent of jumble-sales and fêtes in English schools] and there was, assuming certain rules were observed, the certainty of official subsidy. The commitment was also for only a limited time and there was a virtual certainty that the class and teacher would enjoy themselves unless the latter had been dragooned into it, as sometimes happened later.

The popularity of *classes de neige* increased yearly. The extent of the increase may be gauged from the words of Joseph Lanet, *Secrétaire d'état à l'enseignement technique, à la jeunesse et aux sports* in a broadcast on 22 January 1955 in a *Magazine de l'Université* radio programme (Anon 1955, 22). He pointed out that the *classes de neige* were part of a collection of experiments aimed at developing children intellectually, aesthetically and physically; a reference to the New Education work of Monod and others. In 1953-1954 his department had given one million francs to support 14 snow classes; for 1954-1955 the department was to increase this support to six million francs for 48 classes. The Paris Municipal Council and the General Council of the Seine were also going to increase their support in similar proportion *les classes de neige représentent bien une véritable réforme ... de notre enseignement* [the snow classes represent a real reform ... of our teaching]. In the same radio broadcast a Dr Royer de Véricourt, a *Conseiller municipal de Paris*, and *Conseiller général de la Seine* said that the two councils had already voted several million francs to support the classes, and the latter council had made substantial subventions available to *communes* wishing to support their snow classes. Parental contributions became progressively easier, for the purchasing power of the average French worker went up by 40% from 1949 to 1954, and more than trebled between 1949 and 1976 (Prost 1979, 86).

Already the *classes de neige* were being seen as separate from the *mi-temps* programmes, just as Verel (1955a, 19) was to do (p 141 below). Mr Lanet finished the broadcast by saying that the snow classes were part of the struggle against *le surmenage scolaire* [the overload on pupils] that everybody was talking about. Since the argument about overload had already been going on for most of a century and still is (Marshall 1998, 24), it would seem that neither snow classes nor *mi-temps* experiment(s) have been effective in eliminating it; the overload, of course, relates to the importance of examinations. In any case, snow

classes alone could make little difference to a class's programme outside the actual time of the visit.

There were further attempts to reduce overload. An *arrêté* of 23 November 1956 ordered that homework should be reduced – despite the order of December 1954, that virtually none should be set. Exercises on what had been learned in class should not be done at home. Testing should be in the classroom and corrections were to be done immediately afterwards, the teacher then taking in the books to check them himself.

How much notice was taken of the *arrêté* of 23 November 1956 is uncertain but it seems that ministry orders were not always obeyed, for, despite the growth in popularity of physical activity in official quarters, many schools gave no physical education whatsoever to their pupils. Verel (1955a, 19) says about physical activity in schools that *cet enseignement est pratiquement inexistant, sinon supprimé purement et simplement* [this teaching is virtually non-existent, or purely and simply cancelled]. He then goes on to suggest that even those teachers with neither competence nor interest in physical activities should be able to give their classes a daily fifteen minutes of activity with little detriment to other subjects. In a further article *l'inspecteur* Verel (1955b) outlines the sort of activities that a teacher without training in the subject could offer to the class; He includes activities which offer the means of easily assessing improvement, a timed sprint of 40 to 60 metres, high jump, climbing for style up a rope to three metres, and throwing a ball at a target. Unfortunately, since it seems that schools excused themselves from offering PE because, among other excuses, they had no apparatus, it is unlikely that they would find a safely fixed rope that could be climbed by a succession of children, nor the other necessary apparatus such as a stop-watch and jumping-stand. Furthermore, the organisation of these items of apparatus, if they existed, for 15 minute periods would be disproportionately time wasting, so a reluctant *instituteur*, without any interest or encouragement from the head of school, would be unlikely to bother himself.

Verel (1955c) cites the results of an experiment in a school where the daily fifteen minutes was carried through for six months but the *professeur* of PE of the local *école normale*, the director of the *Centre régional d'éducation physique et sportif* (CREPS) and Verel himself all looked in now and then so the *instituteur* could not give up even had he so wished; and the Hawthorne effect, as with the Latarjet and the Vanves experiments, would be operating on the *instituteur*, the head teacher and the class. Verel claims improved figures for chest expansion, reduced waist measurement, better posture, improved morale and social behaviour, self-control and attitude in class, all familiar claims. He mentions (1955a) that an *arrêté* dated 9 November 1954 from the minister of education had suggested he was thinking of allowing the results in the *Brevet sportif scolaire* to be credited towards a pupil's CEP (Primary school leaving certificate) *pour faire de l'EP une matière d'enseignement un peu plus <<payante>>* [to make the teaching of PE a little more worthwhile], even if teachers' and parents' misgivings remained. Lagrange's *Brevet sportif populaire*, and Borotra's *Brevet sportif national* was now the *Brevet sportif scolaire*!

Verel talks of the Vanves *expérience* and the *classes de neige* as two separate experiments: *ces deux expériences spectaculaires et tout particulièrement l'excellente initiative des <<classes de neige>>* (1955a, 19) [these two spectacular experiments, and especially the excellent initiative of the snow classes].

This was in 1955 when the second Vanves experiment was barely completed, and Verel, as an *Inspecteur de l'enseignement primaire*, could hardly have been unaware that Fourestier and others thought of the snow classes as being an integral part of the Vanves research. Yet Fourestier himself waxes most enthusiastic about the *classes de neige* part of the whole. Verel goes on to suggest that, while the good results of the Vanves experiment(s) were irrefutable, with their resource demands and the current unwillingness of *instituteurs* to teach PE, he could not see how replacing the nominal two to three hours of PE per week with 12 hours was realistic, which is why he proposed the daily quarter of an hour. One can hardly disagree with his diagnosis.

### Secondary school skiing

So far *classes de neige* and *mi-temps* had been confined to the elementary schools which took most French children from the obligatory age of entry at six to the leaving age of fourteen. Secondary schools, where there is specialist teaching, experience problems if a teacher is away with a class even for one day. Increasingly in the 1960s education was being reorganised into primary to age eleven, and secondary from that age so that more and more children over the age of eleven were likely to be cut off from *classes de neige*. An experiment was organised, from the ministry, to see if secondary school snow classes were a viable proposition but no further evidence was found of experimentation being extended beyond the *cours complémentaire* at *l'école Gambetta* in Vanves (p126 above) and cases 1 and 2 below. Perhaps the pilot years showed too little benefit for the effort involved so the experiments were terminated. Experimentation began again in 1992 (ch 9 below).

**Case 1.** Fornas (1963) organised snow classes simultaneously for four vocational secondary schools in neighbouring towns for *l'administration centrale*. Fornas was a teacher in one of the four schools, the *École professionnelle de l'atelier de construction* in Roanne [Vocational School of Building]. This, in 1959, was the first occasion that *écoles professionnelles* took part in snow classes. Fornas considers the snow classes to be a form of *étude du milieu* [study of the environment] and to be:

*Une des formes les plus complètes de l'enseignement actif; elle n'est plus officiellement pratiquée aujourd'hui, si ce n'est sous la forme spéciale de la sortie naturaliste* (Fornas 1963, 50).

[One of the most complete forms of the active method of teaching, it is today no longer officially practised unless it is as a nature study excursion].

The active methods of teaching advocated by the New Education movement and so well supported after the war in France were by now no longer so strongly advocated officially.



Subject teachers had set class work for the boys to do in the *mi-temps pédagogique* time, it could be supervised but not marked by the staff accompanying them.

Fornas repeats the already familiar list of benefits of such a course through living together – and performing the domestic chores. The teachers saw new sides of their pupils, including the bad influence of one group which they would not otherwise have uncovered.

He points out that skiing is an exhilarating sport but it is not within everybody's budget. However, the two week experience was a unique and subsidised opportunity for these young people to taste its joys. Many of them returned home enthusiastic for a sport which they had just discovered; perhaps in later years they would try it again in their own time as Fourestier prophesied. Coupled with the learning of skiing and its physical and social benefits Fornas outlines the study of the environment which was carried out by the boys as part of a geography project, by interviewing local inhabitants, visiting local industries, meeting local personages and seeing outstanding scenery and vernacular architecture. Finally there was the development of language through the residential experience with staff and fellow pupils, and the writing up of log books. A further influence [*éducatif?*] was brought to bear on the boys; four evenings in the two weeks were given over to showing what were considered to be films worth seeing, followed by discussion to encourage the boys' critical attitude towards films.

Fornas thought the *mi-temps pédagogique et sportif* lasting for two weeks was preferable to it being full-time skiing for only one week. It obviated extreme bodily fatigue and maintained the class work in the boys' minds. So already the four week *classes de neige* had, for these sixteen year olds, been eroded to two weeks. The staff for the four classes, consisted of Fornas and three other *professeurs*, four physical education specialists and four local ski instructors. There was therefore the expense of a trebling of the normal staffing and there would be ad hoc arrangements in the schools of origin to cover for the missing staff. (See appendix 2 para 2, last sentence).

Everybody got to know each other better, teachers and pupils rivalled each other in their progress in skiing and falling: *La vie en commune est une école de solidarité et aussi d'une certaine discipline ... qui ne pèse pas* (ibid, 51). [The life together is a unifying experience that also imposes its own discipline ... which does not weigh heavily]. This supports the view that ODP are socially educative especially in a residential situation.

Fornas saw the *classes de neige* as an introduction to a worthwhile leisure activity. He says that skiing is a demanding sport requiring *virilité* [manliness] and quickness of thinking and of reflexes. In fact skiing is a social sport in which there is little difference between the abilities of boys and girls. Boys may be more daring though not necessarily better skiers. Certainly there is the need to be 'physically literate' in mind and body.

Fornas considers that the very situation of teachers and pupils living in community together and involved in a common new activity encourages active teaching and learning.

**Case 2.** In the 60s the Technical secondary school of Chambéry organised a week of skiing for pupils of *Quatrième* and *Troisième* (Ages 13+ to 15+) (Lemasurier 1965, 73).

Complete classes of this school went, full boarders, weekly-boarders and day pupils. Staffing was by *surveillants* and the physical education teachers; they followed the *mi-temps pédagogique et sportif* regime. Life in a community of their class-mates was thus experienced for the first time by the day pupils. Half time academic work prevented any feeling that this was an extra holiday.

Teachers and parents were pleased with the improvements in behaviour of the 420 pupils who had, up to the time of Lemasurier's writing, experienced the *séjours de neige*. Their knowledge of, and esteem for each other, their sense of altruism and their discipline all improved. There seems to have been general agreement on the beneficial effect of all sojourns of this kind:

*Leur but est de développer l'esprit d'équipe, l'initiative, le dévouement à une œuvre collective. Nous nous proposons également d'amener nos élèves à mieux se connaître entre eux et à mieux connaître leurs éducateurs* (ibid, 73).

[Their aim is to develop group spirit, initiative, and commitment to a common task. We intend also that our pupils should come to know each other better as well as to know the responsible adults better].

Lemasurier here uses the word *éducateur* which suggests he sees the *surveillants* and PE staff as socio-educators for that week. These secondary school experiences of snow classes seem to suggest that PE teachers were indeed involved in ODP – but who else would be spared? These Chambéry ski classes also suggest that nearness of facilities makes participation more likely, La Féclaz, the site of the first *classe de neige* is only about 17 kilometres away.

The use of New Education methods in this school seems not to have been a ministry experiment but followed a decision by the head and his staff to pursue them throughout the school year. Responsibility for their own progress was partly laid on the pupils, they were treated as having their own feelings and opinions, they were given freedom within well understood boundaries and they apparently responded with more civilised behaviour than was normal in a school. For example:

*A l'arrivée du professeur dans la classe, l'atmosphère ressemble à celle d'un théâtre au moment du lever de rideau, les murmures s'apaisent d'eux-mêmes* (ibid, 75).

[On the arrival of the teacher in the classroom, the atmosphere resembles that of a theatre at the moment the curtain rises, the murmuring dies away of its own accord].

Skiing, with the residential experience, reinforced the civilising effect of treating the pupils as responsible beings. Lemasurier was pleased with pupils' progress though he acknowledged that in a large school with *internes*, *demi-pensionnaires* and *externes* there were some difficulties with public opinion and some parents who did not understand what the school was trying to do. There were pupils too who would have preferred a more directive discipline instead of having to work out their behaviour for themselves. This suggests that old values persist and parents find difficulty in accepting changes.

The heritage of Reddie and Bertier is evident in methods used in these *classes nouvelles*. At least in some schools the activity ways of working were being assimilated in the 60s into French education and were increasingly known as *éducation moderne*, but PE and sport, as opposed to outdoor pursuits such as skiing and study of the environment, were still resisted by many schools as being unnecessary and of low status. PE teachers and *surveillants* accompanied the above classes; were they the ones who would be least missed in school?

### Extension of the idea of *classes de neige*

The number of snow classes had grown so much by 1963 that, despite an increase in total financial support, selection had to be imposed. Priority went firstly to classes already functioning when at home under the *mi-temps* regime, secondly, where the *collectivité locale* had gathered enough money to leave only a small amount to be paid by the parents, and thirdly, if the experience would be beyond their normal expectations. State help would not be available for a well endowed community though permission to run a *classe de neige* would not therefore be refused.

An *arrêté* of 1 August 1957 created some *écoles et classes expérimentales* which were related to *éducation nouvelle*; and all *classes de neige* were to be counted as experimental classes; in March 1958 the title was extended to *classes de mer et de campagne* [sea and country classes] which had arisen as acceptable mutations of *classes de neige*, but illicit variations on *classes de neige* began to creep in. By 1961 some schools were, for example, making up a group from different classes which would render both teaching and follow-up, impossible; the *académie* would not then sanction the visit. On March 21, 1961 Maurice Herzog, High Commissioner for Youth and Sport decentralised the administration arrangements for *mi-temps*, *classes de neige*, *jeudis de neige* et *cætera* to the local authorities and the schools (Pierre 1979, 130). Visiting classes were subject to inspection by the local inspectors.

By the mid-sixties financial assistance from the state was reduced to between 1600 and 2000 francs for a class of 30 primary school children for 30 days, that is, about two (heavy, new) francs per pupil per day which could be considered as a sign of approval and some incentive to organise such a class. The remainder of the cost was laid on the parents, the school, the *commune* and the *département*. The franc *lourd* [heavy], equal to 100 old francs, became legal tender on 1st January 1960 so two francs, while not equal, because of successive devaluations, to the original subventions of the early 1950s was of some

assistance. This sum was available only if the project had been approved by the *recteurs* of both the home and the receiving *académies* and if all other rules had been complied with.

A ministerial circular of 27 November 1964 limited aid for *classes de neige* more narrowly than before. Pupils were to be in *cours moyen* 1 or 2 [aged nine to eleven], or *fin d'études* [age 13-14], the last now disappearing through re-organisation. But snow classes of any other age, including secondary schools, were not prohibited. The initiator was still to be the teacher, the school or the local *collectivité*.

*Classes de neige* were now to be classed with *classes vertes, de mer, and de montagne* as *classes transplantées* and not seen as *Jeunesse et sports* responsibilities. The circular of 25 November 1966 pointed out that following recent reorganisation the *Secrétariat à la jeunesse et aux sports* had been replaced by a new *Ministère de la jeunesse et des sports*. Subventions for *classes de neige* would now be granted by the *Ministère de l'éducation nationale*. These changes demonstrate again the ambiguous position of physical activities.

The circular of 14 November 1968 modified the rules about the whole class being there with their habitual teacher. Individual pupils could be excused by the head teacher, and the regular teacher could be replaced by permission of the *inspecteur d'académie afin d'éviter qu'une classe tout entière soit privée du séjour à la neige* (Pierre 1979, 142) [to avoid a whole class being deprived of its visit to the snow]. Schools were finding Muslim parents unwilling to let their girls go away, as applies in England. Fewer women than men teachers were able or willing to go away for a month with their class, mainly for family reasons, and some teachers avoided teaching CM1 and CM2 classes to avoid such a duty. The circular also relaxed the rule that *classes de neige* must last for four weeks but shorter periods would not be eligible for the now small state grant. Alternative aid was not forbidden if the visit was otherwise approved.

Fifteen years after the original *classe de neige* the principle had swept through the elementary schools but as secondary schooling became the norm fewer children over age eleven, except for those who had repeated a year, were likely to experience a *classe transplantée*. More than 30% of children repeated at least one year in the 1960s (Mermet 1992, 106).

The Vanves Experiment was a logical step in the progression from the sea bathing centres, the *colonies de vacances*, Latarjet's ski work for Paté and his experiments in Lyon, the Paris IREP class and the Vichy efforts. Concern for children's health, awareness of the need for children to be 'biologically well balanced human machines' as Fourestier expressed it, and the re-thinking that was evident during and after the Occupation all had their effect. The changes in perception by each social class and religious group of other groups enforced fresh thinking. Values could never be the same after the war as they were before even though there was some regression, the chances were there for new ideas to be tried out.

Besides the acceptance of new ways there was the fact that people expected a better life in the future. Prosperity had been growing for more than half a century and this growth was to be enhanced through a series of 5-year government plans. Thus it was possible to consider doing things which could not have been contemplated earlier because of cost and of social inertia. The enthusiastic welcome of the *classes de neige* in the 1950s compared with the anger aroused by rather similar classes in the 1930s is marked. It shows the need for an idea to be proposed at the right time, and the 1950s were the right time for this and other radical ideas. Parental support for experiments continued because prosperity did indeed grow.

But a virtually immovable obstacle was the relationship between examinations and the refusal by obdurate teachers to allow time for PE. The genius of *mi-temps* was that no time was lost from normal teaching when away for a *classes de neige* though some was lost in the original format when at home. So there was little to worry teachers or parents in the academic field when a class went away.

### **Ski instruction**

The circular of 19 December 1968 reminded people that those holding a certificate of the French Ski Federation could instruct on a goodwill basis only. A number of people, including parents, were helping *classes de neige* by teaching them skiing, thus displacing professional ski instructors, who had complained. The minister pointed out that infractions of the law must cease. To work for pay a *Brevet d'état d'éducation sportive (BEES)* [State Diploma in Sports Education], a considerably higher qualification, must be held. The writer met one school party where their bus driver was, legitimately, acting as a cross country ski instructor on a voluntary basis.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

**Question 2** What official agencies instituted these two events, i.e., White Hall opening and the Vanves experiment? Were there voluntary agency models already in use?

In keeping with traditional French centralisation of administration the ministry of education took over control of sport in France in 1945, excepting that of the armed forces. This apparently clear-cut position was immediately blurred by the fact that school physical activities were delegated to sometimes a Ministry of Sport and Leisure or related title, or to a Secretary of State or Commissioner with a varying title and responsible at different times to the minister of education or at others to the Prime Minister. Confusingly, school PE staff were forbidden to teach sport in school until 1967, (even Bertier thought sport was only an adjunct to educational exercises!) though they were required to teach it out of school for three hours each week to volunteer pupils; further, they were not employed or paid by the ministry of education but by the other minister, secretary of state or commissioner. However, the minister for education retained the right to initiate experiments in matters relating to schools and physical activity, and it was from there that came the authority, indeed the directive, to carry out the Vanves experiment.

In England at that time the right to start an experiment lay with the Local Education Authority (LEA) as long as the initiative came within the broad outlines laid down by the 1944 Education Act and the Ministry's financial limits were not exceeded. All teachers employed in a provided school were paid by the LEA regardless of their subject.

There was no known comparable experiment to the *demi-temps pédagogique et sportif* regime in a provided school in Britain but some of the fee-paying boarding schools inspired by the New Education movement such as Abbotsholme, Bedales and Gordonstoun included a good many hours of several kinds of activity each week such as farming, handicraft, music and public service. Generally, the traditional Public schools devoted afternoons to competitive sport. There were, in both countries, voluntary agency models for the two residential experiments. In France there had been *colonies de vacances* run by a variety of bodies for at least seventy years where children experienced a great deal of play and other physical activities – but no academic work. In England there had been similar centres for an equally long period, Scout camp sites, and more recently, centres such as YMCA Lakeside on Lake Windermere from the 1930s, Aberdovey Outward Bound school and Brathay Hall from the 1940s, all preceding White Hall. It is worth mentioning that Brathay Hall Centre was started by another product of New Education, Francis Scott was an old boy of Bedales School (Dybeck 1996, 17).

An hypothesis could be put forward that perceived similar needs will produce similar solutions with adaptations according to physical, geographical and cultural differences.

### Question 3 How influential was the medical profession in physical activities in schools?

This question has already been considered in chapter 2. Doctors at the beginning of the century carrying out research into tuberculosis, and the work of Latarjet and of the doctors who headed the CREPS and IREPS have already been mentioned. Latarjet ran what appears to have been a *demi-temps pédagogique et sportif* proto-type programme in a girls' school in Lyon and may have been the stimulus for the proposed Paris IREP snow visit which caused a rumpus and which may have been the model for the *classe de neige* of Vanves. The Vanves experiments were supervised by Fourestier, a medical doctor as was Encausse who wrote up the experiments of the Vanves type. *Instituteurs* must surely have felt some encouragement to offer physical activity to their classes coming from such a prestigious source but not apparently enough, when on their home ground, to overcome their examination concerns. One wonders if the ministry of education deliberately used doctors to lead the Lyon and Vanves experiments to mollify parental or other possible resistance. Clearly the medical element allowed objective body measurements to be made, providing a different level of credence from subjective assessments of, say, character.

School medical inspections had been inaugurated by Vichy so all children were now seen periodically by a doctor, and as the standard of living was rising quite rapidly from about 1950 there was less need for medical intervention in the school population. It was from

about this time that the objections of the PE teachers to the dominance of doctors really began to grow, from 1933 they had their own specialist training college and were beginning to gain some professional self-confidence. Experiments such as that at Vanves would help build up the status of PE, or perhaps erode the idea that PE threatened examination performances. The original hypothesis to this question in chapter 2 may be modified, medicine and PE may have learned something from each other, so the hypothesis now appears as:

Cooperation between two professions of differing status may gradually enhance the public esteem of the lower one.

**Question 4** How important was New Education in encouraging ODP in French education?

New Education has always encouraged doing and thinking so that practical experience backs up theoretical lessons. This has included exploration in the mental as well as the physical sense; *l'École des Roches* set this example so it is not surprising that with the representation at Vichy of so many people who had been associated with the school, and so many army officers in the new youth organisations who had been Scouts, that New Education ideas were incorporated into Vichy policies almost without question. But from before 1940, there was a growing general interest in ODP in society so the two tendencies reinforced each other. After 1945 again New Education was the basis of educational experimentation for some years, some of it building on earlier experiments. It must not be forgotten that Demolins', and the official Vichy method of PE, was that of Hébert who was influenced by Rousseau who firmly believed in the open air and the development of the body (Thomas 1990, 13). Despite the reaction after 1945 against Vichy ideas generally Hébertism continued to be the approved method of PE for schools although much of his interesting open country activities tended to be lost. The hypothesis created in chapter 3 now needs amending to: people in positions of authority who believed in the value of ODP, in some cases from experience when they were young, were introducing these activities to the children of workers who, as a result of laws passed by the Popular Front, and their continuation by the Vichy regime and then the 4th Republic, were able themselves to enjoy recreations that were once the province of only the well-to-do.

**Question 5** How important was industrialisation in the growth of ODP?

Industrialisation had enabled well-to-do adults and schools to reach the mountains in hours instead of weeks once the railway network had been built. Further development of industry leading to more prosperity enabled the *commune* and the government to afford the expenses of the Vanves experiment, including, e.g., the provision of a motor vehicle to take the boys to the swimming pool, and other expenses, culminating in maintaining the class for a month while they enjoyed what had been a *sport d'élite* open only to a certain class of citizen a decade earlier. This would seem to reinforce the hypothesis developed in chapter 2 that a century or so is needed before industrialisation enables large numbers to benefit from the affluence created by industry.

**Question 6** What were the benefits claimed to be derived from ODP at different times?

Töpffer claimed physical, educational and personality benefits while Du Theil claimed that ODP toughened young men and they derived spiritual benefits. The doctors and *pasteurs* claimed that *colonies de vacances* were a weapon against TB and rickets while the priests considered the *colonies* to be an aid in saving souls. For Carcopino ODP could produce well balanced young men when allied to the general educational programme. The *Jeunesse et montagne* regime was thought to have been so valuable for its members that a movement was founded to continue its beneficial work for any who wished to take part. The common factor between Töpffer's expeditions and the *Jeunesse et montagne* was that the participants were all there from choice. The obligatory movements on the other hand did not seem to be so beneficial nor to leave the participants with a wish for more of the same. It would hardly be surprising if volunteers felt positive about their experiences while conscripts might begin and sometimes end with negative sentiments.

The main part of the Vanves experiments, that is, the programme of mornings of classwork and afternoons of physical education included only one hour each week of activity in rough open country so it can hardly be called a regime of ODP; but the *classe de neige*, a month of afternoons of cross country skiing was another matter. Here were the ingredients of academic work, outdoor pursuits, whole class participation, residential *éducatif* experiences, and medical supervision for four complete weeks, and repeated a year later. Though the previous four terms of the *demi-temps pédagogique et sportif* programme had been energetic yet the boys' appetites, at any rate for bread, increased by 50%. The parents found their boys 'transformed, full of vitality ... seen little boys depart ... received back adolescents.' (p 131 above). A touch of hyperbole here but clearly there was great enthusiasm for the benefits among all concerned. The less obvious benefits were a widening of experience of the geography of their own country, learning about social relationships through living in a community of individuals they thought they already knew, building relationships with adults who were responsible for them, and the experiences of visits to places of interest and being entertained by the *maire*. Some boys displayed sides to their character not previously noticed when under the normal influence of home and parents. This last aspect is suggested even more strongly by the experience of Mlle Maes with her class of girls (p 134 above). Some were released from too heavy responsibility for younger siblings, or from over-bearing parents; signs of autonomy, individuality and ambition were noted, competition reared its head in skiing, and some transfer of affection to accessible subjects happened. One wonders whether these changes were so manifest because they were girls (who may have to care for younger siblings more than do boys of a similar age), or did Mlle Maes note the changes because she was a woman whereas the staffing for the Vanves boys was apparently male (except for Dr Margueritat) according to photographs accompanying journal articles? Did the Vanves boys not swear as much as Mlle Maes' girls or was it not noticed because they were boys?! Had they already stopped swearing in the preceding four terms of *mi-temps* because



of their close association with the PE man and their *instituteur*, and the frequent presence of other adults during the experiment? Or were the Créteil girls from an area where swearing was normal but the Vanves boys' local sub-culture normally excluded it?

The hypothesis from chapter 5 may perhaps be modified to read that ODP are effective in attaining the desired aims if control is well directed, the participants are there willingly, enjoy the experience and are given good guidance.

Question 7 What continuity of thinking and policies was there from one regime to another?

It seemed that the attitudes displayed by all adults involved with the Vanves experiments were centred on providing benefits for the children in as many ways as possible, whereas in wartime, although it was hoped the participants would benefit it was to the end of making them more useful workers or soldiers for France, just as PE/drill had been seen in the nineteenth century. Vanves intended to at least maintain the boys' academic work and also make them stronger and more skilled in physical abilities, swimming, climbing a rope, running, jumping and so on. There was also the aim, extending the Popular Front goals, of giving the boys leisure skills which they could use for the rest of their lives, for example, introducing them to open country and, especially, enabling them to become competent skiers. This paragraph supports the hypothesis as in chapter 5 that ODP can be a universal (or versatile) tool for encouraging personal development.

Question 9 What part has social class and growing affluence played in society's attitudes to leisure and ODP?

By the early 1950s French society had become used to the idea that everybody was entitled to two weeks of paid holiday and therefore it might have seemed reasonable to introduce children to recreations which could be used in their holidays when they became adult. Industrialisation and government five-year plans, and full employment meant that pre-war mass poverty was largely a thing of the past and people could hope for a continuation of the new prosperity. The tradition in France however is that schools are instructional institutions, education is the job of the family, and that includes socialising their children to the wider world. Dictionary translations are here misleading (Ch 3 above; p 55). And France continued to be a country in which promotion was by merit as judged by examination results so, though schools might begin to take interest in preparing pupils for out-of-school and after-school life they still had full responsibility for making sure pupils had grasped *la connaissance* [the knowledge] necessary for annual promotion to the next class up, and for the external examinations which they would meet in due course. So instruction is still the schools' main function, *éducation* that of the family but how many families can fulfil that function at the end of the twentieth century? An hypothesis could be that society may adjust to the *civilisation de loisir* resulting from increased prosperity but schools cannot, under present examination arrangements, allow anything into the programme which they feel may threaten examination results.

**Question 10** What influence have examinations had on PE and ODP in French schools?

It is clear that examinations have had a depressing effect on physical activities in schools. Policy makers have tried by various means to get more activity into children's timetables but up to the 1950s with little effect though the *classes de neige* have proved to be a special case, some academic class time may actually be gained. It could be hypothesised that PE has suffered and will suffer at least partial rejection as long as it is perceived to be a danger to examination performance. On the other hand, the prestige of ODP and their limited time span during which part-time pedagogy operates makes them more acceptable to schools and parents.

**Question 12** Why was *demi-temps pédagogique et sportif* so successful in the 1950s?

The genius of *demi-temps pédagogique et sportif* was that it kept children, teachers and parents happy. The slight time lost from class work was apparently counterbalanced by increased motivation, physical health improved (absences were reduced) and public acceptance of the idea was positive. It was among the early experiments in the post-war period to be carried out with elementary school children, an indication that they and their *instituteurs* were considered of some importance, and it was a radical curiosity that aroused much attention. The residential part of the Vanves type experiments, the *classes de neige*, was even more of a curiosity, for state primary school classes had probably never before gone away in term time. A particular virtue of the residential *mi-temps* arrangement was that more time was spent in class work than when they were at home yet each child gained greatly in health and social experience. A disadvantage for the teacher was that responsibility for his or her class lasted for 24 hours out of 24 but in the early years at least they were volunteers, an important factor in such ventures. An hypothesis could be that an experiment that kept children happy, allayed parents' examination worries, and allowed teachers to feel in control, was unlikely to fail, unlike many innovations started by the ministry when teachers felt they were being imposed upon.

**Question 13** Why was the *Front populaire* period such a turning point in people's attitudes?

The year of 1936 was a real turning point for French workers, many could realistically plan for annual holidays away from home from now on. Another innovation in the following year was that the portfolios for leisure and for education were linked. The paid holiday law was never rescinded, it pleased too many people, but leisure and education being administered by the same department was rather a volte face for many schools. At administrative level this concept could be conceived but hundreds of thousands of teachers were not so ready to change their old ideas. The linkage was reinforced very shortly after when Borotra held the same two portfolios under Pétain. He was able to make a little headway in changing some teachers' attitudes by running in-service courses in *éducation générale* which incorporated the ideas of creative leisure, active learning, PE and ODP, and pastoral work. Zay's in-service centres were ready for Borotra to use! One can hypothesise that the *Front populaire*

period was a real turning point in the formulation of seminal ideas, some of them being realised during the Vichy period, and some in later years.

**Question 14** Why were *classes de neige* seen as a turning point in French education?

*Classes de neige* represented the first time that elementary school pupils had been taken away as a class in term time. Fourestier (1953b, 4-5), under the sub-heading *Sur le plan éducatif* (as opposed to *le plan pédagogique*), points out that these boys aged 12-13 were beginning to have a greater awareness of the importance of social relationships. The common experience of studying and playing together, created enthusiasm; and the over-riding element was happiness. As he says: *Jamais une telle expérience n'avait été tentée dans le cadre de l'enseignement primaire laïque en France* [Such an experiment had never been attempted in state primary education before] (p 131 above). Adding to the immediate success of these classes – they were copied in their thousands – was the fact that they were modified in many ways to *classes de mer, de campagne* and even *classes de ville* for country children. They were the big break through to state schools taking on some of the duties *éducatifs* which had been, and still commonly are, seen as family responsibilities (p 55 above) and increasingly supplemented by organisations such as Les Francas. One can hypothesise here that this imaginative experiment chimed with several favourable factors at the time such as growing affluence and optimism for the future, while unfavourable ones (examination fears) were allayed.

## CHAPTER 8

### *TIERS- TEMPS PÉDAGOGIQUE*

and

### EARLY BEGINNINGS TO ADVENTURE

*Classes de neige* were popular among French teachers, and were generally looked upon with favour by society. Many teachers arranged class visits even though they ignored the edicts about regular physical activity in their pupils' weekly timetable. Attitudes to PE and games, and to *classes transplantées* seemed to be independent of each other. Solal (1968, 20) reports that in the Nord département:

*Comme dans beaucoup d'autres départements français, le pourcentage des classes dans lesquelles les élèves pratiquaient, effectivement, et dans les conditions horaires réglementaires, l'éducation physique, atteignait en 1964, 3,50%.*

[As in many other French *départements*, the percentage of classes in which the children effectively practised physical education in a regularly timetabled way, was 3.50% in 1964].

This figure of 3.50% seems incredible after a century of government orders and decades of effort by *inspecteurs*. The reasons, some familiar ones, given by the teachers for this were: (1) other work which had to be covered at any cost, (2) the age of the teacher, (3) fear of noise in the playground, (4) lack of equipment, (5) having become a teacher after the war without training so being qualified only by experience. Solal thought the real reasons were: (1) lack of knowledge of how to teach PE and what to put in a programme, (2) absence of any real control of PE by the authorities because the subject is not examined, (3) ignorance of how to stimulate a class, how to put in games and the enjoyment that they would produce, and (4) how to organise a *lendit* [sports day]. Again examinations dominate.

Solal therefore began organising in-service training for 12 000 *instituteurs* and *institutrices* in a programme covering six years from October 1965. *Lendits*, with children of the host and nearby schools, were arranged to give teachers experience of organising sports days as well as just single lessons. Teachers of children of an age group from one catchment area were brought together for a course from Tuesday afternoon to Thursday midday. Courses were mainly practical and included cross country matches between schools. Each teacher went away with a booklet of lesson contents to see them through the year. Photographs of the courses suggest a mixture of Swedish and Hébertist activities using both flat playgrounds and rough wooded areas, though the name Hébert was now largely forgotten.

### ***Tiers-temps pédagogique* [Triple division of time]**

This timetable had been piloted from 1962 in a number of schools. By an *arrêté* of 7 August 1969 *tiers-temps pédagogique* became obligatory for all primary schools, including *écoles maternelles* which were attended at that time by 84% of children aged 3, 4 and 5 (Halls 1976, 77). The week was reduced from 30 to 27 hours; Saturday afternoons becoming free of school work (Andrieu 1990, 92-126; Halls 1976, 80-2).

*Tiers-temps pédagogique* meant that, in accordance with long standing concern for the distribution of effort and relaxation (*rythme de vie*), the week was to be fifteen hours of French and mathematics, those important disciplines being in the mornings when the children were fresh; the remainder of the week was to consist of six hours of *classes d'éveil* [awakening disciplines] through history, geography, civics, music, singing, manual work and environmental studies; and six hours of physical activity (INRDP 1971, *passim*). This new time allocation was to make Solal's in-service PE courses even more apposite if the six hours for activity were to be profitably used.

The freeing of Saturday afternoons in 1969 triggered the change of free day from Thursday to Wednesday in about 1974/5 to make a better balanced week.

Andrieu (1990, 93-4) says that well before *tiers-temps pédagogique* was imposed in 1969, the *mi-temps pédagogique et sportif* experiments had multiplied but more under the influence of the *corps médical* than of the *instituteurs*. Dr Fourestier had set an example in the Vanves experiment of *rythme de vie* and other doctors had encouraged schools to follow suit.

*Tiers-temps* was a further attempt to encourage primary schools to offer physical activity and an acknowledgement that there was little chance of getting *mi-temps pédagogique et sportif* operating over the whole country for want of resources, and of enthusiasm among the *instituteurs*. Of the six hours of activity in *tiers-temps* three should be devoted to outdoor activities. Many teachers seemed to welcome ODP in *classes transplantées*, perhaps they might willingly use three hours for an outdoor activity away from school. Here is another case of an ancient example, from Demeny's nineteenth century outdoor walks, and Zay's, David's and the Vanves half-day of *plein air*, being re-introduced.

Guichard, minister of education in 1969/70, says that *tiers-temps pédagogique* simplifies organisation for the teacher. It is adaptable, it gives priority to acquiring the two fundamental tools, French and mathematics, and to the importance of awakening the pupils to the world around them; and the education of the body is given its place (Guichard 1970, *passim*). He goes on to say that the new arrangements required changes in some ingrained habits and would only succeed with the agreement of teachers, the supply of sufficient resources and the support of parents. He adds that for children aged nine to twelve:

*Ils ont besoin de mouvement, dix heures par semaine, disent les médecins, et besoin de jouer, donc, d'apprendre à jouer, car beaucoup ne savent pas, qui, précisément tireraient du jeu le plus grand bénéfice physique et moral* (Guichard 1970, 35).

[They need to move, ten hours each week, say the doctors, and need to play, in fact to learn to play because many of them do not know how to, especially those who could gain the greatest physical and moral benefits].

Guichard's remarks that some children did not know how to play and their medically declared need for ten hours of movement each week was aimed at the schools, the authority of the medical profession still being called upon. Again, people at higher levels in the education service were pushing against the inertia of school teachers. There is a further sign of movement in thinking here at high level, for to suggest that play can promote physical and moral benefits is a change from the situation of only two or three decades earlier when it was claimed that games were not *éducatif* [socio-educative], nor did they teach physical control of the body. Sport, from the 1889 Marey Commission, and again in 1925, was defined as leisure and had no place in *la gymnastique scolaire* (Brackpool 1977, 267). Introduction to the satisfactory use of leisure was still seen as the job of the *famille éducatif*.

Since implementation of even diluted versions of *mi-temps* was going to be impossible for the foreseeable future, its substitute *tiers-temps* was piloted before being made obligatory in 1969. Andrieu (1990, 92) suggests that it was one outcome of the influences on the elementary school of *pédagogies nouvelles*, also known as *méthodes actives*, so it is clear that the New Education legacy had not been entirely lost.

### ***Tiers-temps* pilot trials**

Charroin (1970, 35) reports that two towns, one of eleven thousand and the other of 1300 inhabitants, both piloting *tiers-temps* from the early 60s, had, by 1968, provided facilities for physical activities, manual work and music adjacent to their schools. The larger town provided a bigger gymnasium than was normal at that time for a twelve-class school, a multi-purpose hall of 150 square metres, a music hall and a workshop. The project followed discussion between *commune* and departmental services of the ministries of education and of youth and sport. Charroin does not mention if outdoor pursuits were included but the facilities suggest more practical activities than usual were provided for.

There were a number of experiments encouraging *instituteurs* to take part with their pupils in outdoor pursuits. Some of these involved giving up some of their own time but as their teaching week had just been reduced by three hours they were hardly in a position to grumble.

### **School sailing**

The Vendée, just south of Brittany, is ideal for coastal and inland sailing, river canoeing and rock-climbing. It was popular with tourists, while the local people had clubs of their own for sailing, canoeing, climbing and long distance walking. The opportunity provided by *tiers-*

*temps pédagogique* to offer ODP was taken in some *communes* of that area. Labbaye (1975, 20) describes how sailing was introduced to schools of the coastal town of Les Sables-d'Olonne.

A combined effort of the schools, the *Direction départementale de la jeunesse et des sports* (DDJS), the *Assistant départemental chargé de l'organisation des activités de plein air* and the *Conseiller pédagogique départemental* (CPD) enabled the pupils of CM2 to start sailing. Having Saturday afternoons newly free meant that some teachers were willing to give up Thursday afternoons for this.

Labbaye, as the CPD, presented *activités de pleine nature*, under three headings: *éducatif, sportif, et de loisir*. Once familiar with sailing, it was hoped some of the pupils would join a club wherever they might be after finally leaving school. Club officials, the municipalities, the education authorities and the *animateurs* of USEP co-ordinated their efforts so that the children had the chance to learn sailing on Thursdays, then on Sundays to race with the clubs. By 1971 six centres were available and by 1975 there were nine, used by fifty-eight classes. Staffing the sailing sessions soon became a problem as there were quite inadequate numbers of qualified instructors. From 1971, therefore, the DDJS arranged courses for teacher volunteers:

*L'instituteur, toujours responsable de sa classe, devient ainsi progressivement l'enseignant de la discipline, assisté éventuellement par le technicien sportif* (Labbaye 1975, 20).

[The instituteur, always responsible for his class, became progressively the teacher of the activity, helped eventually by the trained assistant].

Labbaye considers that the arrangements he has described offered a:

*Grande ouverture de l'école sur le monde extérieur grâce au travail d'équipes d'éducateurs comprenant des intervenantes d'origines diverses* (1975, 20).

[Great opening onto the outside world for the school, thanks to the work of the team of social educators coming from various origins].

Undoubtedly, working with adults from other walks of life would be socially and physically educative for the children as well as introducing them to a social or competitive pastime which they could follow up when adult. It could also be beneficial and enjoyable for *instituteurs*, widening their horizons and social contacts as well as seeing their pupils in a different setting:

*l'USEP, ..., a dynamisé les écoles rurales et urbaines, apportant plaisir aux enfants, convivialité aux maîtres* (UFOLEP-USEP 1993b, 28).

[USEP, ..., has enlivened rural and urban schools, bringing pleasure to the pupils, and social enjoyment to the teachers].

Locteau (1976) gives more information about the sailing at Les Sables-d'Olonne. There were, in close proximity, a stadium, a municipal sailing club and a special track for teaching the rules of the road. The first problem was that, while wishing to teach all 67 CM2 children

in the pilot group to sail, only 24 could swim; the 43 non-swimmers were excluded from the sailing sessions. In fact, the sailing facilities could not then have coped with all sixty-seven.

The proportion of non-swimmers was similar to that at Vanves in 1950, reinforcing appreciation of the need to teach swimming as a basic life skill. *Classes de natation* [swimming classes] were started in 1973 at Entre-les-Fourgs as *classes de découverte* to open the way for non-swimming children into water sports.

The 43 non-swimmers took turn and turn about being taught road skills, and learning athletics and games in the stadium. An attraction for 9 to 12 year olds was a *mini solex*, a small real motor-bike, to ride in the road drill sessions. Obviously the programmes for the two groups were sharply different; 24 swimmer/sailors received no lessons in road safety or athletics during the summer term while 43 did not sail.

In the winter period the same swimming-skilled children, the *instituteurs* and the sailing *moniteurs* got to know each other while they built boats; Locteau says nothing about what the 43 non-swimmers did in that time. The chance that some could swim and others could not clearly had an important influence on these children's introduction to sailing, their chance to work manually and socially alongside other adults, and their chances of future participation in water sports.

There is no mention in these articles of the *instituteurs* resisting the outdoor activity part of the *tiers-temps* programme. Perhaps they were happy to be involved in it; they were, like the Vanves children and staff, getting special attention; and there had been three hours reduction in their working week. Perhaps too they were pleased to have a solid block of time to commit to activity away from school whereas they may have disliked the hurried sortie for a short PE lesson before returning, damp with sweat, to the classroom. The Thursday afternoons given to sailing were outside their required working hours; did they also do some PE in school under the *tiers-temps* regime or did they feel they had satisfied the demands of the two Ministries with their sailing contribution? There is no information given on this. Photographs illustrating the articles suggest that participants were entirely male. A result of this experience, though instruction was initially given by *techniciens sportifs*, was that some teachers went on to become *techniciens sportifs* or *animateurs* themselves.

In a third article on Les Sables-d'Olonne activities, Astier (1976) explains that to encourage the children's performances so that they could join in racing at the clubs on Sundays, they took sailing tests, each child racing single-handed in an *Optimist* (a small single-sail dinghy). The test was for the *Brevet de jeune navigateur sur optimist* (Junior Optimist Sailing Certificate) which involved completing three different slalom courses; 436 children in the Vendée gained this *brevet* in 1974, a joint one by UFOLEP, USEP and UNSS. Sixty-three children aged 8 to 11 raced for the USEP departmental Cup at the end of June.



The number of sailing classes in French schools is approximately as below.

| <u>Primaire</u> |            |            | <u>Collège</u> |            |            | <u>Secondaire</u> |            |            | <u>Lycée</u> |            |            |
|-----------------|------------|------------|----------------|------------|------------|-------------------|------------|------------|--------------|------------|------------|
| <u>Class</u>    | <u>age</u> | <u>No.</u> | <u>Class</u>   | <u>age</u> | <u>No.</u> | <u>Class</u>      | <u>age</u> | <u>No.</u> | <u>Class</u> | <u>age</u> | <u>No.</u> |
| CE1             | 7+         | 20         | 6 <sup>e</sup> | 11+        | 36         | Seconde           | 15+        | 4          |              |            |            |
| CE2             | 8+         | 40         | 5 <sup>e</sup> | 12+        | 20         | Première          | 16+        | 2          |              |            |            |
| CM1             | 9+         | 70         | 4 <sup>e</sup> | 13+        | 27         | Terminale         | 17+        | 1 or 2     |              |            |            |
| CM2             | 10+        | 80         | 3 <sup>e</sup> | 14+        | 21         |                   |            |            |              |            |            |

(Gravier 1993, 61):

There are about twice as many primary age sailing classes as there are secondary, with few in *lycées*. The total number of pupils involved in a year is some 11 000 (ibid, 31). Sailing can be credited to the PE requirement of the *baccalauréat* (ibid, 22).

### Value of sailing

Gravier (ibid, 60) thinks sailing to be both *éducatif* and *sportif*. Under the *éducatif* heading he puts introductory sailing courses in timetabled PE in primary schools and links them with teaching about life rhythms. Under the *sportif* heading he puts attending a sports or sailing school, inter-school competition and specialised sailing activity. But he thinks neither section excludes the values of the other, there is merely a change of emphasis.

Gravier considers that *la voile, comme toute activité physique judicieusement utilisée, peut être un puissant moyen d'éducation* (ibid, 10) [Sailing, like all physical activity sensibly used, can be a powerful means of social education].

He then suggests that, whether it is the acquisition of psychomotor skills [physical literacy], developing conceptual intelligence or encouraging the socialisation of the child, sailing offers itself as a remarkable school for life. And since organisation of *classes de voile* requires the co-operation of several people such as the *maire*, and the *commune* for financial subsidies and the sailing club for its facilities, so the teachers and children meet more adults and get to know the local political figures, thus political awareness increases.

And there are economic considerations. The more children are introduced to sailing, the more weekday usage of sailing facilities there will be, justifying further development of the facilities, so leading to better conditions for tourists and locals. There is a considerable resemblance here to the arguments put forward by Fourestier in his advocacy of the *classes de neige*. Gravier (ibid, 12) adds: *la voile scolaire possède un poids "électoral" non négligeable*. [school sailing has considerable voting leverage]. The last point suggests again that pupils could become aware of political and financial realities through sailing.

School sailing in France demonstrates how an outdoor sport can be educational, can be a personal and social developmental activity, and an activity in the society of which the school is a part. A social link between pupils and a sports club is provided at an early age, and the 'gap' at the end of school years, about which the Wolfenden committee was concerned for

British children, could be more easily negotiated (Wolfenden Report 1960, ch 3). It is evident too that people with political aspirations saw the chance to present themselves in a good light to impressionable future voters. The above points are not normally considered in community contacts by English schools. How would English parents react? This section illustrates some cultural and local government differences between the two countries and shows how proponents of an activity imbue it with various values, proven or not. And here teachers were introducing their pupils to a popular ODP.

### **Ski jumping**

Another example of outdoor pursuits being offered through *tiers-temps pédagogique* is found in an experiment at the *École nationale de ski de fond et de saut* [1970] [National School for Cross Country Skiing and Ski Jumping] at Les Rousses in the Jura mountains. The aim was to demystify ski jumping for children, parents and teachers. It was also intended to give the staff of the ski school experience of teaching young children so that they could adapt their teaching techniques and discover what pace of progression they could expect with this age range. It is also likely that France was hoping eventually to make political capital through producing Olympic medal winners in ski jumping.

Twenty children of ages six to eleven experienced six sessions of two hours thirty minutes in the space of three weeks. The children were all from Prémamanon, near Les Rousses, and all had experience of *ski de fond* [cross country skiing]. In winter some of them would travel to and from school, or a kilometre or two to the bus stop, each day on cross-country skis. The teaching of jumping began at the village of La Cure, 2 or 3 kilometres from Prémamanon, on 'bosses' or humps of snow, progressed to a snow platform take-off, then moved to the adult *mini-tremplin* [small take-off] at the National School by arrangement with the French Ski Federation. The 'demystification' apparently succeeded.

*Je croyais que c'était plus difficile de sauter.*  
[I used to think it was more difficult to jump].

*Le tremplin n'était pas assez haut.*  
[The platform was not high enough].

*Je suis content parce que je vais me voir sur le film. (Toute la classe).*  
[I am happy because I am going to see myself in the film. (The whole class)].

*Malgré ma peur, j'ai sauté parce que les autres ont sauté et j'ai voulu faire comme eux.*  
[Despite my fear, I jumped because the others had jumped, I wanted to do as they had done].

*J'avais peur de tomber devant le caméra. Christophe, 6 ans.*  
[I was afraid of falling in front of the camera]. (the amour propre of a six year old!).

*Je n'avais pas peur, je pensais à autre chose. Christelle, 9 ans.*  
[I wasn't afraid, I was thinking of other things. Christelle, 9].

*J'aurais voulu rester plus longtemps en l'air, car c'est très agréable. Christelle, Christine, Annie, Bertrand.*

[I wanted to stay longer in the air, because it was very pleasant. Christelle, Christine, Annie, Bertrand].

*Je me suis bien amusé. J'ai bien aimé quand le caméraman m'a dit: "Il est rigolo celui-là."*

[I was very happy. I loved it when the cameraman said to me "That one was funny."].

One or two, with the superiority born of previous experience, made remarks such as:

*J'étais décontractée, contente, j'avais déjà sauté sur un plus grand tremplin. Florence, 9*

[I was relaxed, happy, I had already jumped from a higher platform. Florence, 9].

There is no mention of either refusals or injuries but some did express initial fear of hurting themselves. Group pressure may have induced some to jump when they might have balked if alone with an instructor. The girls were apparently just as prepared to jump as were the boys. This might suggest, together with the French custom of playing mixed rugby (with tackling) up to the age of thirteen (USEP 1992, 12), that any pre-pubertal differences in risk taking may be as much a product of socialisation as of any innate differences. Three boys and three girls wanted to go on the big Les Rousses *tremplin* where the national team trained, two boys were afraid of breaking a leg, two others were frightened of not being able to stop before the barrier because the jumping skis were heavy, one girl was afraid she might injure herself after the jump, and two girls and a boy were happy because they had not fallen.

The quotations are a selection from those included in *École Nationale SFS* [1970] which are themselves clearly a selection from responses to a questionnaire. One hopes that a fair picture of the total responses has been produced.

### Qualifications in ODP

Moundalek (1988, 79) reports that by *arrêtés* of 11 May 1959 and 7 November 1960 qualifications in ODP were standardised by the minister of education at three amateur levels, and, some years later, at three professional levels.

A *technicien sportif* would be a voluntary instructor holding, or working towards, a French Federation certificate in that particular activity. People may not accept payment for their work if they hold only Federal qualifications but further progress to a State qualification, the *Brevet d'état d'éducateur sportif (BEES)*, 1<sup>e</sup>, 2<sup>e</sup>, or 3<sup>e</sup>, allows paid employment, either part or full time. Central government oversight ensures uniformity across all activity qualifications but with modifications appropriate to each sport.

All candidates must already be good all-round performers, have a first aid qualification, and be aged at least 18. Whatever their sport, candidates must follow a common course lasting 80 hours in psychology, physiology, law and other areas relating to sport in general, plus a theory course specific to the chosen sport, and at least 80 hours of practical teaching before assessment. From 1963 the system of qualifications was gradually extended to all sports

through the *Fédérations françaises*, the *Brevet d'État* being created in the later 1960s. This standardisation, including skiing and mountaineering, typifies the central control exercised from Paris in creating a uniform and understandable pattern. As in England, the growth of ODP has encouraged many teachers to achieve qualifications.

Mountaineering and skiing preceded other sports in training instructors, initially under the aegis of the *Club alpin français* (CAF) in 1930 (Malesset 1985, 211). In 1942 the *Fédération Française de Ski* (FFS) and the *FF de la Montagne* (FFM) founded the *École Supérieure de Ski et d'Alpinisme*. In 1943 the State took charge, changing the name to *École Nationale de Ski et d'Alpinisme* (ENSA). Their headquarters were built at Chamonix in 1975 (p 96 – 7 above).

### **Early age for starting visits and sports**

French children are introduced to visits away from home at what we would think an early age, and to sports considered, in England, to be for adolescents or adults. Nurseries began in 1771 as child minding establishments for working mothers, in 1836 they came under the Ministry of Public Instruction as *écoles maternelles*. By the 1880s 600 000 children attended, increasing to more than two million by 1970, i.e., 84% of all children aged 3 to 5 (Halls 1976, 77). Now, 35% of two year olds and virtually 100% of threes to fives are attenders (Mermet 1992, 106). Small children are thus accustomed to being away from their parents all day. *Classes maternelles transplantées* go away for up to two weeks, other *classes élémentaires*, as in the Vanves experiment, began at four weeks though visits have now become shorter.

Jolibois (1987, 19-21), a paediatrician specialising in sports medicine, considers children should be swimming and roller-skating before they are four, walking on rough ground and balancing on a beam so that they begin to judge the risks and so be more likely to avoid accidents. At four to five they should be skiing and ice-skating to learn how to balance when the feet are sliding; between five and six they can cycle, start dancing, equitation and playing Basque pelota. At seven 5-a-side football, at eight athletics and team games (volley, basket, handball), and ski competitions. At nine mini-rugby, tennis and artistic movement, at ten grass hockey, sub-aqua and alpine scrambling, at eleven rowing, canoeing and making small cycle tours. Up to puberty all games would be mixed, including rugby. Few children would try all these but it gives some idea of the ages some French authorities think suitable for initiation. At the Bombannes centre near Bordeaux (ch 10 below) it is thought normal to start teaching swimming and karate to children aged five, climbing, trampolining and tennis at age six, canoeing, kayaking and badminton at seven, and virtually any other sport at eight.

Amstutz of CEMEA, a trainer of *directeurs de centres de vacances* writes:

*Pendant 28 jours, 50 enfants âgés de 7 à 13 ans, répartis en deux groupes: 21 enfants et 3 animateurs pour les plus jeunes, 29 enfants et 4 animateurs pour les grands. L'escalade était proposée chaque après-midi (hors jours de pluie) par groupes de 8 enfants maximum (Amstutz 1991, 11).*

[For 28 days, 50 children aged from 7 to 13, were divided into two groups: 21 with 3 *animateurs* for the youngest, 29 with 4 *animateurs* for the bigger ones. Rock climbing was offered each afternoon (except when raining) to groups of a maximum of 8]

An instituteur in an *école maternelle*, also a trainer with CEMEA, writes:

*L'escalade, longtemps pratiquée par les adultes sous forme d'activité sportive et de loisirs ... a descendu l'échelle des âges ... à grimper pour des enfants de deux à six ans (Danger 1990, 41).*

[Rock climbing, long practised by adults as a leisure and sporting activity ... has come down the age range ... to climbing for children from two to six years of age].

Two years does seem rather young but these examples indicate how early French children are happy to be away from home to take part in adventurous activities, and parents are content too. Periods of maternal deprivation do not seem to have produced a population of disturbed adults. Indeed it is at the age when, in England, adolescents are just beginning such activities away from home, that French youngsters tend to be deprived of them by examination pressures and time-tabling difficulties in secondary schools, though there are other agencies to cater for their holiday needs. Rauch (1996, 185), talking about *centres de vacances*, reinforces the idea that children are moving into adult sports:

*Les sports de haute montagne diffèrent des jeux de la colonie traditionnelle. Plus thématique, colonies et camps se transforment en colonies poney, camps de randonnée, stages de voile ou de ski etc. Durant les années 70, les activités sportives, jusqu'ici pratiquées par les aînés, entrent dans les habitudes des préadolescents et des enfants.*

[High mountain sports, different from the games of the traditional *colonie*. Colonies and camps have become more thematic and have changed into pony camps, mobile camping treks, courses for sailing and skiing etc. During the 70s, sporting activities, up to then practised by their elders, became the activities of pre-adolescents and young children].

### **Weaknesses of *tiers-temps* support**

The principle of *tiers-temps* is difficult to fault by anyone with a belief in the value of physical activity or PE but it needed to be backed up with resources and teacher willingness. The sailing and ski-jumping cases cited above clearly relied on being in or near the right environment and facilities, having considerable external resources of man [woman?] power fed in, and class teacher involvement. In the sailing case there had to be willingness on the part of already existing sailing clubs to allow their facilities to be used – obviously with the hope of reaping long term benefit. Where these factors were favourable there was a good chance that *tiers-temps* would succeed. For the ski jumping case the national school was ready to make its staff and facilities available, for a limited time, with a view to learning how to teach young children to jump, but such situations are rare. One wonders what those children did for *tiers-temps* once the jumping course ended. There would not appear to be

any fault in the principle of *tiers-temps*, it was lack of resources and enthusiasm in the field that doomed it.

Some English studies (Rigby 1976; Brackpool 1977; Whittingham 1980) have looked at *tiers-temps* and found the idea good but over-hasty implementation with grossly insufficient resources, and changes of policy because of quickly changing ministers of education, resulted in a general breakdown in 4 to 5 years. [From June 1958 to July 1984, there were eighteen ministers of education, an average tenure of 17 months.]

Rigby (1976, 64) reports that Guichard, the minister who enforced *tiers-temps* in 1969, wanted children 'to breathe, run, jump, throw just as they can read, write and count.' He wanted there to be a short session of varied physical activities each week, and weekly afternoons of inter-school competition, of skiing, orienteering, swimming, canoeing, cycling et cetera. Unfortunately 70% of primary teachers were women, many elderly and often working in one-teacher schools of which there were some 20 000 in 1970. USEP helped organise annual *lendits*, mini-basketball, mini-football, mini-rugby, handball, triathlon, roller-skating and sometimes some outdoor activities. But the children in the smallest schools were obviously handicapped in learning team games because of the age range from *maternelle* to eleven or more in one class. Many teachers were unwilling to be involved in PE, or even in *disciplines d'éveil*.

Brackpool (1977) considered that in the early 70s financial support for physical activities was being steadily eroded. By 1975 there were 190 *Conseillers pédagogiques départementaux* who organised support for schools such as at Les Sables-d'Olonne; they were PE teachers qualified to teach in *collèges*, i.e., ages 11 to 15 but there were not enough of them. Their assistants, *conseillers pédagogiques de circonscription*, were *instituteurs* who had undergone a short in-service course in PE, sport and outdoor activities; there were 785 but a need for 2 500. Shortage of staff, of equipment, and of enthusiasm among primary teachers, meant that *tiers-temps*, working well where conditions and enthusiasm were favourable, was collapsing nationally. A report of 2nd October 1975 to the National Assembly said that in 1973-74 barely 9% of primary children were getting their statutory six hours of activity; 35% were getting 2-4 hours and 56% were getting between zero and two hours. But this was an improvement on pre-1969 when only 15% were getting their then statutory two hours.

The cuts in finance for school PE were related to the French government's spending on promising athletes in order to win Olympic medals. Whittingham (1980, 174) says that by 1978 the shortage of money, facilities and trained PE teachers was such that 150 000 secondary pupils were getting no physical activity at all, yet twenty top athletes were given government contracts and told to win medals in the 1980 Olympic Games, while the PE teacher training department at Nice was closed for economy's sake.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

**Question 3** How influential was the medical profession in physical activities in schools?

Although PE teachers had separated themselves from the medical profession to a considerable extent by the 1960s school doctor *inspecteurs*, such as Fourestier, still encouraged the *mi-temps* regime as a health promoting programme in primary and secondary schools. Andrieu (1990, 93-4) reckons that the programme had grown considerably before the *tiers-temps pédagogique* programme was imposed in 1969 but that the main push came from the doctors, not from the *instituteurs*; so again we see that the latter were negative in their reactions to PE in school though doctors' status was used positively. Later modifications of *mi-temps* to about 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> hours of activity including playtime reduced the loss of teaching time but emasculated the format so that it was hardly worthy of the name *mi-temps* and came to be called *horaires aménagés* [arranged timetable], and was one quarter (7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> hours including playtime) of the week. *Tiers temps* (six hours of activity plus playtime) was little different; either would have been better than the nil activity that many pupils continued to receive according to Solal (p 153). Modifying the hypothesis again one may say that the levelling of public and colleague esteem of two different disciplines is a very slow process.

**Question 6** What were the benefits claimed to be derived from ODP at different times?

*Activités de pleine nature* under the *tiers temps* arrangement at Sables-d'Olonne were claimed to benefit the children under the headings *éducatif, sportif et de loisir*. As the programme included racing then it could justly be said to be *sportif*, if later, when adult, pupils joined a sailing club it would probably come under the *sportif* as well as *loisir* headings. As they were mixing with adults not connected with the school, including building boats through the winter, then it would justifiably be counted as *éducatif*, that is, they were being socialised into being young citizens and behaving responsibly. Instead of the usual narrow social confines of a teacher with a class they were working with adults from a variety of origins; as Labbaye says it was a great opening onto the world for them all. This would apply as much when sailing as when building boats. The opening onto life is particularly marked when racing at the sailing club because there they met the *maire* and other figures in local politics, and perhaps became aware of the realities of finance. Here, as mentioned earlier (p 4 above), things are real, not just an exercise.

The ski jumping was apparently an activity in which the children mastered their initial fears and gained self-confidence. There appeared to be no difference between boys and girls in daring, and no expression of surprise was made in the report so perhaps, at this age, the French do not expect any difference. Do we socialise girls into timidity? All the children were familiar with cross-country skis and probably *skis de piste* too so the exercise was not entirely an innovation to them but would have been impossible for a class of non-skiers from a lowland town. The children learned that jumping was not as difficult as they had

imagined, it was demystified. There is an example of wishing to conform to group norms – the one who jumped because the others had jumped. It is a little surprising that, despite living close to the national centre for ski jumping, so many should have started with fears of breaking legs or skis. Did they only hear of the accidents? How were parents persuaded to allow participation in the exercise? Did the experience increase group cohesion? Or, as the one class in the village school, was that possible? Two hypotheses may be put forward here, the first relating to sailing:

- i. ODP can be a socialising experience through working with adults on a common task
- ii this particular ODP experience (ski jumping) enabled participants to master themselves despite their fear.

One wonders what the children did for *tiers-temps* once the three-week period ended.

**Question 7** What continuity of thinking and policies was there from one regime to another?

There seemed to be continuity of the age old policy of the ministry of education in trying to get children moving while in school, with the teachers effectively countering that policy – Guichard talks of the 'ingrained habits' of teachers. There were the long established opinions of the doctors now advocating ten hours of exercise. The six hour duration Guichard chose was probably a compromise between what doctors thought it should be and what was thought teachers and society might find acceptable. A marked discontinuity is evident when Guichard claims 'physical and moral benefits' from play because from only two years before his tenure at the ministry began in 1969 had games been allowed to be taught by PE teachers, despite the work of Lagrange, Borotra and Monod from 1936 to the early 1950s.

The long established custom of piloting a new element in education was followed when *mi-temps* was introduced, generalised, adapted; then piloted again as *tiers-temps* and generalised in some hundreds of schools in the 1960s. Yet, according to Solal's figures, it looks as though even some experimental schools were failing to practise any activity with their pupils. One can hypothesise that the long ingrained habit of teachers in resisting offering physical activity to their pupils was maintained by their situation of school and parental expectation of emphasis on examination work, and a dislike of being expected to teach something of which they had no experience and knew little.

**Question 8** What measures, and by whom, are taken to regulate risk in ODP in education?

Government overall control of qualifications in all sports leads to them being broadly standardised in format across the range of activities and there are restrictions on what level of instruction may be given according to the level of qualification held. Thus risk is minimised for members of a class since their instructor should, in theory at least, be working within his boundaries of skill and knowledge. Some Sables-d'Olonne *instituteurs*, from interest and necessity, worked up to the level of qualification needed for what was expected of them as *animateurs* in their *tiers temps* sailing. They could thus join the limited pool of instructors to teach their own classes; and parents could feel more reassured about



the safety of their children. The certificate demonstrating a child's competence to sail a boat is another matter; it is a goal to stimulate the children to improve but nothing to do with teaching others. An hypothesis may be that the government exercises its traditionally centralised powers of control in the field of instruction of sport, reinforcing the hypothesis from chapter 5.

Question 9 What part has social class and growing affluence played in society's attitudes to leisure and ODP?

In the 1960s and 70s the growth of affluence meant that the number of ODP clubs catering for local people grew considerably and the members, as did those of the *Club alpin français* a century earlier, wished to spread their sport among the next generation. Education and youth and sports authorities were able to employ specialist teachers for the purpose of visiting schools to teach ODP in agreement with local *communes* who also contributed in cash and in kind to the projects. This was very different from the 'teaching' of drill by ex-army NCOs a century earlier, and the attitude of *communes* not long before who begrudged spending any money on their schools for the purpose of PE. As is clear from the description of the Sables-d'Olonne project the *commune* hoped there would be a pay-off in the form of improved sailing facilities and more members later but affluence allowed them to make this hopeful investment. One wonders if they would have been as willing to contribute if the future pay-off was likely to be of minute proportions. The change for the teachers must have been considerable since the school week had just been reduced by three hours, and, nominally, six hours had been allocated to ODP and PE, a total loss to ordinary classwork of nine hours if there had been no time given to PE previously. This reduction would have raised a chorus of protest only a few years earlier; there must have been some other factor operating, general affluence could not allay fears of the long term consequences of examination failure. Had secondary reorganisation already taken place in the town? If so, then virtually all these CM2 pupils would move into 6<sup>e</sup> in the next academic year, removing parental fears of immediate cut off from the *baccalauréat*.

Though there was rising affluence among the population of France there was poverty in some departments of government. As research findings show (Rigby 1976; and others, (p 163 above), financing of *tiers temps*, as of its predecessor *mi-temps*, was inadequate, as were the resources for the training of PE and ODP teachers. Politics determined where the available resources were to be allocated, and decided that school pupils did not figure highly enough for *tiers temps* to be adequately funded. One may hypothesise that official allocation of resources to education are subject to national political pressures but local allocations of resources are based on local interests and they may work against each other.

Question 10 What influence have examinations had on PE and ODP in French schools?

The evidence that examination pressure, plus the long established low status of PE, has pushed the subject to the very margins of the curriculum, is abundant in this study. Solal's figure of 3.50% of children receiving any PE in 1964 backs up that evidence and shows

how dire was the situation then. The reasons he gives including that other work must be covered at any cost suggests that examination pressure is there all the time. The other reasons given by the teachers all indicate the complete absence in schools of any interest in PE (p 153). Looking at what Solal calls the real reasons suggest that the teachers, unsurprisingly, had had no experience of PE or even drill lessons when they themselves were pupils. The hypothesis from chapter 7 tends to be strengthened by chapter 8 in that PE is almost entirely rejected by teachers in Solal's survey, more than 95% of children getting no regular PE in the *Nord Département* in the 1960s.

**Question 16** Are ODP beneficial to areas where they occur?

There are differing opinions about whether areas which become popular for ODP benefit or suffer. The poet Wordsworth (1770-1850) deplored the crowds coming to the Lake District though he was partly responsible, through his poetry, for attracting them. A century later, in 1932, so popular was Derbyshire becoming for outdoor activities that the Sheffield and Peak District Committee of the Central Council for the Preservation of Rural England published their book *The Peak District, its scenery, disfigurement and preservation* (Hunter & Krageloh 1995, 5)

Fourestier (p 136 above) talks enthusiastically of 'hundreds of thousands' of children visiting the mountains each year for *classes de neige* and returning later when adult, and transforming economically backward [poor] areas. There would be local people who would welcome such an influx of visitors bringing money with them but would they be happier and, in the end, feel better off? He talks too of the existing sanatoria for TB sufferers not being needed because of the new vaccines and so being used by hundreds of children for *colonies de vacances* and *classes de neige*. What happens to local cultures when small mountain villages become quite large towns and who benefits when new winter sports centres are created in virgin areas as has happened in several places to accommodate the multiplication of numbers? On the other hand, would the envisaged increase in the number of sailors and attendant enlarged facilities at Les Sables-d'Olonne adversely affect the locality? In that case there seemed to be active local co-operation in encouraging the venture for their own children whereas snow classes consist entirely of a series of in-comers visiting temporarily. There is always the paradox that each visitor contributes to destroying the tranquillity that he or she has come to enjoy but for some activities a certain number of visitors are needed to ensure facilities are created, for example, sailing at Sable-d'Olonne or ski lifts for downhill skiing. An hypothesis might be that the growth of ODP in a locality can be seen as a positive or a negative feature depending on the activity, the circumstances and on people's values.

## CHAPTER 9

### VARIATION ON *CLASSES TRANSPLANTÉES*

Once a sojourn of a class for a period of *demi-temps pédagogique et sportif* amid the snow had become popular, people began to extend the idea. The official circular of 14 November 1968 mentions *classes d'air pur, de mer, de neige, de montagne, de soleil, d'altitude, classes vertes* [pure air, sea, snow, mountain, sun, altitude, green] in which the *mi-temps* regime prevailed. The minister was sympathetic to these variations but laid down that the same rule as to approval by the home and receiving *académies* was to be observed; subventions however would be available only for snow classes.

The circular of 20 January 1971 modified the conditions for gaining a subvention. Now *classes de neige* had to last for at least twenty days instead of twenty-eight, and they had to be *en France métropolitaine*. Probably some enterprising teacher or *collectivité* had tried to get a grant for a snow class and a foreign experience combined. In such a case inspection would be virtually impossible. Large urban areas were to get priority in grant allocations as would *collectivités* which had made meritorious efforts to overcome meagre resources.

#### Other *classes transplantées*

*Classes de mer* and *classes vertes* were declared, in the circular of 6 May 1971, to be suitable for every type of work and age from *maternelle* to *éducation permanente* [adult education], for a study of the milieu and for the basic main subjects, French and mathematics, of *disciplines d'éveil*, and of physical activities. Here manifestly are the signs of *l'éducation nouvelle*:

*Elles contribuent à l'épanouissement physique et psychique des enfants par la cure de santé qu'elles procurent, par l'activité intense qu'elles suscitent ... et par la modification des rapports adultes-enfants qu'elles créent* (Pierre 1979, 150).

[They contribute to the blossoming, physical and psychological, of the children by the improvement in health that they promote, by the intense activity that they provoke ... and by the changes in relationships between adults and children that they create].

They were still to be for complete classes with their regular teachers if possible, and they should last for at least three weeks though for *maternelles*, two weeks would suffice. For other *classes transplantées* stays could be shorter if the *Inspecteur départemental de l'éducation nationale* or the head teacher so decided (ibid, 150).

Other constraints were as for *classes de neige*, but no government grant was available. There should, if possible, be at least two classes together for the sharing of staffing responsibilities

and reducing costs per class. Popularisation of *classes transplantées* meant that it was no longer just the pioneering enthusiasts who went with their classes, less motivated teachers found it tiring being responsible 24 hours in 24 (ibid, 151).

For *classes de mer*, besides the visiting *instituteur/trice* there should be staff trained in study of marine environments; student-teachers specialising in open-air activities could complete a team. Programmes should be adjustable to take account of weather and tides but they should conform to the *tiers-temps* regime in that intellectual and physical activities should alternate – *rythme de vie*. Supervision of these classes would come under *Inspecteurs d'académie du département d'accueil* [receiving *département*] *de l'éducation nationale* as well as *Inspecteurs de la jeunesse et sports*. Since programmes included both academic and physical activities both inspectors could look in (ibid, 151-2).

### **Growth in number of staff and centres to help visiting classes**

When a class arrived for a *classe transplantée* valuable time was lost while the teacher found his or her way about and full potential of an area was never realised since few teachers were sufficiently knowledgeable. In the circular of 29 September 1971 the minister therefore laid down that there were going to be permanently staffed centres where teachers would find educational and scientific aid and equipment. Here is another case of centralised control.

The first fourteen centres for *classes de mer* were created in the *académies* of Rennes and Nantes following the above circular. The minister hoped to open centres progressively in other *académies*. In an *arrêté* of December 1977 forty-two permanent centres were listed for *classes de nature* (ibid, 172-6). By 1984 there were about a hundred (Penin 1993, 8).

The centres were organised to welcome school parties from distant *départements* for stays of three weeks and local classes for shorter periods; they would be open for the whole school year. Equally important was the staffing by a specialist *instituteur* to co-ordinate activities and promote liaisons, so enabling classes to start work promptly and make the stay fruitful. He/she would be advisor and facilitator, having specialist knowledge of the area. But *l'enseignant demeure responsable de sa classe en toutes circonstances* (Pierre 1979, 156). [The (visiting) teacher would remain responsible for his class under all circumstances].

This permanent *instituteur* would also look after seasonal centres where he would help as in the permanent centre. He was to sensitise teachers of his own *département* to problems of the environment, and he would work closely with teachers in training. He would be busy.

In 1968 the *Brevet d'état de moniteur de voile* [State diploma as instructor in sailing] was created. The *arrêté* of 10 June 1971 laid down that water based activity centres and sailing schools were to have their safety plans worked out and as far as possible neighbouring centres were to co-ordinate their rescue plans. Pupils, when on the water, were to be under constant surveillance. Holders of the *Brevet d'état de voile* would be responsible for organising precautions (ibid, 154). *Brevets* for other activities followed. Measures were

being taken at this time in England too to ensure skilled leadership and teaching in ODP but the governing bodies took the main responsibility for this.

From 1972 payments to teachers accompanying a *classe transplantée* were determined by a formula involving length of stay, extra hours worked, the teacher's salary, and a deduction for bed and board (ibid, 157).

Here we have three instances of central control. Centres being set up by order; outdoor pursuits/education qualifications being centrally organised and controlled by the ministry; and thirdly, the recompense to teachers being specified centrally. All quite different from the ways in which, at about the same time in England, LEAs did or did not set up centres as they thought fit, sporting bodies designed their own qualifications, and LEAs decided their own rates of recompense to teachers.

Though there were controls from the ministry they did not seem to inhibit the growth of French voluntary agency centres in addition to the 'official' ones. Centres were owned by various organisations, *communes*, French railways and industrial concerns, cities, regional branches of the *Ligue française de l'enseignement et de l'éducation permanente*, (LFEEP) and the *Union national de centres permanents d'initiation à l'environnement* (UNCPIE). Pierre lists 108 centres in all parts of France where *classes de nature* were run by LFEEP. The number of beds in a centre varied from 30 to 275. Activities included skiing and several ODP at many centres, various sports in some, environmental studies, swimming, riding, ecology, and sea activities predominantly in others; in some of the larger ones there were courses for *moniteurs* and *directeurs* (Pierre 1979, 178-204). Thus grew a multitude of facilities for once exclusive sports.

In 1972 *classes vertes-équitation* [country riding classes] were told they had to conform to the normal rules of *classes transplantées*, especially to the *tiers-temps* regime. They had been calling themselves *classes de cheval* and so trying to evade the *tiers-temps* rules (ibid, 157-8). Was this a case of teachers enjoying the activity so much they 'skipped' classwork? If so, they were going against the tendency still to give ample time to examination work.

### Changing conditions and expectations

By the 1970s, in the affluent society which France was increasingly becoming, *ski de fond* was no longer the wonder it had been for the first Vanves pupils; children now wanted the more exciting down-hill skiing which some would have done with their parents or one of the many commercial or semi-official organisations which run ski holidays for children, for example, USEP, UFOLEP, or UGSEL, the Roman Catholic equivalent of UFOLEP.

By 1983 the increasing number of various types of class, *de neige, de mer, de voile, de campagne, d'air pur, de montagne etcætera*, had been taken under the blanket term *classes de*

*découverte* [discovery]. Thus increased ODP in society was reflected in schools preparing children for a civilisation of leisure.

### **Frequency of visits**

Giolitto (1983) considered that about 50% of French school children received some three weeks of residential experience during their passage through *écoles maternelle* and *élémentaire*, i.e., from the age of about four to eleven. He thinks this is very slight compared with the 150 to 200 weeks that they spend in school during those years.

Compared with Cliffe House, Kirklees LEA's centre visited by the writer it seems reasonably generous. It had been calculated that if children in the LEA came for 2½ days each, i.e., Monday morning to Wednesday midday and a second group Wednesday midday to Friday afternoon, the centre could manage to receive about half an annual cohort. The centre received 2500 resident pupils annually in this way and another 2200 children on day visits. Thus, virtually all the children in the top junior year visited but only half of them experienced residence. Teachers found that even such a short practical field work period made teaching back at school much more meaningful to the children; their work reflected their understanding – and group rapport was enhanced. For 80% of the children visiting Cliffe House it was the first time they had spent a night away from their family; for Muslim children, especially girls, it was virtually 100%. In every group it was found some were unable to use a knife and fork – so Cliffe House provided social training as well as field work during the short visit.

Two and a half days for only half the children seems minute compared with the three weeks that half the French children enjoyed; and one wonders what long term impact such a short sojourn could have. Visits of less than five days are not counted in the French statistics so the real contrast is probably greater.

### **Motives for *demi-temps pédagogique et sportif***

Giolitto considered that one of the main objectives of the Vanves experiment was as a *cure de santé* [health cure], for which, he said, there was a need at the time, implying that the need was now reduced. This seems to correspond with the facts; poor living conditions for many before the war, and for some years after, aggravated by wartime food shortages, but followed by increasing prosperity as France prospered. A further implication is that other objectives of outdoor activity residential centres had now become more important:

*L'objectif fondamental de ces classes, ... est la formation globale de l'enfant, dans toutes ses composantes, corporelles, affectives, intellectuelles, sociales ... (Giolitto 1983, 2, citing Note de Service of 17 Sept 1982).*

[The fundamental objective of these classes, ... is the global training of the child, in all his being, body, emotions, intellect, social adjustment ... ].

But the reality for many teachers, *collectivités* and parents did not always correspond to these high minded ideals. The *classes de mer* and the *classes vertes* came into being later than the

*classes de neige* and were not tied to such a *sport de prestige* as skiing (ibid, 4), rather they were seen as including class work and field-work and therefore having an academic ambience. The snow classes were primarily seen as providing pleasure.

Giolitto questions whether health is now thought important at all because *classes de neige* have become so expensive they have been repeatedly shortened. The classes no longer go to 'discover' the mountains, the children demand downhill skiing and come only for that. Parents and *collectivités* find money for ski classes but fail to raise funds for *classes de mer* which could, for the same money, last much longer and therefore be educationally, socially and healthwise more worthwhile. An excuse is that the children are being prepared for the *civilisation de loisir*. No mention is now made of the motor control and knowledge of one's body which used to be claimed for *ski de fond*, of the taste for effort and for tenacity – pleasure is the sole reason cited for going. *Classes de découverte*, more commonly called *classes transplantées*, for sports such as sailing, tennis or riding were reasonably popular but were less well backed. Giolitto is astringent in his remarks.

### Costs of *classes de neige*

Vial [1981] in *Le Monde* reported that, after 28 years, *classes de neige* went on being ever more popular despite the fact that *le crédit budgétaire global n'a pas varié d'un centime depuis 1968-1969* [public finance has not varied by a penny since 1968-69]. And there was no uniformity of support from one *commune* or city to another so parents had very different burdens to bear if they sent their children to any kind of *classe transplantée*. In the *commune* of Mayenne in 1979-80 the town gave 345 FF per child for 75 children and the *département* gave 183 FF per child but the total cost of the *classe de neige* for each child was 2000 FF for 3 weeks; the difference of nearly 1500 FF was made up by *kermesses* [bazaars and fêtes] and the parents themselves. However, in Lille, 300 children went for 17 days and the parents had to pay only 122 FF towards the total cost, so clearly there was no central policy ensuring that parental contributions were evened out. But demand remained heavy and Vial thought that some communities were going to start operating a process of selection and also questioning the value of these classes. In 1981-82 children of Savoie received 90 FF towards the 1000 FF cost of ten days of *classe de neige*, leaving all parents to find 910 FF, which Giolitto considered to be heavy for some families. So much for the claimed French equality of opportunity in education regardless of locality. Primary education is about 54% a *commune* financial responsibility (Mermet 1992, 108).

Accommodation was increasingly expensive as were *moniteurs de ski* in a prosperous society. As subventions for individual *classes de neige* became effectively smaller, and sometimes unobtainable, the rules as to minimum length of stay and the requirement to observe *tiers-temps pédagogiques* became unenforceable.

Vial [1981] also considered that they should do something else besides skiing, for example, explore a local milieu that was different. And they should share accommodation with a class

from elsewhere in France to widen their social contacts. It seems that Vial is talking about something which had lost most of the features, *mi-temps* or *tiers-temps*, of a *classe de neige*. But it is apparent that there was still plenty of enthusiasm on the part of teachers, parents, *collectivités* and, of course, the children. The answer to rising costs was to curtail the stay still further so that no child was excluded for financial reasons.

*Classes de neige* were ever more costly as downhill skiing meant more expensive clothing, boots and skis, plus the price of mechanical uplift; distinctive uniforms became necessary to help keep classes together on crowded slopes. Yet it was these most expensive *classes transplantées* which were willingly backed. Snobbery and capitalistic values affected educational practice, suggests Giolitto. Ten days of snow classes were frequently preferred to three weeks of other *classe transplantée* for the same price.

As Fourestier foresaw, parents generally paid on a sliding scale according to their income but different *départements* and different *collectivités* had different arrangements. Beside the variations in costs per child imposed, there were differences in duration of the sojourn. Four weeks then three weeks were enforced, then this was eroded as costs rose. But Giolitto reports that the *Conseil général de l'Isère* would not help any class departing for less than three weeks even in the late 70s though other areas accepted ten days. Isère had a vested interest in maintaining the idea of a three week stay since it is one of the larger reception areas for skiing.

### **Varying costs of other *classes transplantées***

In 1981 the help that Paris gave to *classes transplantées* amounted to 0.5% of the capital's total local taxes (Giolitto 1983, 9). As with *classes de neige* there was no standardisation across France of costs to families. In 1981-82 Paris charged 645 Francs for three weeks of *classes de montagne* per child for the wealthiest families, reducing by one-third, two-thirds or three-thirds according to income. Grenoble charged for its *classes vertes*, from 6.40 FF to 30.40 FF per day according to family income for those in residence, and 3.70 F to 17 F for day use of the *centres*. In the *Département de l'Aisne* parents paid 25% of the real cost of *classes de mer*, i.e., 30 F per child per day (ibid, 11).

Help for poorer parents may be obtained from *Plan d'épargne populaire (PEP)* [a scheme for saving towards retirement], *conseils de parents d'élèves* [parents associations], *Caisses d'épargne* [savings societies], *Crédit agricole* [savings banks mainly in rural areas], *la Jeunesse au plein air* [an organisation to which virtually all secular youth organisations are affiliated], *Caisse d'allocations familiale* [family allowance local offices, who have more discretion than in the UK], and philanthropic clubs and societies. Pupils also earned money by washing cars, selling bread rolls and so on (ibid, 9).



### Effects of *classes transplantées*

The results of a period of residence in a *classe transplantée* are still declared by the teachers to be the now familiar ones, improved behaviour, confidence, social skills and autonomy. The last factor is thought by Giolitto to be especially the case with the *pré-élémentaire* children who quickly learn to do those things which their mothers or older siblings did for them such as dressing and looking after their own property. Especially, the teachers get to know their pupils and can treat them more appropriately when back at school. But not all French families had prospered equally. An inspector in the *Académie de la Savoie* claims that a *classe de montagne*, or any other *classe*, is especially valuable for the children from deprived backgrounds since they are, for the period, in a more emotionally secure and materially better situation than when at home.

Catering for the children of families who have been left behind in the growth of affluence would seem to be continuing the beneficial health goals of the old *colonies de vacances* combined with the advantages of the whole-class *éducatif* [socio-educational] and pedagogic goals of the first *classes de neige*. At the other end of the socio-economic scale the writer was told, when visiting *l'École des Roches*, whose fees are high, that the school no longer arranges school excursions, except for academically necessary field-work, because the parents can all afford to buy activity holidays for their children. Many of them do so because about 50% of the pupils come from broken homes, so such holidays continue the 'legitimate' absence of the children from home which the school already provides for a large part of the year. (Personal communication, Mr Daniel Dolfuss, *ancien Roc*, responsible for in-service courses for current staff of the school, October 1995).

Giolitto (ibid, 6) considers that *classes transplantées* can be especially effective in encouraging pupils who are suffering from *l'échec scolaire* [failure to make academic progress], to *remettre à flot certaines élèves issus de milieux défavorisés, scolairement bloqués pour des raisons affectives* [recover the balance and motivation of some pupils from deprived backgrounds who are academically blocked for emotional reasons] because the time away can provide a period of affective security, can encourage independence of thinking and improved motivation. Perhaps, for the children of the well-to-do, the *École des Roches* provides the affective stability which their homes may lack but for many more weeks of the year than the *classes transplantées* can offer the children *défavorisés*.

### *Classes de neige* as holidays?

It seems that *instituteurs*, parents and *collectivités* did not consider *classes de neige* as on all fours with other *classes transplantées*. For the latter there is acceptance that the time should have some relationship to academic work but *classes de neige* are seen as fun and happiness during which class work can vanish from everybody's mind. This applies especially during downhill skiing, but rather less during *ski de fond* when the teacher is very much more present and in control of a coherent, slow moving group so that environmental studies can more easily be touched on at any moment. A teacher quoted by Giolitto claims he has

insufficient time to organise a study of the milieu, he is far too busy making sure the children do not regress in the foundation subjects of French and mathematics; presumably they wanted to spend every minute skiing. And the teacher too?

All *classes transplantées* are subject to inspection by the receiving *académie* and:

*Inspecteurs ayant eu la malencontreuse idée de consacrer leur mémoire à la pédagogie des classes de neige, ... [les instituteurs] les considérant comme des intrus devant les empêcher de savourer leurs 'vacances' (ibid, 6).*

[Inspectors having had the untoward idea of reporting on the school work of the *classes de neige* ... [the teachers] considering them as intruders hindering them from enjoying their 'holiday'].

The idea that *classes transplantées* are a holiday for class and teacher is not entirely surprising. Giolitto makes clear that many teachers and children reported they were happy times when everybody was relaxed. One *inspecteur* wrote in his annual report:

*Les séjours ... représentent-ils souvent, pour les enfants les plus démunis, leur seule évasion et leur seul loisir (ibid, 7).*

[The visits ... often represent for the poorest children their only escape and their only holiday].

A Paris inspector said much the same, it was the only chance for the poor children of Paris to see the *réalités du monde rural*. Furthermore, the family allowance offices in France giving *Bons Vacances* grants for holidays for poor children, counted *classes transplantées* as being eligible.

### Healthy, sporting or educational

Giolitto considers that *classes transplantées* contain all three elements, health giving, sporting and educational, in varying degree even if some of the happenings are not in the *plan pédagogique et éducatif* [academic and socio-educative plan]. For the children there is *joie sans mélange* (ibid, 7) [unalloyed joy]. This last would probably apply to most children on residential visits in both countries. The first two factors, health and sport, must without doubt be present in any outdoor school visit and the academic work done in a *classe transplantée* ensures that all three are present. An English school visit would have a different balance but it is unlikely that the three would not all be there to some extent.

### Organising a *classe transplantée*

The initiative for a *classe transplantée* can come from a teacher. That means raising the money, finding and planning the best use of a location, and arranging the extra helpers (*éducateurs*), which usually means parents, to act as *animateurs* and minders. Giolitto says this often happens in a rural one-class school. Most often the initiative comes from the *collectivité* or parents. There may be pressure put on a teacher, who, unable for family reasons, or just unwilling, may refuse to teach the CM2 class (top prestige class), because it most often departs as a *classe transplantée*. But the teacher may *se laisser faire* (ibid, 8) [let

themselves be persuaded] though to have, as well, to elaborate an educational project is sometimes seen as mental cruelty.

### Local variations

Not all authorities agreed with the priority given to *classes de neige* or *transplantées*. Grenoble built up a network of *centres d'initiation à la nature* through which the city's children visited farms, every child having two non-residential days each season so totalling eight days every year. Generous compared with Kirklees (p 171 above). There were exchange visits by urban and rural classes, twinning of rural zones and urban neighbourhoods, and encouraging of school gardens. Green classes became the pivot of Grenoble's environmental policy. The centres allowed the children to escape from pollution to the fresh air where they also learnt about the rural environment and its activities.

Grenoble is well placed to take a cool look at skiing; the town is only 80 kilometres from Albertville which was the centre for the 1992 Winter Olympic Games.

### Problems and weaknesses

A problem for teachers when organising a *classe transplantée* is to persuade parents to accept an unconventional time and so avoid crowds. A *classe de mer*, for example, can function from September to December and from March, because it can study *le milieu marin* as well as doing some sailing, and it can include elements of a *classe verte*. Thus it is rich in possibilities, the work being adjusted according to season, weather, and tides. But parents tend to think that dealing with the sea must happen only in summer. Changing established thinking is difficult.

Giolitto (ibid, 15) quotes the Bachat-Bouloud centre in the Isère region which consisted of eight "*villages*", each taking four classes, so totalling some 800 children. He thought this to be a place to avoid; how could a child retain a sense of identity when queuing for breakfast in such a centre? A discovery class requires natural surroundings and a human environment, so encouraging achievement of the socio-educational objectives. The environment should be rich in natural and human features; it should be easy to reach, not be too popular with tourists and there should be few other *classes transplantées* there at the same time!

The same writer details other faults of centres. Those so high in the mountains that snow is assured but special transport is needed to get children and luggage up and down again, so leading to isolation from human settlement; too low so that time is lost daily in getting to the snow; distant from the sea or lake being used for sailing, more than an hour each way being common; and newly built centres lacking any history of human settlement.

Aims of discovery classes include making children aware of the world through living temporarily in surroundings new to them, by the sea, in the country, or, for the country child, *classes de ville* to widen experience and demystify the city.

The ownership of centres shows a great variety. As in Britain, some owners are associations with a general or specialist interest in the environment, some are privately owned, while others belong to industries, to *collectivités*, whether *commune*, *département* or city, or a confessional or secular organisation. Most centres welcome *classes transplantées* as well as *colonies de vacances*, family groups and people of the third age in order to keep up the bed-night usage. Giolitto mentions the *Centres permanents de classes de nature (CPCN)* and the *Union nationale des centres permanents d'initiation à l'environnement (UNCPIE)*. These two movements have 14 and 41 centres respectively. They have specialist teachers, some financed by the ministry of education, on their permanent staffs where they take discovery classes for predominantly field-work in biology or other life sciences. There are always elements of environmental study and of sports in the courses of CPCN and CPIE. Below are examples taken from CPIE's list of some 200 courses offered in 1994 (UNCPIE 1993). UNCPIE also organises work camps where people between 15 and 25 work on conservation projects, repairing footpaths, renovating old chapels, châteaux, river banks and so on.

#### February

The Jura under snow

#### Activities

*ski de fond*, snow-shoeing, dog-sledging, study of tracks of wild animals; For ages 6 to 12

Monts de Forez (Central Massif)

study of nature in the mountains - rock-climb, walk, mountain bike (VTT); For ages 6 to 17

Vallée de l'Ognon (Franche-Comté)

listening to nature - VTT, canoe, photography, video, astronomy; For ages 9 to 12

#### April

Trégor (Brittany)

sailing on a traditionally rigged boat For age 16+

Jura - Life in the mountains

VTT, speleology, walking For ages 6 to 12

Grandes Causses (Midi-Pyrénées)

discovering karstic milieu through introduction to speleology For adults

#### June

Savoie

glacier touring; For good walkers

Savoie

VTT; beginners or improvers For any age

Pierre (1979, 177–204) lists some 120 permanent centres belonging to *La Ligue française de l'enseignement et de l'éducation permanente (LFEEP)*. A further large organisation with a range of services for children is the *Fédération générale des associations départementales des pupilles de l'enseignement public (PEP)*. PEP ran its first *colonie de vacances* in 1920 and now has more than 250 *centres de vacances et loisirs* where a wide range of courses in sports, hobbies and recreation take place. The centres are also used for *classes transplantées*, including *classes de neige*, *de mer*, *verte* and so on in term time.

Giolitto discusses the variations in centres used for *classes transplantées*, especially in the case of snow classes. As in England centres varied from those providing full-board,

classrooms, laboratories with equipment for field studies, and specialist resident staff, to simple centres without beds, and facilities only for eating packed meals. Small residential centres restrict the children's social development as can big impersonal ones. Small centres may have nowhere for the children to play, even with the snow; medium centres with forty beds may try to squeeze in two classes of twenty-five, or take in a group of the third age who are incompatible with a class of children. The classroom may be the dining room or in the distant village school. Giolitto is hard to satisfy – or cautionary.

### The teachers

Some CM2 teachers share the stay with the CM1 teacher so each does half the period, and the latter can see how his last year's class has progressed; this arrangement can be advantageous. But inspectors reported an increasing number of teachers with suspect motivation; pressure by parents or the *commune* is not an ideal motivator. As an arrangement becomes more generalised so the job may be done as a duty, without enthusiasm. Some teachers refuse to do more than their weekly 27 hours, do not eat with the children nor even stay in the same building. The *tiers-temps* programme and the responsibilities of daily supervision cannot be fulfilled with such a grudging attitude. Since every *classe transplantée* must have extra staff, often parents, as *animateurs*, the supervision is left to them. The writer has seen analogous behaviour in England which resulted in a loss of benefit and joy all round. It is that spirit which leads to the children gaining so little that, as Giolitto puts it:

*Au cours de ces sorties, les enfants voient sans regarder, entendent sans écouter, bref, recueillent une vision fugace et kaléidoscopique du milieu, un peu comme celle que la télévision leur donne du monde (1983, 64).*

[In the course of these visits, the children see without looking, hear without listening, in short, they gather a fleeting and kaleidoscopic picture of the milieu, a bit like that which the television gives them of the world].

Unhappily it is not only the loss of learning and satisfaction which such teachers cause, his attitude to his work is demonstrated to children and helpers.

Another attitude is found, which, as an inspector, Giolitto could not agree with but was sympathetic towards. An *instituteur* said that the mornings were for class teaching, the afternoons were for skiing. The objectives of the *classe de neige* were to let the children ski as much as possible because the stay was so limited, to be happy and to avoid accidents. It was then necessary for Giolitto to spoil this simple plan by pointing out the *nécessité d'un projet pédagogique* (ibid, 62). One wonders how much inspector time was consumed in chasing kindly teachers who omitted or skimmed the project. Is examination work losing some of its dominance, at least in competition with skiing?

Giolitto considers *classes transplantées* in a contrasting, for the children, part of France to be an effective way of opening their eyes to their own home environment and giving them the motivation and another perspective from which to study it when they return home. Which is virtually what Töpffer said well over a century earlier about *voyages en zig-zag*.

### **King-sports de pleine nature**

Giolitto (ibid, 67) considers that three 'king-sports' dominate *classes transplantées*; skiing, sailing and horse-riding. Besides these there are walking, canoeing, cycling, speleology, board sailing, sub-aqua, orienteering, and others. The 'king sports' are the most expensive and so were once exclusive. They are also those in which the participants do not have to carry their own weight in order to move easily – which may help towards their popularity.

Giolitto questions how fully these 'king-sports' really are open-air sports. Downhill skiing is restricted to runs, often crowded, uses mechanical uplift and sometimes artificial snow; sailing is normally on a sheltered piece of water in tame weather, and riding is often in a riding-school, full of odours and roofed over. And the proprietors want their expensive facilities fully used. In contrast, walking, running, jumping, swimming, climbing [*hébertisme!*] are free and easily integrated into a *classe verte* programme involving the children more closely with nature and promoting their full development.

The 'king-sports' are advertised in some centres as the means of making contact with the environment, i.e., they are used for moving to interesting areas for environmental study. The sports *moniteur* must then transform him/herself into an *animateur de découverte du milieu*, and the children must, to get to the area of study, possess a mastery of skiing, sailing or riding which the *classes transplantées* are incapable of imparting in the time available (ibid, 68). There is an impasse here. Most children quickly acquire sufficient skill in *ski de fond* to be able to cover a few kilometres. There is also the problem that UNCM met in staffing their mountain camps. This is to find the skilled technician with the right personality to lead young people, but here also with the academic background to teach *étude du milieu*. The writer has found the same problem in English outdoor pursuits centres (not field study centres) when this polyvalence was required; it was not popular with resident staff though all were graduate teachers but often in inappropriate subjects.

### **Ski instruction**

Cross country skiing (*de fond*) is best suited for penetration into natural areas, so experienced *instituteurs* can take their classes for little tours after the children have had a couple of days practice, snowshoes being the next most suitable accessories. Downhill skiing is a more difficult skill and teaching it is hedged about by legal constraints zealously enforced by the ski schools. *Classes transplantées* are taught by ski instructors of the local ski school or of the class's centre with its own qualified instructors. *Instituteurs* complain that, despite necessarily holding a *Brevet d'état*, the instructors are dogmatic, theoretical, slap-dash and unpunctual; children often being fobbed off, after two or three days, with unqualified aspirant instructors. Giolitto says the *ski moniteurs* forget *classes de neige* provide them with continuity of work through low as well as high season. Despite the dominance of downhill skiing, the Inspector of the Academy of Haute Savoie says that

initiation into skiing through *classes de neige* must remain a general training and not a preparation for competition, so they will not be renamed *classes de ski* (ibid, 78).

### Statistics

The extent of the popularity of *classes de neige* may be judged from Ministry figures. All other kinds of *classes transplantées* were consistently fewer and of shorter duration. But hints that *classes de neige* were becoming too expensive for what the children gained from them seemed to be becoming more widespread. In 1987-88 10% (425 600) of all primary children aged five or more experienced a *classe transplantée*, by 1991-92 this had increased to 12% (584 780) but the percentage of *classes de neige* had fallen from 44% (9 680 classes) to 34% (8 923 classes), an absolute fall of about 8%. Meanwhile *classes vertes* increased from 30% to almost 34%, and *classes de mer* increased marginally to about 20% of the total of 26 129 *classes transplantées* (19 600 1987-88). As there were 43 019 elementary schools in France (Mermet 1992, 106) this works out that about 60% of elementary schools sent a *classe transplantée* away in 1991-92, if, a big if, no school sent more than one class. The important figure is that 12% of all primary children went away in 1991-92.

*Classes de neige* were, on average, of the longest duration, 12 days in 1987-88 compared with a mean of 10 days in 1991-92; 11 days in 1987-88 for all *classes transplantées*. Older children had longer stays, CM2 (ages 10-11) averaged 11 days (13 in 1987-88) and *maternelles* the shortest, 7 days (previously 8 days). CM2 classes increased from 28% (1987-88) of the total to 31% in 1991-92 while *maternelles* held at about 5%. By 1991-92 fifty-five per cent of all stays were for less than ten days, 25% lasted 10 to 15 days, and 20% lasted 15 to 30 days – a remnant of the original four-week stays persisted.

Generally, conurbations produced higher percentages of *classes transplantées* than rural areas, Paris 16%, though there were exceptions such as Tarn-et-Garonne where 30% of children enjoyed a *classe transplantée* in 1991-92 but in adjacent Lot-et-Garonne less than 5% of children participated. The main reception area for *classes de neige* was Haute-Savoie, for *classes vertes* Savoie, and for *classes de mer* Finisterre and the Vendée (Ministère de l'Éducation, 1989; 1992).

The rules that the whole class must be there with their regular teacher were still nominally in force. The ministry had considered ten days to be the minimum effective length of stay for older primary children but that now seemed to be used as a guide only. Since no visit of five days or less is recorded Wednesday and weekend trips are not counted, nor are ski holidays during the month of February when all schools close for two weeks. The real incidence of children experiencing skiing, not necessarily with their classmates, must therefore be appreciably higher than the official figures suggest but by how much it is impossible to say. If sojourns in outdoor pursuit centres in England of five days or less were not counted the statistics, if they existed, would be pitiable. The 1992-93 programme for White Hall,

Derbyshire had three courses covering six nights and 15 five day (four night) courses for pupils of minimum age 14, 'a taste of adventure and the first time away from home', and three one-night primary age courses. All other courses were for one or 2 nights; other LEA centres had comparable programmes. There are LEA centres which emphasise primary school visits but mainly for environmental work rather than adventurous activities (DES 1985, 13).

### ***English demi-temps pédagogique et sportif!***

An attempt was made by an English LEA to combine academic work with a ski visit to Austria (Disley 1971) but by French standards many weaknesses were evident.

Surrey LEA sent 210 children to Austria in January and February 1971 and, in an attempt to reduce academic loss

We decided to bracket ski-ing with environmental studies and language learning — ski-ing would be the 'peg' that we would hang our project on, but the village environment would be utilised and exploited in every possible way to [encourage] learning (ibid, 8).

The county advisers helped to plan projects in 'geography, language, economics, etc.', and the pilot of the aircraft gave a running geography lesson over the inter-com., each child having a map of the route:

The range of ability of the pupils was mixed, as were the age groups. The majority of the young people were from secondary schools and in their 3rd year (ibid, 9).

Every child kept a daily log-book, drawings being encouraged. Tape-recordings of sounds from cow-bells to the rattle of ski-lifts were made, photographs were taken and projects were written up. If children decided they did not like skiing they devoted their time to the projects, as did those 'who could not ski'! This is extraordinary since ski lessons must surely have been built into the project, and few children would be able to ski at the outset. No indication is given of the length of stay nor of the number of schools involved. Academic high-flyers were encouraged to take on more difficult environmental projects but the hotels did not always provide adequate writing space and quiet time. The language project 'was a failure, mainly because the Austrians don't speak good German'; another extraordinary statement considering that the language adviser had been consulted.

The children were of mixed ages and from several schools, some primary, some secondary so, apart from a parents' tape and photograph evening, no follow-up was possible to the project work. A contrast with the careful and well tried French procedures; such mixing would have been forbidden from the first moment of planning.



## Secondary School ODP

With the exception of Cases 1 and 2 (p 141-4 above), secondary school ODP visits have hardly been mentioned. In the 1950s and 1960s, children up to the age of 14 could be in *classes transplantées* but as re-organisation into primary and secondary education developed from the 60s, pupils above age 11 were progressively excluded (Appendix 2).

Cases 1 and 2 were attempts to introduce secondary pupils to ODP but it is clear from Fischer's (1992, 9) figures below that little headway had been made in the following 25 years. The figures show what percentage of secondary schools included these activities in six volunteer pilot *académies* in 1991-92.

|   |         |        |
|---|---------|--------|
| Athletics   |         | c.100% |
| Small pitch games - basket, hand, volley-ball (each activity) |         | 80+%   |
| Football, swimming, gymnastics                                | ( " " ) | 67%    |
| Rugby, dance, table-tennis                                    | ( " " ) | 33%    |
| Tennis, judo  | ( " " ) | 15-17% |
| Orienteering, rock-climbing                                   | ( " " ) | 12-13% |
| Canoeing, skiing, sailing                                     | ( " " ) | 4%     |

He says the figures give a rough idea of the spread of teaching of PE, games and ODP but he gives no guidance on how often, say, orienteering and rock-climbing occur; once a year for a week? A half-day every week for a term? In or out of school time? For what ages? Fischer was head of PE and Sport in Office DLC 18 concerned with *lycées* and *collèges*.

Fischer's office set up a working party in 1991 to see how it might be possible to encourage more *activités physiques de pleine nature (APPN)* [ODP], in secondary schools. The working party became a *groupe de pilotage* and volunteers were called for to join the experiment. Six *académies* were given extra resources of man hours to set up a system of encouragement and information exchange between *académies* and between schools. By 1992/3 the backing had been increased to the equivalent of eight full-time posts. Again the ministry aimed to learn from a pilot project and perhaps then generalise it more widely. One hopes it is not crippled by reduced resources as happened with *tiers-temps*.

Constant (1992, 2) gives three aims of PE and Sport, and considers that all three are equally inherent in ODP. The three are: to develop in children and adolescents basic organic capacities and physical skills; to give access to areas of culture through acquiring sporting and expressive skills which contribute to civilisation; and to give the means to maintain and care for potentialities of the body throughout the different ages of one's life.

As Constant says it is not always easy to practise ODP because of lack of time or facilities within reach of a school, which can lead to their marginalisation, yet the reality of society towards the end of this century means that at weekends there are increasing numbers of

people going to the sea, the country or the mountains, and introducing their children to these milieus. There is a growing interest in open country, and during the holidays *une forte majorité* (ibid, 3) [a great majority] of five million [*sic*] *lycéen(ne)s* and *collégien(ne)s* practise activities on and in the water, in the country and among the mountains. Finally, the growing number of accidents, some fatal, which happen in ODP in society attest to a need for, and an absence of, training in the basic rules of safety. Constant says the schools cannot ignore this societal tendency which shows across the whole of Europe. He is arguing here that the schools have a duty to acknowledge the 'society of leisure', a vast change from pre-*Front populaire*.

Fischer and Constant were addressing a four-day conference of enthusiasts from the six *académies* involved in the pilot experiment and it would be easy to be carried away by the enthusiasm shown in the papers presented but it is salutary to look at Fischer's figures again to see how few secondary schools touch ODP.

The results of an enquiry in the *académie* of Grenoble presented at the gathering shows that ODP was staffed in 35% of cases by the PE staff alone, in 16% with the aid of colleagues, with parents' help in 30%, and 'external/other' in 19% of cases (Grenoble 1992, 284). In the same enquiry, reasons given for there being no ODP in some secondary schools were, in descending order of importance, organisation too complex; no equipment; no suitable site; ODP unimportant; too many pupils; staff unqualified; pupils not interested (ibid, 286). Some of this sounds rather like the excuses from *instituteurs* for not giving PE lessons. And this was in the *académie* of Grenoble containing a wealth of ODP possibilities.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Question 2 What official agencies instituted these two events? Were there voluntary agency models already in use?

This question needs to be reworded slightly here to ask who was responsible for the continuation and development of ODP activities.

Once the Vanves *mi-temps* type of school visit had become widely accepted and had mutated into a variety of other activity visits it was clear that some new centres were needed with specialist staff which the minister of education decided should be founded to help visiting teachers and classes make the most of their stays. There were also voluntary and other bodies who had centres for similar or other specialist purposes – some of them subsidised by the ministry of education or other ministries such as that for agriculture. It was a much more centralised decision making than in England where each LEA decided to open their own centre(s) or not. Similar disparity showed in deciding the qualifications needed by specialist staff. At first some LEAs devised their own qualifications but Governing Bodies of sports, independently of each other, constructed theirs which generally became required for

residential staff and desirable for teachers taking school parties to centres. The independence of Governing Bodies led to there being little standardisation of format from one to another.

Another example of French central control came in enforcing a *tiers-temps* programme on errant riding classes (*classes de cheval*) to maintain the flow of class work, it supported the claimed equality of academic input across the French education system.

The vast growth of demand for ODP in the two countries produced, as the hypothesis in chapter 7 suggests, similar responses but adapted to the history, values and norms of each country.

**Question 4** How important was New Education in encouraging ODP in French education? New Education believes in the value of practical experience as part of the educational process for all children; from Reddie's time at least this included all aspects of the child's being. The Vanves experiment was an attempt to put New Education principles into practice. From that time variations of *mi-temps* and *tiers-temps*, to some extent at school and especially through *classes transplantées*, have given children experience that combined academic classwork, physical activity, social interaction with their peers and with adults in residence together, and a look at, if not a study of, an environment different from that of their home and school. This is recognisably a New Education inspiration yet also similar to what Töpffer was doing. Marine study centres and centres in other milieu offer educational experiences in the same vein. The examples of courses organised by the *Union nationale des centres permanents d'initiation à l'environnement (UNCPIE)* (p 177 above) illustrate this well. We may hypothesise that though *éducation nouvelle* would be unlikely to be known by that title by teachers in France in the 1970s, the principles involved are still the same as those of the first Vanves *classes de neige* and of the Scout camps of *l'École des Roches* in the Cotentin Peninsular in 1913.

**Question 5** How important was industrialisation in the growth of ODP?

Constant (1992) rightly says that it may be difficult for a school to practise ODP because of lack of nearby facilities but the products of industrialisation have put facilities very much more within reach of members of society than they were two centuries ago. What took Rochefoucauld (ch 2 above) two days on horseback (Geneva to Chamonix) is little more than an hour now by car or mini-bus so that *Genevois* can enjoy two whole days of skiing in a weekend. They can also spend time on the glaciers or rock faces and ridges in a weekend because there are various forms of mechanical uplift installed which can, in minutes, elevate them to a height which would have taken Rochefoucauld hours to achieve on foot and horseback. This sort of pattern began to emerge as soon as powered transport developed; trains took people from Manchester to the Peak District for day rambles, and climbers from Paris and London to the Alps for holidays, from which sprang specialist clubs. The internal combustion engine accentuated this tendency; the ownership of private cars and mini-buses, which became more common after the second world war, put ever more areas suitable for

ODP within easy reach. This means that for many schools even a half-day can make canoeing, rock-climbing or other ODP possible. One may hypothesise that industrialisation has created the free time and wealth, the transport, the new material for special clothing, footwear, boats and canoes, sails, skis and so on which have put a choice of ODP at the disposal of the populations of advanced countries. Another hypothesis follows which is that outdoor pursuits may be pursued at an appropriate level almost throughout life whereas competitive, especially contact, team sports can only be continued up to a relatively early age. John W Dudderidge, canoeing, Olympic Games 1936, is still canoeing gently each week in his 90s.

**Question 6** What were the benefits claimed to be derived from ODP at different times?

At the time of the Vanves experiment the health of children was still a cause for concern, for the war with its deprivations was only recently ended and TB was not uncommon. The *colonies de vacances* were even more directly concerned with health during the first half century of their existence but by the 1970s school medical inspections and a generally rising standard of living made children's health a less pressing problem. There were several other arguments put forward however to justify the *classes transplantées* experience. Giolitto said that they were a means of training children in their entirety, bodily, emotionally, intellectually and socially, which in fact is not very different from Töpffer's and Fourestier's claims, though the latter specifically claimed gaining knowledge of one's body and a taste for effort and tenacity. Now however, Giolitto says regretfully, the aim is to enjoy the 'holiday' and learn how to adjust to the 'civilisation of leisure' which had by now arrived. But it had not arrived for every family. For poor children a *classe transplantée* was an opportunity comparable with that of the early *colonies*, a chance to see the countryside or the sea, to breathe fresh air, to have substantial meals and to enjoy space to play. French family allowance offices give grants for such breaks as holidays. For children from dysfunctional families and for those who had lost motivation to work in school the visit can be an opportunity to have a break from a trying or damaging situation, and to recover emotional balance. Changes of behaviour in new situations are to be expected; for example, young children learn independence or autonomy when required to dress themselves. Relationships among the children and with the adults change and teachers learn more about their charges, social behaviour is modified as was found at the Kirklees LEA centre, even a mechanical and social skill such as the use of a knife and fork is learned. Undoubtedly, horizons are widened. An hypothesis could be that claims for the benefits derived from ODP through the school, especially when involving residence, though modifying slightly over the years, tend to be consistent over time and across national boundaries.

**Question 8** What measures, and by whom, are taken to regulate risks in ODP in education?

State intervention is again the norm in this matter in France. The ministry of education recommended that two classes should be together so that staff would not be on duty for 24

hours out of 24 every day of the week; this would certainly improve safety margins by avoiding staff fatigue. Specialist staff were to be available where appropriate, for example, for *classes de mer* where lack of knowledge on the part of the visiting teachers could put the whole party at risk. Qualifications at State level were inaugurated from the late 1960s; people holding these *Brevets* would take responsibility during the activity, for example, sailing though the visiting teacher would still remain responsible for his/her class overall. Departmental inspectors for classwork and for the physical activity would naturally have safety as a factor to be noted during their tours of inspection.

From the ministry office of the *Direction des Lycées et Collège (DLC)* 18 efforts are being made to see if secondary schools can again include ODP in the curriculum because of the Europe wide increase in accidents due to ignorance of the risks involved. Lessons in ODP at secondary level including emphasis on safety measures might be more likely to have an impact than they would in primary schools where understanding may be slight and can be easily forgotten in the longer interval to adulthood. The ministry of education is here really intervening to influence pupils' future leisure; no longer declaring leisure not to be the business of the school but accepting that many of its current pupils will certainly take to ODP, whether the schools do anything about it or not. It is thought better to canalise the future climbers, sailors, canoeists and so on into safe and aware practice of those activities rather than letting them pick up the rudiments haphazardly, an enormous change from just before Jean Zay.

One may hypothesise that at ministry level thinking was keeping pace with modern developments in society; but the same was not necessarily happening at school staff level

And a second hypothesis

Central control of the safety regulations makes for uniformity and therefore more widespread understanding and acceptance. Uniformity should avoid idiosyncratic regulations which have occurred in some LEAs when devised by well-meaning but inexperienced local councillors.

Question 9 What part has social class and growing affluence played in society's attitudes to leisure and ODP?

Rising affluence in French society coupled with more obligatory paid holiday (5 weeks from 1982) for workers has resulted in an increasing pool of people able to take to ODP. This has been reflected in the ministry of education accepting that they cannot ignore what are becoming pastimes for millions of people though whether schools will follow is uncertain. More centres are being founded and courses arranged for schools in term-time and during the holidays. Fashion, or the status of former *sports d'élite*, downhill skiing, riding and sailing, Giolitto's 'king-sports', had dominated the choice of which kind of *classe de découverte* to organise and back by schools and *collectivités* until recently but in the early 1990s it began to look as though either financial pressure or common sense were beginning to prevail, for, as Giolitto suggested, a *classe* of one of the other subjects, *verte, d'air pur* and so on could be

twice as long for the same price as a ski, sailing or riding class. One may hypothesise that the present generation of parents do not remember these sports as being for the elite only, they became more open to the whole of society in the decade following the Vanves experiment so they are losing their cachet.

Question 10 What influence have examinations had on PE and ODP in French schools?

Examinations have had a dominating influence in French schools for approaching two centuries but instances of *instituteur* non-conformity have occurred in the course of *classes transplantées*. Teachers allowing skiing to usurp the time of the required study of the milieu project, and attempts to avoid *tiers-temps* classwork by renaming *classes verte-equitation* as *classes de cheval* had caused the interdiction of *inspecteurs*. As all children move to 6<sup>e</sup> in a *collège* since the reorganisation of schools in the 1960s the immediate examination pressure in CM2 is postponed though there is still the need to achieve well enough to move up to the next class each year.

Hypothesis There may be a weakening of examination dominance in primary schools now that most children move to 6<sup>e</sup> at age eleven.

Question 12 Why was *demi-temps pédagogique et sportif* so successful in the 1950s?

There is little doubt that *mi-temps* was instrumental in setting the pattern for whole-class visits during term-time. It broke the long established custom of every school day being an intellectual slog yet *mi-temps*, during *classes transplantées*, did not reduce class work time and results did not apparently suffer. It began as France was beginning to prosper, when expectations aroused by the Popular Front and built up during the Occupation were still fresh in people's minds and the idea of the *civilisation de loisir* was a reasonably realisable goal for the average family. As *classes transplantées* became shorter and *mi-temps* was replaced by *tiers-temps* and finally the time, for snow classes at any rate, became full-time skiing but lasting only a week or so, the feared loss of work time became less critical since the French equivalent of the one time English 11+ had been abolished. That important examination, determining whether the *baccalauréat* was to be beyond reach or not, was no more. We may hypothesise that the *mi-temps* notion happened to be the right idea at the right time for encouraging the development of ODP in French (primary) education and in France.

## CHAPTER 10

### TWO NEW FRENCH ORGANISATIONS

#### *LES FRANCAS and UCPA*

In chapter 4 the beginnings of two organisations for young people resulting from war time experiences were outlined. In post-war years they became FFC (Les Francas) and UCPA.

#### *Les Francs et Franches Camarades (FFC) — later Les Francas*

Based on principles drawn from New Education, the secular scouts and with the aid of CEMEA [*Centre d'entraînement aux méthodes d'éducation active*] *Les Francs et Franches Camarades (FFC)* aimed to provide a socio-educative leisure organisation for young people from childhood through to adulthood. Its initial impetus was provided by the stresses caused by the Occupation.

The Allied invasion of France began on 6 June 1944 and fighting continued on French territory until early 1945. Nevertheless, the *Francs et franchises camarades (FFC)* held their first *stage* [training course] before the end of 1944 when activists of the *Éclaireurs*, *Instituteurs*, *Auberges de jeunesse* and the *Ligue française de l'enseignement* gathered in an atmosphere of enthusiasm and confidence, *aucune fausse note ne trouble le climat de travail* (Rosa 1986, 45) [no false note spoils the atmosphere of work]. Recruitment of staff and members by a national team of two paid workers began. They called meetings of the staffs of educational establishments, spread information about the new organisation and appealed for help. Within four months there were 136 part-time assistants, the full timers had doubled to four and there were a thousand members divided into three age ranges; 6 to 10, 11 to 14, and 15 to 21. CEMEA were running the initial training courses which were designed to introduce the volunteers to New Education content and methods.

The basis of the programme was work adapted to interest children according to age and was clearly inspired by *Éducation nouvelle*. Outdoor activities were an important part of the organisation's work from the beginning; French agencies are very ready to mix physical, aesthetic and intellectual activities in their programmes. Six types of work were foreseen: 1) physical activities including ODP, 2) art and music, 3) manual work, 4) exploring the environment, 5) service, and 6) creation of French citizens.

Permanent staff were recruited from the teaching world, and from those working as *éducateurs* with the full range of youth (Rosa 1986, 40). FFC was free to employ

outstanding individuals, whether qualified or not. The *Grand Mouvement*, as it was at first called, was firmly secular though no young person was ever refused membership.

## Finance

Financial problems became pressing though membership grew encouragingly. By 1947 there were 20 000 members, and 1 500 adult *guides*, as voluntary staff were called, but money was short. As in England, economic stringencies hit the country in 1947 and 1948. The *Journal officiel* of 8 March 1947 reported that many millions of francs requested for the training of *moniteurs* for *colonies de vacances*, for *mouvements de jeunesse*, for *centres d'éducation populaire*, and for *auberges de jeunesse* were all refused; and the building of a national school of skiing and alpinism was shelved for the time being. The *Francas* journal *Camaraderie* said that balancing the national budget was important but not at the price of sacrificing the young (ibid, 50). The stress caused bickering among organisations which had been collaborating. The solidarity of war-time alliances was disintegrating and FFC experienced the effects of an indifferent society. Aid to youth organisations in England was heavily cut during the same years. The cold war (against Eastern Europe) for Britain and France, and war in Indo-China for the French, strained national resources.

Inflation was rampant. Voluntary organisations had to reduce their activities and were neglected by official agencies. The staff of FFC could not be paid regularly and had to live on credit, the *Éclaireurs de France* reduced their paid staff from one hundred to 27. These were difficult years during which the Langevin-Wallon Plan was being discussed and Monod was setting up his *classes nouvelles*.

During 1947-48 Pierre François, founder of FFC, feared it would collapse but 1949 was more promising. J-A. Sénèze, an initial member of FFC in 1944, who had been secretary-general of the *Syndicat national des instituteurs (SNI)* and then of the *Ligue de l'enseignement*, became *délégué général* of FFC while remaining with the *Ligue*; this shows how close were the public teaching profession and FFC. In July 1950 the SNI affirmed that instruction was not the sole function of *instituteurs*, they should also be *éducateurs* (ibid, 62). The lessons of the war were still operating to some extent among teachers, certainly at the level of the union delegates, who accepted a pastoral element, as Borotra had wished, in their work and as Monod was advocating. Many teachers did and do work with children, for example, in the Scouts or in *colonies* or *centres de vacances*.

In 1953 the aims of FFC were stated as: to maintain the secular character of public education, to make known active methods of education, and to help parents with socio-educational orientation, or guidance, of their children. Membership was now 55 000 with 3 500 *guides*. An increasing number of members were coming from secondary schools and *Cours complémentaires* despite the pressure of examinations, some older pupils helping with the



younger children. At the request of municipalities FFC was now organising *colonies* and *camps de vacances* and training their staff.

### **FFC trying new ideas**

In 1957 FFC began developing *centres aérés* on the periphery of towns which children could easily reach for a day of activities in the fresh air, then go home again in the evening. Centres were open throughout the year on Thursdays and Sundays, and every day during the holidays. The idea has spread and the name became *Centre de vacances sans hébergement*. (CVSH) [Holiday centre without sleeping accommodation] and then *CLSH* (*Centre de loisir sans hébergement*). Besides other pastimes there were day trips for cycling, walking, and scrambling from these centres.

In these decades the flight from the countryside to the towns accelerated, leading to overcrowding. In 1946 the urban population was 53%, by 1968 it was 70% of the French population (Ferrandon & Waquet 1984, 10) and approaching 90% urban or semi-urban by 1990 (Mermet 1992, 182). The incidence of juvenile delinquency, which had been falling from 1945 to 1957, increased appreciably and the age of delinquents was going down. As Rosa says (1986, 78), lack of play space condemned the young to boredom. Empty spaces were being built on so facilities were reducing when they needed to increase.

In 1958 the Fifth Republic came into being with, temporarily, de Gaulle as Prime Minister. The government, right wing and Catholic inclined, blamed delinquency on the lack of moral values and of religion, and put the blame on families [shades of Vichy] but also reflecting the traditional view that *éducation* was the job of the family. They did little to improve facilities because of the pressing problems of inflation and of revolt in Algeria. They appeared to distrust youth organisations; in 1959 secular youth movements co-ordinated plans to oppose any government take over.

In the summer of 1959 the *blousons noirs* [hooligans] appeared armed with bicycle chains. They were condemned by government and the newspapers, with no attempt to understand the roots of their behaviour. At the same time the Albemarle Committee was formulating its recommendations for the youth service in England where delinquency was also creating moral panic (Ministry of Education 1960).

The adoption by the United Nations of the Rights of the Child charter in November 1959 encouraged FFC. The school leaving age was raised to sixteen, although 50% to 75% of pupils were already staying on to that age; the Act was for those entering school that year at the age of six so it would have little effect until 1967; but FFC foresaw it would have to work with older young people.

After 20 years Les Francas increasingly shared its knowledge, skills and principles with other compatible organisations as in November 1964 at a four-day conference on *L'enfant*

*dans la cité* [The child in the city]. Here FFC celebrated its experience with three hundred and fifty representatives of other secular organisations. Education, social work, medicine, sociology, architecture, parents, psychology, youth and ODP were represented. The main speaker was Pierre François, Founder-President of FFC, now head of Youth Education at UNESCO (Rosa 1986, 109-10).

Internal re-structuring of FFC ensured that communication and democratic control was maintained throughout the organisation. Each *guide* participated in the deliberations of his local group, and each child participated in the planning of his own leisure centre and groups. They were giving members and staff experience of democracy, not just talking about it. The aims are overtly socio-educational (*éducatif*) as in many French youth organisations.

### **Les Francas impartial but active during strikes**

The student and worker strikes of 1968 created opportunities for FFC. They persuaded strikers and employers to continue services for children; striking bus drivers, in agreement with the union and the bus owners against whom they were striking, collected children then took them back at the end of the day – neither drivers nor owners charging for this; factory management and municipalities gave financial aid and help in kind, striking employees who were also *guides* brought fellow strikers to help too – some became regular *guides* thereafter (ibid, 129-35).

### **Relations with schools**

As *Les Francas* grew, signs of jealousy showed among teachers, some pastoral aspects of New Education were being accepted by schools who felt that FFC was trespassing on their, new, territory. But relations with SNI remained close, there was room for both groups; children spend only a fraction of their time at school.

FFC wanted school, home life and leisure to be complementary without clear cut boundaries between them. They called this concept *l'école ouverte* [the open school] which they saw as including, the *centre aéré*, *la maison de l'enfance* [youth club], sports, games and outdoor pursuits. But they also wanted family life, preparation for citizenship, and having a vocation taken into consideration as part of the minister of education's responsibility; to *rétablir ... l'école élémentaire dans sa mission originelle d'éducation et non de simple instruction* (ibid, 150) [to re-establish ... the elementary school in its original role as a means of education and not just instruction]. As secondary education from age 11 became the norm the elementary school was now an academic preparation for it instead of being the sole institutional source of most French citizenship as it had been throughout the Third Republic. As society became more complicated preparation for adulthood became more demanding. FFC saw it as their duty to facilitate this preparation through their work with children, by persuasion of those with power such as the minister of education and by co-operation with parents and bodies such as SNI and schools.

One sees traces of New Education passed on from Scouts and CEMEA, and there are the inspectors of the ministry of education who were and are, ex-officio, members of the executive committee of FFC. At first they would have been influenced by senior colleagues such as Monod when setting up the experimental *classes pilotes* from 1945 to spread the ideas of *l'Éducation nouvelle* shortly after FFC's foundation. The closeness of FFC in its origins to New Education is illustrated by the fact that J-A Sénèze, a founder member of FFC, was on the committee of the *Groupe français d'éducation nouvelle (GFEN)* in 1945. (Séclet-Riou 1945, 243-6).

### **Some side effects of tiers-temps**

The generalisation of *tiers-temps* in 1969 affected Les Francas. Now children were free on Saturday afternoons, making family weekends away possible. *Centres aérés* or *centres de loisirs sans hébergement (CLSH)* now needed accommodation for Saturday nights. Families found it worthwhile to buy camping equipment, and its accompanying activities received a fresh boost. *Parcs de loisir se créant à proximité des agglomérations pour accueillir les familles pendant les week-ends* (Rosa 1986, 181) [Leisure parks were created within reach of conurbations to receive families during the weekends]. These side effects of *tiers-temps* reinforced the growth of ODP in society.

The existence of free Saturday half-days also increased the need for play areas for those children not away for a weekend. FFC provided these, some even within school buildings, staffed by paid and volunteer *guides*. This arrangement may have aggravated teacher jealousy.

These new demands strained the finances of Les Francas again. They organised more courses for directors and staff; centres had to be increased in number. They were expected to be open for all holidays, weekends and Thursday afternoons and to organise more outdoor pursuits since more time was now available. Local Authorities, the government, the local family allowance offices (*Caisses d'allocations familiales*), and *comités d'entreprises* [works' councils] were all asked to help their local branch of FFC. Central government subsidies were supplemented by teachers seconded, on full pay, for a period of some years. This helps to maintain an educational ambience within the organisation.

By 1974 FFC had a million members and 30 000 *guides*.

### **Continuity of principles**

Through the years FFC has maintained its principles of:

- looking for new and active ways of education
- believing in the dignity of the individual
- working for the full development of the potential of every child in a democratic society
- offering a wide choice of leisure activities through which young people can develop themselves (*s'épanouir*).

Residential and day camps are organised, as are crèches, child nurseries and club facilities before and after school hours. The programmes include art, music, drama, nature study, games and adventurous outdoor activities, and there are exchange visits with other countries by some thousands of children.

So Les Francas works for the physical and psychological well-being of all children; for their development as well balanced citizens who will be aware and tolerant of their contemporaries in other countries. Practical involvement with methods drawn from *l'éducation nouvelle*, the Scouts, the practice of democracy in young people's groups, and maintaining an enquiring, research oriented atmosphere among its staff has enabled the organisation to grow and to deal with more than a million youngsters at any one time. They work, sometimes with CEMEA, for the development of socio-educational activities and facilities complementary to school, for the benefit of children and young people.

### ***Union nationale des centres sportifs de plein air (UCPA)***

UNCM (*Union nationale des centres de montagne*) (ch 5 above) began, in the flush of Liberation, to look for centres, equipment and staff to offer courses in mountain activities to young people. It wanted to retain the lessons which it was felt had been learned through *Jeunesse et montagne* during the Occupation. UNCM collaborated on amicable terms with organisations such as FFC, the Scouts and Guides, Touring Club de France and also confessional organisations since it did not have a policy on being secular.

#### **The tasks of UNCM were**

- 1 to make available to young people, male and female, equipment, personnel and accommodation for courses in climbing and skiing
- 2 to train staff to lead such young people
- 3 to publish information for the public on the essential principles of mountain activities (Malesset 1985, 21).

This was in 1944 just when the British Mountaineering Council (BMC) was being formed at the Alpine Club with similar aims. Geoffrey Winthrop Young had suggested its formation in 1943, after having put forward a comparable idea in 1921 and 1909 (Milburn 1997, 317). Young was a schools HMI.

Although the authorities and UNCM intended that the Union should take over equipment, buildings and staff of *Jeunesse et montagne* there was only one usable group of huts. From the movement's dissolution in 1943 it had been a duty to make evacuated property unusable for the Germans, and to take removable equipment when going to the *Maquis*. So the first centres were in shabby hotels and *pensions*, dilapidated farms, old schools, factories, mills and forts. None gave any great comfort. For the winter of 1944-45 two centres were in hotels to test the market for the proposed courses. In the summer of 1945 there were 8 centres operating, three being in the Pyrenees. The hotels welcomed the business. Some

were temporarily equipped with double-decker bunks, others had straw mattresses on the floor; showers were unknown.

In the first four or five years most hotels lasted only one year with UNCM, sometimes the hotel reverted to its normal business after a year, or UNCM found the setting unsuitable; disengagements came from either side. Gradually suitable premises were found, rented long term and improved. Malesset names a number of locations which were tried and found wanting in the years 1944 to 1950. He recounts tales of breaking the ice before washing in the mornings, a mule's leg coming through the ceiling of the girls' toilet block, *stagiaires* arriving to find the ordering of food had been forgotten; all amusing in retrospect but less so with deep snow all round. By 1951 UNCM owned five centres and rented nine.

One argument in UNCM was about the size of centres. At Les Deux Alpes 90 beds made for economy of size but other centres with 40 to 50 beds were easier to run, had a good atmosphere but were expensive per *stagiaire*. The *Direction générale de la jeunesse et des sports* suggested that 90 should be seen as the optimum size – this government department encouraged UNCM financially.

In the early 1950s government grants ceased but in 1955 UNCM acquired the chalet *Altitude* at Val d'Isère *pour lequel une subvention exceptionnelle, par son volume et par son taux, était accordée* (ibid, 35-6). [for which a subsidy of exceptional size and cheapness was granted].

## Equipment

This was difficult to find but German, French and American military equipment was used for the first two or three years; German army skis from Norway; made of birch wood and needing coats of tar to stop the wood swelling in wet snow, then layers of wax before they would slide; French army nailed boots for medium grade climbing. In the Pyrenees UNCM used rope-soled espadrilles, rubberised when available. Soles cut from old tyres were used on boots. Ex-army hemp ropes of 20 or 25 mm diameter were very heavy when wet, and slow to dry. Sleeping bags and palliasse covers were obtained in hundreds. Improvisation was the rule.

## Staffing

Senior posts in UNCM centres were filled from those having held responsible positions in *Jeunesse et montagne*, and one or two from *Éclaireurs de France*. A few younger men who had spent some years with *Jeunesse et montagne* and then with the *maquis* were available but most were in the army or picking up the threads of ordinary life and study. Those who joined UNCM tended to stay only two or three years so training courses were organised to maintain a flow of qualified staff; for most instructors it was a passing phase. As Malesset says (ibid, 41) 'there was no question of making it a career.'

Nevertheless, a move to working permanently in the mountains by people from distant towns and other métiers became evident. Applications to work with UNCM came from all quarters, there was a new interest in the mountains. Unqualified individuals were willing to work in the kitchens and became competent cooks, some went on to become *guides de haute montagne*, one *institutrice* became a *Chef de Cordée*, helping in centres as a supply instructor before marrying a centre director (Malesset 1985, 40-1). By the 60s a permanent career structure appeared, in England also; a new industry, OD Education, was growing.

The *Collège des Praz*, belonging to the *Direction générale de la jeunesse et des sports*, trained instructors. Most, in 1945-6, were attracted by the summer alpinism and rock climbing, including a few from *Jeunesse et montagne*, who were barely adequate skiers but UNCM needed the skills of both seasons. Three-month courses enabled the novice skiers to acquire the French method of skiing. It was important to ensure that clients avoided the frustration of being taught different methods of skiing in succeeding winters. Instructors were also required to go to the *Collège des Praz* for courses in *pédagogie* and for *perfectionnement* in activities.

The old *Guides* felt threatened by these newcomers, not realising there were going to be many more clients compared with pre-war. Relationships improved when search and rescue brought everybody together, especially if there was a body to bring down: *ce qui a toujours été considéré comme un devoir sacré en montagne* (ibid, 43) [this has always been considered a sacred duty in the mountains]. By 1948 most of the centres and their *moniteurs* were accepted in the local communities despite being 'in-comers'. The use of local suppliers and labour encouraged rapport. This was a harbinger of the prosperity which Fourestier foresaw the *classes de neige* bringing to economically poor valleys. The fact that UNCM paid on time, even if *moniteurs* had to wait for their pay, and help with *commune* work such as flood control and cutting firewood reinforced acceptance.

*Moniteurs* were little older than many *stagiaires* so all were on *tutoyer* [familiar] terms; everybody was motivated to do their best and then improve on it. The atmosphere was one where each tried to surpass their previous performance; to climb a steep wall was to defeat their own doubts about themselves. *Vaincre les parois oui. Se vaincre soi-même donne une joie supérieure* (ibid, 50) [Conquer the walls, yes. To master oneself gives a greater satisfaction]. There was an atmosphere of success, of overcoming difficulties, fatigue and fear, a sharing with everybody. Normally the first day was filled with a long mountain walk, the following days were for rock climbing, each day lasting 12 to 17 hours. In skiing the objective was to be functional in order to travel in contact with nature. As mechanical uplift was rare they walked for hours to gain height for a few minutes of descent on virgin snow. All this must have had a considerable group and social effect.

## Financial problems

Since centres were only full during holiday periods it was necessary, for economic survival, to extend the seasons at both ends. UNCM ran pre-military service courses but conscripts' motivation was often poor; they disliked the mountain activities and the communal life but the income helped UNCM for two or three years. Mountain sports were still seen as elite activities and full prosperity was yet to come, so winter was an especially lean time until, from 1947, they aimed at people who were not tied to scholastic holidays, such as staff of youth organisations and trade unions.

The 1950s saw changes as staff demanded less spartan living conditions for themselves and their families, and more security of employment than annual contracts with salaries which varied with UNCM's finances. Some moved to other posts as head of ski schools or *professeurs* at the *École nationale de ski et d'alpinisme* (ENSA) [National School of Skiing and Alpinism]. In October 1958 Raymond Malesset became Secretary General. He was in origin an *instituteur* who became in 1952 *Directeur départemental de la Lozère de la jeunesse et sports*. An attempt was made at this time to inaugurate a *Certificat d'aptitude à la pédagogie alpine* to encourage ski and mountain leaders to be teachers as much as technicians but the government refused permission.

## Effective marketing

In 1957-8 UNCM began the policy which they have followed ever since. All courses were priced *tout-compris* to avoid nasty surprises when, otherwise, *stagiaires* might find that ski lift prices added appreciably to the cost of their stay.

Sixteen centres, averaging 50 beds, became inadequate and planning to enlarge Val d'Isère from 80 to 200 beds began in 1959. At this time the government moved to increase facilities for sport of all kinds so 50% of the total cost of the extension was obtained as a state grant. *Régie Renault* offered 24% of the cost as an interest free loan over ten years; Renault sent all four years of 150 apprentices each year for two weeks of skiing with their *professeurs*. They found the *classes de neige* beneficial for all because of the excellent relationships which developed. *Caisse nationale de sécurité sociale* offered the remaining 26% as an interest free loan over 15 years for they were convinced of the worth of UNCM's *objectifs éducatifs et sociaux* as they already had experience of the Vanves type experiments' value in reducing illnesses so that calls on their funds for treatment were reduced. In February 1962 the new building was opened by Maurice Herzog, *Secrétaire d'état à la jeunesse et aux sports*, formerly leader of the French expedition that conquered Annapurna (Malesset 1985, 69).

Here we have real support for belief in the health value of ODP as it was supported by insurance actuaries using the statistics of their trade; and Renault found the investment worthwhile from the teaching relationship point of view.

As the search for new centres proceeded one or two of the original smaller ones were disposed of. That at Barèges was to be closed but the town was keen to retain its UNCM centre, and the *maire* was President of the *Fédération française de ski*, so the *commune* bought a large hotel in the town and rented it to UNCM who put 100 beds in it. In Chamonix the *commune* was unhelpful but with a loan from the *Caisse nationale de sécurité sociale* again, and the *Caisse d'épargne de Paris* (@ 4%) an hotel taking 70 beds was bought.

Money for fresh centres came from state grants and in loans from, especially, the *Caisse nationale de sécurité sociale* which gave aid equivalent to 80% of that received from the state (ibid, 71). Other lenders and donors included the *Banque de France*, various *préfectures* and *communes*.

### Diversification

Some centres were excellent for skiing but not for summer climbing, and some were the other way round so, to fill centres, other activities had to be offered such as *découverte de montagne*, *plein air montagne*, *randonnées pédestres* and, at Val d'Isère, summer skiing. The clientele changed. No longer the hardy young men and women of the heroic years of the 40s and 50s, now it was adolescents of the post-war 'baby-boom', and more varied social classes. Clients were more disparate on any one course. Malesset says the wish to climb will be at a different level in the girl *des Écoles ménagères de Lorraine* [School of Domestic Science of Lorraine] and the future *Professeur d'éducation physique* (ibid, 72).

Increasingly factories were sending their apprentices and workers. Young coal miners were being aided by their employers to go skiing; a remarkable change from the stereotype skier of not long before. Some mine managers thought mountaineering to be more valuable than skiing so promising workers, after a course for conversion to the rank of foreman, experienced two weeks of alpinism in June. Senior staff joined in with the prospective foremen, usually breaking down worker/staff barriers. Many men returned with their families to repeat an ascent and even a night in a *refuge* with their wives.

The filling of UNCM centres was helped by scholarships given by the *Services départementaux de la jeunesse et des sports* to young people who had done well in sport, or who helped with youth work. The *Office franco-allemand* [Franco-German] started running courses each December and April from 1963 so that Decembers and Aprils were full.

The lengthening of the working seasons now meant that staff holidays, hours and working conditions had to be negotiated otherwise staff could, as happened at Val d'Isère, see nothing but snow for seven months. Security of employment and salaries became more pressing; the pioneering days had passed.

The growth of UNCM was now threatened by its winter success. The first *moniteurs* had been mountaineers who happily became skiers but by the early 60s the *moniteurs* recruited



were skiers who were not happy to become summer mountaineers; they disliked the slow up-hill slogs. There was therefore an imbalance developing in the structure of the Union.

### **Union nautique française (UNF)**

When UNCM and FFC were being founded in the winter of 1944-5, the Union nautique also began. It was a club mainly for canoeing and kayaking, and some sailing, which one could join if sponsored by two existing members, appropriate clubs could affiliate if they wished. There already existed a *Fédération française de canoë-kayak (FFCK)* but Malesset gives no indication of the relationship between the two bodies. Internationally only the FFCK was, and is, recognised as the French governing body for canoeing; it is responsible for touring and for French teams taking part in international competitions in racing and in canoe slalom. (Personal communication June 1998, John W Dudderidge, organiser of British Canoe Union teams for Olympic Games and World slalom championships from 1936). A number of PE teachers in the years to 1950 set up centres for canoeing which affiliated to UNF. Some of the 14 centres started by Vichy (ch 5 above) were handed to them though the leases were short so material improvements undertaken were limited. Here we have PE teachers running canoe centres suggesting that they found this ODP acceptable but they may have preferred racing rather than touring.

By 1950 UNF shared an office with UNCM and relations between them became close, there was joint advertising and organising of holiday courses such as *Mer et montagne* which involved a week at each of a sea centre and a mountain centre.

### **New start for UNF**

In 1955 Pierre Buisson, a keen *Éclaireur de France*, became Secretary General of UNF for which he foresaw three roles;

- 1 organising nautical holidays
- 2 spreading of simple self-build techniques and  
information about sailing and navigation
- 3 helping with prefabrication of boats by providing moulds and literature.

They had also to acquire more centres, replace poor buildings, and provide good camp sites; there needed to be standardisation of boats, and better training of *moniteurs*. In 1956 84 *moniteurs* were trained, 220 in 1957; 50% were teachers and 15% were staff of other youth movements. UNF could now pick and choose its seasonal staff. Their Sartrouville centre near Paris, now renamed Créteil, developed weekend courses for Parisians, with evening theory classes in the city.

New and better boat designs, cheap and easy to build by amateurs, were commissioned, some even for sea cruising. Plastic based on coal, and developed in collaboration with the chemists of the coal fields of the *Nord* and the *Pas de Calais*, revolutionised the building of canoes and boats.

Financial difficulties kept arising. As with UNCM the shortness of the season meant that income was intermittent and when the 1957 government grant was delayed until 1958 and sharply reduced, permanent staff had to be made redundant and programmes cut.

*Direction générale de la jeunesse et des sports* grants were always less than was desired. In 1958 Maurice Herzog was sympathetic but said *l'aide de l'État a atteint la limite après laquelle il n'y a plus de limite* (ibid, 100) [State aid has reached its limit beyond which there is no limit], suggesting that future aid needed much thinking about.

### **Amalgamation**

Rational thinking produced an obvious solution. The seasonal imbalance of UNCM almost complemented that of UNF. Their core seasons overlapped only at Easter. A working party studied the problem. Twenty years after their separate births, the *Union nationale des Centres sportifs de plein Air (UCPA)* appeared.

Drift of population to the towns in those 20 years interested the ministries of tourism, agriculture, the interior and merchant marine; and local authorities — departmental, urban and rural. The drift was reinforcing the desire to escape to the outdoors and there was a vast growth in related pursuits. So all these official bodies wished to be represented on the executive committee of the new organisation.

It was assumed that most national youth organisations and some sports organisations such as CAF and FFS would be represented. Supportive financial bodies such as *Caisse nationale de sécurité sociale* wanted seats. Some movements lost their original right to be on the executive committee, e.g., the *Fédération française de voile*, but by right it was on the technical nautical committee.

The unknown future was approached with caution. The new Union did not want to be too much influenced by government, nor be perceived as a commercial travel agency; nor did it want to lose its *éducatif* role which is evident in many French youth organisations.

### **Growth in Activités de plein air**

There was now an explosion in skiing and sailing as the post-war *baby-boomers* reached maturity, prosperity touched more people and paid holidays became longer. The most popular activity was winter skiing while summer sailing was growing fast. There were still summer courses in canoeing, climbing and discovery of the mountain milieu; and sub-aqua courses recently introduced by UNF.

### **Bigger centres**

More centres were acquired, one at Argentière taking 300 beds and others with up to 150. Malesset talks of one of the original centres where *stagiaires* and *moniteurs* still shared the only dining room, the implication being that this was now unusual. The loss of intimacy was set against the economies of size.

UCPA was now better able to approach its major objective of being *une association éducative*, non-profit making, offering good services at the lowest prices possible, so avoiding its activities being seen as reserved for a privileged minority.

### **An unusual centre**

One UCPA centre opened in 1965 was within the *Domaine départemental de sports et de loisirs* of Bombannes, on the shore of a large inland lake, *l'Étang de Carcans*, 60 kms north-west of Bordeaux. UCPA acquired its own unit there where sailors, from beginners to international standard, can sail. The Bombannes *domaine* is a holiday and recreational centre where there is a wide range of open air activities not run by UCPA. Several large camp sites allow people to stay for a week or more and try the different activities available such as swimming, tennis, pelota, canoeing and sailing, cycling, and climbing on an 11 metre wall. There are 26 tennis courts, 4 being covered, an international standard swimming pool and a learners' pool. Lessons are available in swimming and karate from the age of 5; in climbing, trampolining and tennis from the age of 6; canoeing, kayaking, and badminton from seven. Other activities such as board sailing, land yachting, orienteering, archery, golf, gymnastics, cycling and folk dancing are taught to anyone over the age of eight. Lessons in more than 30 activities are available and are taken by 40 000 individuals a year. Customers are 95% French, mostly couples aged 30-40 with two children; largely working class though professional people come for activities such as sailing and tennis – a social class distinction still appears. Profits from the restaurant and the camp sites help towards the running costs of the centre. [Much of the above information was kindly given during an interview on site in 1994, by Mr Alain Simon, director of Bombannes]. Despite the number of visitors the 250 hectare site is so well wooded that one can be isolated and, on foot or bicycle, find wild life.

Again one is impressed by the early age at which children in France are introduced to various sports.

### **Riding**

Riding became increasingly popular in England and in France after the war. It was initially offered by UCPA in 1968, the first centre being near Brive in the Corrèze, easily accessible by train from Paris. Ninety *stagiaires* could be taken and fifty horses offered two hours in the saddle for each person each day. The economic necessity of making the fullest use of resources was satisfied by ensuring that all riding centres were within daily reach of a town. Local people could then come to ride during the off-seasons. The horses were therefore ridden most days of the year, which was good for them and made economic sense.

The Camargue breed of horse was chosen. It is strong for its size, agile and gregarious so a unified troop was rounded up each morning instead of individual horses. The *selle creuse* [deep saddle] was used with high front and back and long stirrups so that the rider feels stable from the beginning. Falls were few, perhaps one in a whole course, and instructors

were trained to think that a fall was their responsibility. Here is another once exclusive sport becoming open to almost anyone as a recreation and as a teaching career for some.

### **Voluntary staff**

Malesset suggests that many kinds of association depend on the help of volunteers; these organisations canalise volunteers' interest, devotion and competencies to the benefit of members or clients. Youth and sports movements attract those who are interested in *la formation physique et morale de la jeunesse* (ibid, 123) [the moral and physical training of young people]. During courses UCPA looks for promising performers and personalities, they find them coming from many walks of life; those selected are encouraged to return as helpers to the professional instructors, though continuing to pay their own fees. Some are invited to help staff a course in the following year and will neither pay nor be paid. If they can offer several weeks in a season they will be reimbursed previous years' fees. Some become full-time instructors but most have careers they are not prepared to give up. A number come back year after year on the same footing. This is not unlike the situation at White Hall, Derbyshire in the early days when course members might be noted and encouraged to become volunteer instructors, a few graduating to paid staff status.

The reward for the volunteers is in the satisfaction of passing on their own newly acquired skills to beginners, and in a holiday spent with congenial people doing activities which they like – as happens, as Malesset suggests, in a multitude of voluntary agencies.

### **Teaching methods**

From its earliest days UCPA experimented with new methods of teaching, aiming to make the activities immediately pleasurable. Play appeared in the teaching, so learning seemed to be incidental. It still required effort but the chances of 'putting people off' were reduced because pleasure and early progress were experienced. Equipment was always of good quality, often prototypes before being marketed by top makers, the chief instructors reporting on performances.

Skiing is one example. Teaching with short skis was a carefully assessed experiment. From winter 1969-70 debutants were put on short skis of 1.35 metres then moved on to 1.60 metres. Other teaching variations were introduced to maintain interest. On the first day the class went round two or three instructors who threw correctional comments to them as they passed. Thus beginners progressed rapidly and enjoyed themselves from the start. Another innovation was having a *moniteur* with a sub-group of *stagiaires* who told him what they thought other skiers in the class were doing wrongly; this encouraged close observation of human movement. Malesset gives more detail of the method and its evolution (ibid, 134-7).

The teaching of sailing and canoeing was also re-thought with the new plastic boats.

## **Effect of UCPA locally**

Malesset touches on the changes caused by UCPA centres being opened in new empty areas. As Fourestier foresaw, the expansion of outdoor pursuits was to change the distribution of population and wealth. Les Deux-Alpes had been deserted except for one chalet until 1951-2 when UNCM turned it into a centre with 90 beds and nine ski instructors; the nearest ski school had only five. By 1984 that school had 140 instructors while UCPA had 23. This gives some idea of the growth of skiing in that valley pioneered by UCPA who also developed summer climbing there.

## **Individual financial aid**

Tax concessions encourage French employers to subsidise their employees and their families' outdoor, cultural and other pursuits. In France the writer met an Anglo-French group from the Paris branch of British Telecom enjoying a subsidised ski holiday. French teenagers met at White Hall received 70% of the cost (4700 francs each, about £500) from their parents' employers for a week of ODP and a week of cultural visits. The State still backs snow scholarships for deserving apprentices or students through *Cheques plein air*.

## **UCPA's expansion continuing**

*Stages* are still the mainstay of UCPA's work when people learn a skill quickly, enjoyably and thoroughly. People of all ages use the centres for their activity holidays while some, as mentioned above, use centre facilities for riding out of season if they live near enough.

The Union now has over 100 centres of its own and runs adventurous expeditions to some thirty countries; they have about seven hundred permanent and some thousands of seasonal employees. Their own training school offers one year full-time courses to equip those selected to become *moniteurs*, centre directors or to fill other posts. The ministry of education seconds a number of teachers on full pay as part of their subsidy.

Courses are now differentiated into those providing:

- 1        adventure, including expeditions to areas such as North African desert country
- 2        concentration on one activity for committed enthusiasts
- 3        for those wishing to taste a number of activities in a week or two weeks
- 4        a mixture of physical and academic activity, e.g., a week of skiing and English lessons (*mi-temps pédagogique et sportif* for lycéens and adults!).

UCPA as an organisation supports the French awareness of the value of leisure for encouraging people to develop themselves through following their interests to some depth. Sixty years after the *Front populaire* the thirst for culture and self enhancement is still there. *Les Francas* leads through an active childhood so that the UCPA facilities can be used more fruitfully both during the school holidays, when they run children's courses, and on into adulthood.

FFC and UCPA are not the only organisations owning centres. Moundalek (1988, 84) reports the number of *centres d'initiation aux sports de plein air* increased from 332 with 56 000 beds in 1962, to 974 with 190 000 beds in 1969 and the expansion has continued.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

**Question 4** How important was New Education in encouraging ODP in French education?

Both UCPA and Les Francas were indirectly influenced by New Education because the organisations which founded them already incorporated New Education's principles and methods into their work.

The Vichy government officials who attended the initial meetings which resulted in *Association nationale des camps de montagne* (ANCM) (ch 5 above) being founded were working for a regime which employed some New Education methods because several of the initial top personnel involved were sympathisers, but the government followed a warped version of its philosophy because of the *force majeure* under which it operated. The people who initiated ANCM were a secular scout, a keen youth hosteller and a member of the Vichy movement *Compagnons de France* which itself had been begun by a Scout, Henri Dhavernas. He organised homeless young refugees into work units to do necessary jobs in the absence of prisoners of war in Germany; 'the young men ... gaining in morale through feeling that they were being useful to their country (Halls, 1981, 267). ANCM's successor UCPA uses New Education principles in encouraging active, inquiring and purposeful use of leisure. Although UCPA is not a school it teaches Outdoor Pursuits to people of secondary school age and upwards, it claims that it has educative goals, goals which Bertier, Zay, Carcopino and Monod would recognise. Since UCPA has prospered, its teaching methods must be more than acceptable to its customers – they pay for the lessons. One wonders whether the schools could learn something from UCPA about involving pupils, so making lessons more interesting and therefore more effective instead of the traditional slog of memorising facts; the continuing existence of the slog being attested by first hand parental accounts (Bacon 1999; Vandenhove 1999).

Les Francas was founded by several organisations coming together (p 98 above) of which a number incorporated New Education in their methods, CEMEA and the Scouts being the more obvious. Les Francas has links with the ministry of education and encourages a wide range of activities which are recognised as educative in the French sense rather than being instructional in the pedagogic sense. Do teachers who help Les Francas or the Scouts transfer youth work methods and philosophy to their school work, or is there a mental barrier as well as a professional one preventing any contamination of their work *pédagogique* by their voluntary work *éducatif*? Some French citizens have argued with the writer that each has its place, pupils need to know facts, which, of course is true, but they seemed to consider the *pédagogique* and the *éducatif* features to be mutually exclusive. However, as mentioned concerning the early age at which French children contentedly go away from

home, the final product created does not seem to be either dysfunctional or lacking in interest or interests.

One may hypothesise that whether New Education is present in practice or not, each culture arrives at a child rearing and educational mode which largely satisfies that society; though individuals seek ameliorations, the attempted improvements are not always seen as such by all citizens.

#### Question 5 How important was industrialisation in the growth of ODP?

Industrialisation implies urbanisation but it was not until 1931 that more than 50% of French people lived in towns of more than 2 000 inhabitants; about 40% of workers were still in agriculture compared with 8% in Britain (Hanley et al, 1984). By 1968, however, the urban population had reached 70% which meant many people retained rural roots. Thus an increasing proportion of the population felt a need to visit open spaces for family reunions, fresh air and tranquillity but unlike a century earlier, the resources to do so were becoming commonplace. Shorter working weeks and paid holidays plus reasonable affluence meant that the flow to the countryside, the mountains and the sea at weekends and holiday periods created unprecedented demands for roads, trains, campsites, equipment and so on. The effects of industrialisation were producing the need, or want, to vacate the towns and, at the same time, providing the means to do so for pleasure. Some figures are useful to give a sense of proportion. At weekends 11% of people take part in sport and 19% go away; the remainder, e.g., do DIY or watch television. The fifth week of paid holiday, started in 1982, is taken in winter when about 25% go away compared with the main summer holiday during which 56% of people go away. The percentage of French people taking a winter sports holiday increased from 4.3% in 1974-75 to 8.4% in 1990-91 (some 4.75 million people), in each case being about a third of those who took a winter holiday of any kind. The duration of the winter sports holiday decreased from 12.7 to 9.0 days (Mermet 1992, 414-7). This diminution parallels the reduction in the length of *classes de neige* over the same period. A survey found that 80% of children in the age range four to eighteen enjoyed holidays averaging at least 31 days in 1990; made up of 98% of those from well-to-do homes but only 60% of those from poorer families (CIDJ 1993, 3). An hypothesis here is that industrialisation has created the conditions which enable a considerable proportion of the population to take a winter holiday, and a majority to take a summer holiday too.

The drift to the towns, a direct result of industrialisation and the turmoil of war, had an unfortunate effect on children. Housing and other facilities failed to keep pace with the growth of urban populations, empty patches of ground which had been used as play spaces were built on so children were steadily robbed of the possibilities of healthy informal activity with the result that boredom and delinquency increased; Les Francas did what they could to make good the gaps in facilities but governments at that time were unhelpful.

One may hypothesise that growth in public affluence resulting from industrialisation was insufficient to keep pace with the increasing need for adequate facilities for the crowded populations. Would felt need always outrun resources?

Question 6 What were the benefits claimed to be derived from ODP at different times?

UNCM began in the immediate post-Liberation days intending to continue the good work, the spirit and the ideas of *Jeunesse et montagne*. The aim was to give people enjoyable and satisfying holidays which stretched them physically and psychologically, for them to learn about their own latent possibilities, to go further than they had thought was in them, and to do it in the congenial company of others who were similarly being pushed to their own self-discoveries. This was done in as close contact with nature as was possible, height being gained at the expense of sweat since mechanical uplift was rare. This is remarkably like the philosophy of Kurt Hahn who at the same time was getting the Outward Bound movement on its feet in Britain. Physical health gains tend to be taken for granted during ODP but the *Caisse nationale* had hard figures to prove the extent of the benefits from, for example, the *classes de neige* of the Vanves experiment. Industrial firms such as Renault and the coal mines of the *Nord Pas de Calais* area sent employees for health and social relations benefits. As time passed facilities increased and the demands and the gains perhaps changed but did not become less for those enjoying UCPA courses; in time they became more sharply focused so that people could choose courses appropriate to their needs.

An hypothesis here could be that the benefits claimed to be derived from ODP modify over time as society changes, and from one type of client to another; the field of ODP is a versatile one so educational or other use of it needs to be carefully planned and executed for particular clients. A second hypothesis, seldom questioned and apparently well proved, is that there are physical health benefits over a prolonged period after the experience has finished.

Question 7 What continuity of thinking and policies was there from one regime to another?

Les Francas has carried the principles evolved during the Occupation of concern for the dignity of young people, concern for democratic methods and the all round development of young people through the provision of a wide programme of mental, aesthetic and physical activities. It maintains its principles but modifies its methods as society changes. It still sees itself as complementary to the secular state schools. UCPA, though started from the roots of a Vichy youth organisation, has retained its intention to carry the lessons learned then into its work of being *éducatif* though with people of senior school age and older.

One may hypothesise that the attitudes acquired in the voluntary but highly purposeful *Jeunesse et montagne* would be deeply ingrained in its ambience, and the principles that provoked people into founding what became Les Francas, would persist in the respective movements though methods may be modified with time and changes in society.



**Question 8** What measures, and by whom, are taken to regulate risk in ODP in education?

The regulation of risk implies particularly making sure that those in charge of parties of pupils or others enjoying ODP are suitable people with appropriate qualifications. (See answers to this question pp 105, 165 and 185 above). As ODP began to attract people from other than mountainous areas the field of selection widened but there was still the problem of finding and training people who had the right temperament and personality to lead and teach, not just instruct. When Malesset, an *instituteur* then *inspecteur* by training and experience, became Secretary General of UNCM in 1959 he tried to persuade the government to start a *Certificat d'aptitude à la pédagogie alpine* [Certificate in alpine teaching method] but the idea was turned down. One may hypothesise that this might have raised the quality of the personnel drawn to the work, which attracted *instituteur* criticism (p 179 above).

**Question 9** What part has social class and growing affluence played in society's attitudes to leisure and ODP?

The expectations built up during the Occupation led to heavy demands on government finances after the Liberation. In 1947, with reconstruction to pay for and the breaking up of the French empire calling for resources to be diverted overseas, the government had to refuse applications for millions of francs for work with youth, and no doubt many other good causes; the affluence which came to be taken for granted had not yet had time to come into effect. However there were individuals already taking advantage of the partial breaking down of social barriers in order to indulge in what had been *sports d'élite*, though not yet in sufficient numbers to ensure the comfortable survival of UCPA. But as the years passed it became apparent that the general standard of living was rising and people became accustomed to the idea that holidays with pay, leisure pastimes and more worldly goods were to be the norm for most people. The Vanves experiments slightly changed people's attitudes to the role of schools. The *éducatif* aspect, introduced by Zay and Borotra, became rather more acceptable including preparation for leisure. As a pressure group Les Francas pushed for *l'école ouverte* which they saw as integrating the work of school instruction, the family *éducatif* role to be supplemented by the school, vocational preparation, and personal developmental activities, all to come under the ministry of education.

*Tiers temps* with its free Saturday afternoons from 1969 altered leisure patterns. Despite the gradually successful efforts from early in the nineteenth century to get the *semaine anglaise* for workers (Saturday afternoons free), teachers, school children and parents had missed out on this until 1969. Now, with affluence already fairly widespread, the weekends from Saturday midday were available for pursuits of people's choice.

The *tiers temps* experiments (ch 8 above) seemed to suggest acceptance in some sections of society that schools should involve themselves in preparation for the leisure society but then came the contradiction that the government was not prepared to fund the scheme adequately

and it died when political priorities diverted the bulk of its resources. The change of format of the school week caused other social changes to follow.

More people now had time and money for the leisure pursuits they saw around them, social class differences became less impermeable as people's aspirations changed though personal finance and class still have some effect. Winter sports are enjoyed by 25% of *cadres supérieures et professions libérales* [senior executives and members of the liberal professions] but by only 4% of skilled workers, 2% of unskilled workers and 2% of the retired though, from 1974-75 to 1990-91, the figure for the senior executives increased by one-fifth but the number of unskilled and agricultural workers doubled, so the gap, though still marked, was narrowing (Mermet 1992, 416-7). Most people give priority to the summer holiday, 85% of *cadres supérieures* and 37% of unskilled workers taking one (ibid, 419). Sufficient prosperity was moving down the social scale to allow more people to enjoy what were still expensive outlays.

The hypotheses created in chapter 3 are probably still valid though changing social conditions have modified boundaries and people's readiness to accept their inherited status.

Question 11 What effect have the Scouts and other voluntary movements had on ODP in education?

It is very apparent that voluntary movements including CEMEA, the Scouts, *Auberges de jeunesse*, and *Éducation nouvelle*, all named on the first page of chapter 10, played important parts in the first few months after the Liberation in setting up Les Francas which included ODP as an important part of its overall programme of activity. Later, that movement was to be instrumental in setting up *parcs de loisir* where families could camp for the weekend after the introduction of *tiers-temps pédagogique* in 1969. Families equipped to camp with their children at these centres were, of course, now free to go further afield in the weeks of paid holiday which they enjoyed, so encouraging participation in the activities which different geographical areas offer.

UCPA was also a voluntary organisation, its core activities being ODP and having aims *éducatif* though it was less concerned with school age clients than Les Francas. A very similar and overlapping range of voluntary organisations to that which backed Les Francas at its beginning also supported ANCM (ch 5 above) during the same formative period in 1944/45. But being a Vichy offshoot it was not *laïque* as was Les Francas and so *le Scoutisme français* was represented rather than the *Éclaireurs* at their founding.

An hypothesis here could be that memories of the *Front populaire* would inevitably lead to more desire for recreational activities, and the reduction of economic and social barriers opened the way for organisations with ideals to create opportunities for the *éducation* and continuing education of the population since schools, under academic pressures, were still reluctant to give time to this aspect of pupils' and people's lives.

**Question 13** Why was the *Front populaire* period such a turning point in changing people's attitudes?

The two organisations dealt with in this chapter both took ideas from New Education but relied especially on the free time that the Popular Front had made a statutory obligation and which was never rescinded by any subsequent government – free time was normalised as part of the culture. But for those two weeks holiday entitlement it is unlikely that UNCM and UNF could have survived. Les Francas, had different problems; it aimed at frequent contact with its members but teachers and pupils, in contrast with England, had two isolated days each week though their number of whole weeks of holiday is among the highest in the world of teaching (Dechavanne 1990, 376: p 119 above). This traditional pattern was a complete blockage to any term time going away for a night but the release of Saturday afternoons in 1969 changed matters for pupils and parents. It was, however, the legal right of people to paid holidays from 1936 which resulted in people being able to assume, without question, that if they could afford and desired a holiday then they were morally and socially free to take one. Rather than a turning point in change of people's attitudes it would probably be a better analogy to describe the *Front populaire* period as a legal focal point at which the trends, aspirations and changing values from the nineteenth century came to fruition.

One may hypothesise that the Popular Front represented a legal landmark in the democratisation of leisure and a step in the process which had begun nearly a century earlier when workers began to take up hobbies and pastimes within their limited resources.

**Question 16** Are ODP always beneficial for the areas where they are practised?

The word 'beneficial' can have different meanings. Early practitioners of ODP often sought fresh air and tranquillity but as these activities became more popular favourite areas become crowded and even at quiet times the evidence of large numbers having been there is shown by worn grass and often debris from meals eaten. French and British teachers of ODP include concern for the environment in their work but the growth of the Outdoor Education Industry, as it is sometimes called, inevitably means that peaceful, unspoilt areas become more difficult to find.

Both Les Francas and UCPA have built new centres over the years, some on what were empty spaces. Are the local people pleased to have an endless stream of visitors coming to what previously was perhaps a cattle grazing meadow or an alp? Malesset claims that UNCM/UCPA found Les Deux-Alpes with one chalet in it in 1951, and the nearest ski school had five instructors; by 1984 that school had 140 instructors. What degree of tranquillity and spaciousness was lost in that valley with such a transformation in numbers? On the other hand how many more people had been able to enjoy a health promoting holiday indulging in the former *sport d'élite* and how much money has the transformation brought to the formerly almost deserted valley, providing a living for perhaps hundreds of people?

Similar changes have taken place in mountainous and coastal areas all over Europe and many other parts of the world.

One can hypothesise that ODP have transformed many areas economically (it is a form of tourism) but ecologically and culturally the changes may have been doubtfully beneficial

## CHAPTER 11

### DISCUSSION of the RESEARCH QUESTIONS: and CONCLUSIONS

Question 1 asking why the Vanves experiment and the opening of White Hall started in the same year will be dealt with last but other questions will be considered in as logical an order as is possible.

#### Question 9.

What part has social class and growing affluence played in society's attitudes to leisure and ODP?

The social class of those who, in earlier times, enjoyed visiting mountains was an important factor since there is normally a correlation between class and economic resources available to the individual. One must surmise that Windham and Pococke were financially comfortably provided for when at home to be able to travel to the Alps to pioneer exploring the glaciers about Chamonix.

*Ces premiers pratiquants sont en général des personnes aisées, disposant de loisirs (Calbrix 1973, 114).*

[These first practitioners were in general well-to-do with leisure time available].

The same must have applied to those who lived on the mainland of Europe since, except for those who lived almost within sight of the mountains, they would have needed a day or two of travel to reach the Alps. At that time the working man had neither time nor money for such pleasures.

A similar argument must have held until the late nineteenth century for any pastime that required equipment and free time beyond the resources of a family living at little above subsistence level. However, as the wealth created by industrialisation spread, under pressure from workers' own groups, churches and concerned elected representatives, workers did find themselves with a limited amount of time and money which they could devote to their needs for recreation as a change from just working to make a living.

As those with the means realised that mountain exploration could be a satisfying pastime once somebody had suggested the idea, as Windham and Pococke did by actually doing it, so those with more limited resources, more than a century later, found their recreation in football imported by the aristocrat Baron de Coubertin hoping to improve France's status through his re-invigorated *bourgeois* proteges at elite schools. This game was not protected

from popularisation by needing more time and money than the workers could now find, so it provided a satisfying means of self-expression for players and a respite from the boredom of crowded urban life for both players and spectators, plus the excitement of betting.

Social class and money for many years absolutely divided those who could afford mountain activities, and sailing too, from those who could not; these activities retained their upper class status because the economic reasons persisted. On the other hand, football, originally a game formalised in England by upper class Public school boys but encouraged among the newly relatively well off workers by ex-Public school curates became in England mainly a working class game. It quickly moved down the social scale in France too. Social class and economic status were restrictive elements in each of the pastimes considered but the financial boundaries were moving, so exclusivity was moving too though it remained for much longer in mountain and sailing activities. Bicycling is an outstanding example of the influence of cost on the relative popularity of a pastime among a social class as rising incomes and falling prices made the bicycle non-upper class within about three decades of its invention. Thus many upper class individuals ceased to ride bicycles for there was no longer any kudos in doing so though others, wishing to continue enjoying the activity and congenial company, formed the exclusive *Touring club de France* towards the end of the century. This compares with the formation of the *Club alpin français* and the Alpine Club in which people with common interests and similar social standing joined together to enjoy their pastime. There was, in the nineteenth century, in both countries, a quite explicit separation of the social classes, members of an upper class needed no excuse for refusing to associate socially with a member of a lower class as happened when Mummery, then among Britain's best climbers, was blackballed by the Alpine Club from 1880 to 1888 'because of his social background' (Hunter & Krageloh 1995, 9). These mountain clubs were a product of a social class but in a new situation in which industrialisation had made the mountains accessible because the new trains reduced the journey from Paris to the Alps from several days to some hours. Industrialisation killed cycling as an exclusive pastime but facilitated the development of alpinism as a continuing elite recreation. Cycling, through industrial processes, has now adapted to increased road traffic by developing off-road (all terrain) designs though frequently motorised transport is needed to get the bicycle to where it is to be used.

Social class no longer gives exclusivity in most pastimes. Rising affluence has lifted real incomes for many people to levels that enable them to enjoy what had been the recreations of the relatively wealthy, the increase in the number of such people is undoubtedly matched by the number with education at least equivalent to the level of those who wrote up their experiences after exploring the mountains and glaciers of Switzerland in the eighteenth century. Social mobility has made the population pyramid flatter than it was.

One might hypothesise that the social class which once overtly considered itself superior by birth to the lower orders has changed to being based mainly on economic criteria and has

enlarged to include those whose incomes have risen to allow a style of living equivalent to that of the former upper class. We have here the interaction of two social factors, social class and affluence at birth, and general affluence due to industrialisation with an element of meritocracy intruding. A further hypothesis follows: Industrialisation encouraged the original upper class to escape to the open air but in the course of time enabled an enlarged comfortably financed class also to enjoy the activities associated with the open air. This hypothesis is supported by the data above, a large number can now enjoy what was once the prerogative of a small section of society.

Within education the adopting of particular activities tended to reflect the social class of the school and affected that of the activity. The indulging in mountain walks by Gerlach and then *voyage en zig-zag* by Töpffer, and the elite *lycées* taking boys to the mountains from the 1870s are further examples of schools of the *bourgeoisie* following in the footsteps of those such as the *duc de La Rochefoucauld* who wrote up their exploits. The social class link between adherents and mountain activity remained, only slightly eroded, for well over a century. The *instituteurs* who took their children out from the 1880s perhaps represent the beginning of the erosion.

About the turn of the century skiing joined mountaineering and sailing as exclusive recreations of the well-to-do until the 1930s when the youth hostels movements made the mountains accessible to those with time but only modest amounts of money. As real incomes rose a growing minority of the population had access to ODP.

The *Front populaire* government and then the Vichy regime contributed to the spreading popularity of ODP. The former made leisure time available to all employees and encouraged recreation while the latter brought more resources for sport into existence in France than ever before. So the exclusivity of sports such as sailing, canoeing and mountain activities including skiing were still further eroded.

The delay until the 1960s in moving children to secondary schools at 11+ allowed many more pupils up to the age of fourteen to experience *classes de découverte* than would have done so otherwise. Now, social class divisions have not disappeared but the merging of the lower years of the secondary schools with the upper years of the *écoles élémentaires* may have blurred the sharp divisions which were inherent in the former chasm between those *en route* to the *baccalauréat* and the 'others'. *Classes de découverte* must have helped democratise ODP in the latter half of the twentieth century because whole classes went together. A formal hypothesis could be that changing economic and political conditions accelerating from 1936 encouraged social changes in recreational pastimes in French society and its schools.

### Question 5

How important was industrialisation in the growth of ODP?

From chapter 2 one may hypothesise that industrialisation created wealth for a few in the eighteenth century but for more a century later, and still more a further century on at an accelerating rate. Some of the affluent left the polluted towns to find fresh air in the mountains; others thought such activity was interesting in its own right, once somebody had started the idea.

The data from chapter 7 seems to reinforce the hypothesis above that a century or so was needed before large numbers could benefit from the affluence created by French industry. Chapter 9 suggests the hypothesis that industrialisation has created the free time and wealth, the transport, as well as the new material for special clothing, footwear, boats and canoes, sails, skis and so on which have put a choice of ODP at the disposal of the populations of advanced countries. Another hypothesis follows which is that outdoor pursuits, not needing to be competitive, may be pursued at an appropriate level almost throughout life whereas competitive, especially contact, sports can be continued only up to a relatively early age.

An hypothesis arising from the contents of chapter 10 is that industrialisation has created the national wealth which enables the majority to take a holiday in the summer, and an increasing proportion of the population to take a winter holiday too.

Apparently local people found or created motives of their own to explore the mountains of Switzerland, once the trail had been blazed by Windham, Pococke and Pierre Martel. A few teachers were among them; Töpffer recorded his observations of the effects of the experience on the boys; his words could be duplicated by almost any late twentieth century teacher following a similar experience.

Once industrialisation had created wealth, city pollution and railways the number of people escaping to the countryside increased enough for it to become a social, sporting and an educational movement among the well-to-do, and a charitable/philanthropic movement by others for the benefit of the poor. The pollution in industrial cities stimulated doctors into research concerning the effects of open air activities on children with TB and rickets.

The benefits of industrialisation gradually filtered down to the workers in the form of more free time and raised real incomes resulting in the growth of leisure pursuits. The goods resulting from growing industries made life more comfortable and transport faster. The Vanves experiments depended on the products of industrialisation including the wealth to cover the extra costs of staff, transport and two months of what had been a *sport d'élite*, all for educational purposes. One can hypothesise that society was prepared to invest some of the wealth generated by industrialisation in the educational development of workers' children; in France mainly on primary age children, in England mainly on secondary school age children though for shorter periods.



By the early 1990s ODP had become so popular across Western Europe that many accidents were happening so the French ministry of education tried again to encourage secondary schools to include them in the curriculum. It seems that the ministry is feeling some responsibility, for through its primary schools, millions of children have been introduced to ODP but been left with little awareness of the risks and the precautions to be observed. Now the accidents born of ignorance are happening in increasing numbers. Can the French ministry of education again persuade parents to subsidise time away for their older children, now much nearer to vital examinations, and can they induce secondary schools to cooperate? Taking on responsibility for preparing adolescents for leisure and stemming the tide of future accidents is a massive job. Industrialisation, creating wealth, has made ODP of many kinds perhaps too easily accessible. Can one hypothesise that society, through the ministry of education, will take on the responsibility for preparing pupils for this new aspect of the *civilisation de loisir*? If so, it will be a complete reversal of opinion from the 1920s. Will pupils leave school equipped for an enjoyable, healthy and life-long pastime, and be aware that more than technical skills are needed to avoid avoidable accidents?

A formal hypothesis could be that industrialisation of society creates more wealth, more recreative sports and pastimes but also creates more problems

**Question 10.** What influence have examinations had on PE and ODP in French schools?

Examinations have a long history in French education and they tend to have carried more weight than they do in England. Partly because of the centralised nature of French administration there is an impersonality built into the system so that examination marks are often the sole criterion by which people are assessed. The importance therefore of examination results is evident. Because of comprehensivisation of secondary education the examination for 6<sup>e</sup> no longer exists but the sorting process begins at the age of six when compulsory school starts. At the end of the first year 8.5% of children in 1991-92, had not reached the required standard of achievement and repeated the year. They would thus be a year older than their classmates from then on. In total, 29% of children repeated a year or years before passing into 6<sup>e</sup> (Mermet 1992, 106). The pressure to achieve an adequate level every year is thus apparent, and must inevitably be reflected in what the class teacher includes in the timetable. Non-examinable material – art, music, handwork and PE – is the first casualty; and *disciplines d'éveil* (history, geography, civics) may also be discarded; the teacher's reputation and inspection assessment depends on results in the basic subjects of number and French.

One probable outcome of this examination pressure was the *demi-temps pédagogique et sportif* format devised for the Vanves experiments. This ensured that the experimental group lost very little time of ordinary classroom teaching and were supervised in their homework so parents felt re-assured. At official level there would be awareness of the Latarjet Lyon experiment which showed an apparent gain in performance despite a reduction of more than 30% of teaching time. For those Lyon girls there had been little prospect that they would

achieve much in the examination for 6<sup>e</sup> or the primary leaving certificate three years later so the successes gained were seen as a welcome bonus. The *mi-temps* Vanves experiment showed that this class of boys, could manage a longer day than normal and apparently benefit from it. What the experiments could not compensate for however were teachers who were not prepared to be experimental and to include subjects beyond their accustomed range once the incidence of *mi-temps* outran the supply of keen open-minded *instituteurs* willing to try this new format. Cost was another factor, generalising *mi-temps* to hundreds of classes was expensive but attempts to economise appeared to reduce its effectiveness. The claimed examination success rate for the Lyon and the Vanves experiments apparently did little to convert teachers though parents were comforted. Solal's figure of 3.5% of children getting regular PE in the 1960s (p 153 above) suggests that *instituteurs* either distrusted the claimed figures or so much disliked going out with their class for energetic activity that they were prepared to ignore ministry edicts; but doing that has a long and distinguished history.

The effects of examinations on ODP have been rather different. In the vast majority of schools ODP could only be attempted when largish spells of time were available which was normally only during the holiday periods, as in some schools from the 1870s. Outdoor Pursuits have an upper class image so teachers, parents and *collectivités* were prepared to help their *écoles élémentaires* children towards such experiences after the Occupation had changed perceptions, but only as long as they did not lose class teaching time. Though children gained roughly the equivalent of two week's experience of ODP for each four weeks of residence the *mi-temps* format ensured they lost no class work time, and the overall health and social development gains were so manifest that the idea was welcomed. The original length of time of four weeks may be related to the fact that *colonies de vacances* were for three weeks, and four weeks is not so much longer as to worry either parents or children. There seems to be an acceptance in France of the month as a common unit of time, most people are paid monthly and incomes are often stated by the month, whereas in England most people have been paid weekly or, if they are paid monthly, think of their salary as an annual income. An influential figure in the development of educational ODP in Britain was Kurt Hahn, German in origin, who considered that to be effective an Outward Bound course needed to last for a month. Is this a cultural difference related to our geographical isolation from Europe?

The different attitudes of *instituteurs* to PE in school time and to ODP when practised during a *classe transplantée* has been noted during this study. The relatively lowly image of the one discipline and the good standing of the other may be contributory factors but the writer was aware when a student of PE that fellow students almost to a man disliked ODP. A similar attitude was evident in an informal survey carried out during early field-work for this study. Of the total teaching staff of six LEA centres (some 30 individuals, almost all graduate qualified teachers), only one man was trained in PE, and he was Scottish ski champion during his PE studentship, and one woman had done an ODP course at what had been a PE

college. Of the visiting staff with school parties (almost 20 individuals) only three were PE trained and they were all there for reasons other than enthusiasm for ODP – one was the only woman in her school without family commitments, one was in his probationary year and had been sent to see the pupils in another setting, the third had stepped in to replace the original non-PE man who had suffered a family bereavement. All three were content to be there but would not have chosen to be so. PE teachers are normally heavily involved with school teams so cannot often give whole weekends to ODP but may not want to; there may be a general difference between PE teachers and colleagues enthusiastic about ODP; there does not have to be mutual exclusion but there frequently seems to be. Is there a general personality difference between the two types? It could be an interesting area for enquiry.

In secondary schools the combined effect of looming examinations and French teachers refusal to work more than their set hours has meant that, in term time, school visits for ODP have been rare; only recently has an attempt been made (Ch 9 above) to re-insert ODP into secondary schools after the experiments of the early 1960s. It is early yet to know if resources have been sufficient to promise success.

To return to the original question it may be hypothesised that examinations tended to cause PE to be, in practice, excluded from normal school timetables for over a century, despite ministry efforts, while it seems they caused ODP sessions to take on a different format from the norm in England where visits are full-time ODP to make the most of the time there. Other factors, especially being accustomed to staying away from home for some weeks at an early age, enabled *classes transplantées* to be longer than normal visits in England and were probably more beneficial in the *éducatif* sense for that reason, and the *pédagogique* work was maintained though in a different milieu, which might also have been beneficial.

From chapter 2 one can hypothesise that PE will have difficulty in changing its status in education but ODP were never identified with low status individuals nor did they involve loss of academic time, therefore they have no negative associations in society; they were, from their beginning, high status pastimes.

A further hypothesis could be that the acceptance of ODP in secondary schools should be easy as long as they can avoid threatening academic results.

From chapter 7 it could be hypothesised that PE will continue suffering at least partial rejection as long as it is perceived to be a danger to examination performance. On the other hand, the prestige of ODP and the obvious benefits of *classes transplantées* make them acceptable to schools and parents.

The hypothesis from chapter 7 is strengthened by evidence in chapter 8 that PE is almost entirely rejected by teachers in Solal's survey, more than 95% of children getting no regular PE in the *Nord Département* in the 1960s.

An appropriate hypothesis from chapter 9 is that there may be some weakening of examination dominance in primary schools now that children move to 6<sup>e</sup> when they reach the top of the primary school, the majority at age eleven.

A formal hypothesis suggests that any diversion from the main goal of school work is deprecated or rejected though a diversion for a high status and enjoyable purpose, if the main goal is not too threatened, may be acceptable.

**Question 3.** How influential was the medical profession in physical activities in schools?

Medical doctors' opinions have always carried weight because the status of their profession is consistently high. As industrialisation progressed in France in the nineteenth century so the state of the urban environment deteriorated. Overcrowding, pollution, poor diet took their toll of young and old of the working class. As middle class and church well-wishers brought the workers' children into the public gaze from the 1880s through offering them *colonies de vacances* and imposing compulsory schooling on them it became evident that TB and rickets were rife. Some doctors turned their attention to this problem and tried to persuade teachers to get the children into the open air though lack of space and facilities were problems. A number of surveys of the incidence of TB put figures to the impressions, e.g. the Grancher Report, 1904 (p 55 above) and doctors increasingly encouraged *colonies de vacances*. A Doctor Tissié had been active from the 1880s in encouraging physical activities in the Bordeaux area and in organising inter-school sports days [*lendits*]. It was during this earlier period that a number of different systems of PE or drill were being tried. Military drill had been imposed on schools by unsuitable ex-army NCOs who had replaced the officers appointed earlier in the century so giving the subject a poor name and suggesting it was a disciplinary subject for conditioning the children to reflexly obey commands. This atmosphere was carried over to systems of exercises designed for children such as those by the Swede Ling, Demeny and others which meant that enjoyment and spontaneity for the children were excluded. PE or drill continued to be seen as a disciplinary subject by most people until well into the twentieth century in England and in France. A few, such as minister of education Ferry said in 1890, with remarkable foresight, that recreation and enjoyment should predominate but his words had little effect on teachers.

There were few PE specialists of any standing in France and their systems differed, being based on ideas from a number of different countries so leading to bitter disagreements known as the *guerre de méthodes*. The exercises, reputedly *éducatifs*, were unlikely to enthuse pupils; they were used for disciplinary, not enjoyment purposes. The status of doctors was such that any who showed interest or had some appropriate speciality became heads of institutes for training and up-grading of PE teachers. Tissié was responsible for getting PE accepted as a university subject when a course for PE teachers at the Bordeaux IREP was absorbed into the Faculty of Medicine at Bordeaux university in 1921 – it continues as a research unit today. More lectures in anatomy and physiology may have made

them more learned but PE specialists doubted whether it made them better teachers of their subject. Doctor Latarjet was influential with his ski lessons in 1928 and his Lyon experiment in the early 1930s, and Fourestier was central to the Vanves experiments. By the 1930s PE teachers were dissatisfied with doctors being so dominant and finally managed to oust them from their influential positions. This opposition to the dominance of doctors was the one factor which united all PE people, even Hébert joined them in this.

There is little doubt that the medical profession helped to upgrade the subject of PE by association and by treating it as a therapeutic agent, even if the *instituteurs* who should have practised it did not do so. There was almost a 'biting the hand that fed them' situation when PE ousted the doctors although there is now co-operative research between the two professions at centres such as Bordeaux, Lacretelle in Paris and the *Institute national du Sport et de l'Éducation physique [INSEP]* at Vincennes.

One can hypothesise that the support of doctors provided credible research data to back up PE in its struggle for respectability; the discipline needed the backing of a higher status profession to help overcome early handicaps. The raised reputation of PE teachers was confirmed in the early 1980s when the ministry of education became their employer, when universities took over their training, and the *agrégation* became available to them.

A formal hypothesis could be that association between two professions raises the standing of the one suffering lower public esteem.

**Question 15.** Why did mountain exploration, football and other pastimes each become popular once they had been introduced?

As ways of living slowly changed in the eighteenth century and thinkers such as Rousseau and others of the Enlightenment stimulated people, some of those who had time and means realised there were wider horizons both geographical and mental to be explored.

When the idea of exploring the glaciers of Switzerland was put in people's minds through two Englishmen (and a Pierre Martel) doing it in 1741 there were several living nearer to the area who thought the exploit worth emulating. Before the end of the century a number of, mainly, Continental people had found variations on the theme which they thought worth writing up: *The Natural History of the Environs of Geneva*; *Remarkable Views of the Mountains of Switzerland*; *Journeys in Switzerland*; *Natural History of the Glaciers of Switzerland*, and so on, and many more after 1800 (Rauch 1988, bibliography).

It is apparent that outdoor pursuits became an accepted pastime in the eighteenth century among a minority of the well-to-do population. Discovering truth by experimentation and exploration led to widening of fields of knowledge so curiosity in many fields was followed up. Windham and Pococke may have been adventurous, just wanting to be first on the glaciers of Chamonix but many followed them with diverse motives. To discover flora and

fauna, or geology, or movement of the ice but some also, or instead, enjoyed the wild scenery, or confronting the difficulties caused by terrain and extreme weather. The activity obviously struck a chord, there was no apparent commercial, military or other motive; the reward was intrinsic to the activity, an important point when considering why people follow their own pastime or hobby. But there needs to be a pioneer to set an example, perhaps starting a fashion, as in this case. Seeking adventure, innovation and knowledge still continues in this field.

Football is another example of people taking to a pastime when they are introduced to it. The game was imported by Coubertin for *bourgeois* boys and young men in the early 1880s. As it did not require equipment or facilities beyond the pockets of the rising incomes of the working class when joined together in clubs, it was taken over by them so the *bourgeoisie* took refuge in the slightly more expensive and, in England, middle class game of rugby football. Cycling also lost its exclusive status when bicycles became cheap. In each case there had to be a population at the right stage of development to take up these activities; if a crucial factor changed then the interested population was likely to change or fade away.

The popularity of these three pastimes once introduced have the common characteristic that the interest is in the activity, as it is in play for any age, there is no material need to take part. But each activity must correlate with the resources of the participants, fellow participants must be congenial, of about the same level of skill, and socialising must be pleasurable for each person. Mountain activities were accessible to only a limited number of people of a similar standing who could socialise comfortably; in football the same principle applied and the minority group, Coubertin's, quit the field. Cycling was an interesting case of rapid change affecting who maintained their interest. Rising incomes and falling costs opened the activity to the workers so the 'fashion' cyclists ceased to be active while those who were enthusiastic for the activity itself started the *Touring club de France* in 1890 in imitation of the English Cyclists' Touring Club. At first it pioneered cycle touring but later its centre of interest moved to motoring and improving hotels – again social class changes had their effect. In 1894 it had 9 000 members, 75 000 by 1900, and by 1939 there were 400 000 (Rauch 1996, 266). How many of those in 1939 were cyclists Rauch does not say.

Of these three activities mountain exploration began with a limited number of participants; it was the right activity at the right time for that select few, but the number of adherents has grown steadily with rising affluence to this day and the trend shows little sign of halting. Football, already a developed game in England starting from the elite Public schools but taken over by the working classes from about the 1870s, became popular and has thrived in both countries since then. Cycling, while expensive, was welcomed by the *bourgeoisie* then became popular with the workers but also some middle class during the next half century. Now cycling has changed its format because affluence has reached the working class and, in

England, their cars have almost forced cyclists off the road. In France, a much emptier country and one where cycling still has some popular prestige because of the world class races which are held there, motorists do give the cyclist road space (from personal experience of the writer) but the all-terrain bicycle has largely taken over, usually being carried by motor vehicle to the piece of country to be explored. One can hypothesise that the popularity of an activity depends on a number of factors operating simultaneously, means, social class, accessibility to necessary facilities, free time, and others such as degree of difficulty or danger involved, mental effort needed, even the level of education achieved can be a factor of some importance. Every activity must have an intrinsic interest or reward for each participant, playing a game, as do children, in which the outcome is uncertain until the end, seeing something new or anew, adventure, physical achievement, discovery, solving a problem, solitude or congenial company, the list goes on.

A formal hypothesis proposed is that a recreation must satisfy a unique combination of criteria for each participant.

**Question 11** What influence have the Scouts and other voluntary movements had on ODP in education?

Religious and philanthropic charities were founded by priests, pastors and middle-class people when they became aware of the damaging living conditions for the industrial poor in the nineteenth century. Country life was nostalgically invested with strange qualities; a 'mystical capacity to shape character' and [there were] 'edifying moral impulses to be found in nature' (Rosenthal (1986, 140-1)). This has been the leitmotif of writers and outdoor organisations from Rousseau, through the YMCA, Boys' Brigade in Britain, *colonies de vacances*, the Scouts, the Outward Bound movement, and innumerable schools who have taken parties of pupils to camps or residential centres. Undoubtedly children return from such periods away from home having gained in physical health and having learned something about themselves and their peers through social interaction; they may not be aware of what they have gained but parents are likely to notice changes on their return. One should include teachers' organisations who were involved in voluntary activities. *La Ligue de l'enseignement* [Teachers' Union] and *Le Sou des écoles* [School penny] were running what were called *colonies scolaires* by 1883 during school holidays; and *institutrices maternelles* had their *colonies maternelles scolaires* from 1898. From 1880 *instituteurs* organised *voyages pédagogiques* with official financial support. But they had to take books for lessons in improvised classrooms. Children's measured growth in chest expansion justified the financial backing. No child was excluded because he was not well behaved which contrasted with the *colonies de vacances* and parallels the later *classes transplantées*. Here perhaps are the real origins of the *demi-temps pédagogique et sportif* format some 70 years before the Vanves experiments.

English elementary school teachers at about the same time were taking children on school journeys and others were organising team games and swimming in their own time.

Many teachers give help with voluntary movements such as the Scouts and in *colonies*, François found that 60% of scoutmasters were *instituteurs* so again it is not surprising that ODP were readily accepted in the elementary schools. At root the Scouts and the *colonies de vacances* offer the same ingredients of communal living and activities in the fresh air so physical benefits to the children are likely to be much the same though the Scouts will have the advantage of knowing each other through weekly meetings so their camps will deepen the social benefits derived from the stay. Both movements are likely to reinforce pupils' interest in schools' *classes de découverte* through their becoming accustomed to living communally and moving about the countryside.

The movement *Centres d'Entraînement aux Méthodes d'Éducation Active [CEMEA]* was a voluntary movement formed in 1936 to encourage children to be active in their own *éducation* and to train *éducateurs* in appropriate activity methods for teaching in *colonies* and other settings. The Scouts and the New Education movement together were responsible for CEMEA coming into being (p 62 above). ODP form a significant proportion of the activities of CEMEA (Chobeaux 1994).

The youth hostels movements (secular and Catholic) in which hundreds of teachers have been involved, have encouraged thousands of participants in ODP through their economical accommodation and their courses in various activities. All these movements are *éducatifs* and are part of the society in which schools and teachers operate, making ODP normal activities in modern society and have therefore made their introduction into schools through *classes de découverte* seem a natural thing to do, as long as they do not interfere with examination work.

A hypothesis could be that these voluntary organisations, before the Occupation, provided social education with which French schools did not normally concern themselves.

During the Occupation the break-down of social barriers opened the way for voluntary organisations with ideals to create opportunities for *éducation* and continuing education since schools were still reluctant to give time to this aspect of pupils' development.

Several voluntary movements were involved in the formation of Les Francas during and after the Liberation. ODP were and are an important though not dominating part of their programme. They were, however, after the reshaping of the school week in 1969, responsible for the provision of camp sites at their *centres de loisir* so that families with children could make use of the new 1½ day weekend. Families having once bought camping equipment, with weekends free and four weeks annual paid holiday from 1969, were in a position to take up those outdoor activities which they found attractive – another boost for ODP stemming indirectly from the voluntary agencies that promoted Les Francas twenty-five years earlier.



A similar and overlapping list of voluntary movements were responsible also for acting as midwives in bringing UNCM into being in the same tense months of the winter of 1944-45. This organisation, as UCPA, deals with older adolescents up to adults of any age who care to try their courses in a wide range of ODP. Apart from a few courses in which there is a *mi-temps* sort of format in skiing and a foreign language, UCPA concentrates entirely on ODP, but they still see themselves as being *éducatif* in their goals.

A formal hypothesis suggests that several voluntary organisations see themselves as having a complementary *éducatif* role in the all-round development of French young people.

Question 4. How important was New Education in encouraging ODP in French education?

Rousseau's writings encouraged people to go out into the open country; he also influenced the developers of new forms of education which were child centred and he advocated the open air and doing rather than relying on books in the early years of life. His ideas influenced New Education in the nineteenth century.

The entry of ODP into French elementary education in school time, and into French society for the working man, really began with Popular Front legislation, the work of Zay (a New Education sympathiser) and his encouragement of purposeful and creative use of leisure which was made possible by the government's legislation. Weekly half days in the open air in elementary schools were an idea from fifty years earlier and were in keeping with Rousseau and New Education thinking. The *École des Roches* was New Education inspired and really had its most influential periods from 1936 to 1938, during the Occupation, and for some ten years afterwards when the Vanves and other experiments were carried out. The combination of New Education inspiration, new aspirations for children after the war, and new affluence meant that ODP, with *demi-temps pédagogique et sportif*, was an acceptable idea, in fact the right idea at the right time.

During the Occupation New Education made its mark through the influence of *l'École des Roches* personnel and by others, such as Carcopino, who had been affected by that school. In addition many of the ex-army officers who were responsible for the Vichy youth movements were Scouts, a movement which included a good deal of philosophy compatible with New Education. It seems that once New Education ideas have been introduced, though the name and the exact methods may change, recognisable traces of the principles remain to enrich educational work. *Éducation nouvelle* would be unlikely to be known by that title in France now, but its principles are inherent in the very activity of carrying out a class visit to an environment different from that of the home area.

From chapter 5 (above) it is clear that during the Occupation a number of people influenced by *l'École des Roches* were active in encouraging physical and other activities through *éducation générale*. How much change of attitude among teachers and parents the Vichy regime was thereby able to effect is uncertain but the official backing of the training of

mountain and ski guides and instructors, and the setting up of a number of sailing centres, tended to democratise these sports. The fact that qualifications for mountain activity instructors were government backed would enhance their status and encourage more people to take part in the sports since there were now more, better qualified and safer guides and instructors available. The intention to encourage physical fitness among young French men and women through demanding yet satisfying activities would seem to have been the result of a philosophy stemming from New Education through *éducation générale* plus Hébertist ideas, aiming to create the all-round person, rather than hoping to bring fitness through performing exercises to barked commands and academic improvement by passive learning. One must not forget the Vichy hatred of the 'decadence' allegedly created by the previous regime.

The Vanves experiments built on a number of favourable factors; the 1880s *voyage scolaire*, ski classes arranged by Latarjet under the aegis of the ministry of education in 1928, the Latarjet experiment in Lyon, society being accustomed to children going away for three weeks to *colonies de vacances*, awareness of the unfitness of French conscripts in 1939-1940; *Hébertisme* encouraging every kind of activity and being enjoyable, Lagrange's and Borotra's efforts to provide new facilities for sport; furthermore, there had been an unprecedented mixing of social classes in common adversity during the Occupation. All this meant that the period of educational experiment in post-Liberation years met a warmer welcome than would have been the case a decade earlier. Finally, though Monod had to argue for money for the experiments in *éducation nouvelle*, there seemed to be sufficient for new initiatives; and family finances were generally easier than before the war; despite the destruction of the war there was optimism, and there was full employment.

Contrary to the original situation that ODP were for 'a certain privileged class', the Vanves experimental *classe de neige* was for a whole class in an ordinary elementary school. The many examples of generalisation of the experiment were also for whole classes in any elementary school where a *commune* was prepared to help finance a *mi-temps* regime, whether full-time or just for a month's visit, and where there was a teacher ready to cooperate and then be responsible for a *classe transplantée*.

It would seem that the original hypothesis that New Education influenced the growth of ODP in select French society and then in schools for the same social class was valid at the time. It continued encouraging that growth but among a widening section of society and schools until now conditions for ODP are so favourable that one or other OD pursuit may be followed by almost anybody who wishes to do so though some activities are more expensive than others. This process of ODP moving through the social range can be traced over more than two centuries, especially rapidly in the last half-century, when much less of the original class distinction remains.

A formal hypothesis that a method that has had some influence in education and recreation nation wide will leave recognisable traces for many years seems to be grounded in the facts presented above.

**Question 13** Why was the *Front populaire* period such a turning point in people's attitudes? For much of the nineteenth century workers and their unions had been trying to win leisure time as well as a living wage from the employers; towards its end they achieved some success which grew until in 1936, after a 60 year long general rise in national affluence and the formation of a government sympathetic to the lot of the workers, legislation was passed which ensured that all employees were entitled to a working week of 40 hours, and to two weeks annual holiday without loss of pay.

Some categories of workers had won the right to some paid holiday over the previous four decades and those in the liberal professions already had that privilege but 1936 was the year from which all but the self-employed were entitled to that benefit. The self-employed still covered a fair proportion of the population; in 1931 40% were agricultural workers including the peasants, for whom a forty-hour week and two weeks work-free holiday were, for most, but a pipe-dream. Of the beneficiaries of the legislation there were many who did not know what to do with the new weekly freedom nor the two weeks of holiday so the *Front populaire* provided more recreative and cultural facilities than ever before. For the employers and the middle classes improvements were less obvious. For the former there were wages to be paid but for fewer hours of work, and for two weeks no work at all. The latter "found their usual seaside and country resorts swamped by hordes of workers ... It seemed like a new barbarian invasion." (Cobban 1965, 154).

The brief period before the Occupation was perhaps just long enough for the workers to appreciate the possibilities of the new situation without having had sufficient time to take full advantage of it. Employers in the same period adjusted to their new responsibilities to their employees. Thus the 1936 to 1938 years remained in the minds of Frenchmen during the Occupation as a period to which they longed to return to pick up the threads and to develop them further; it was one of the unifying ideas among many otherwise disparate citizens suffering in common. The *Front populaire* legislation on the provision and the use of leisure changed the thinking of the population and consolidated the theme which had been developing for the previous sixty or seventy years that it was normal for people to have leisure time in which to follow a hobby or pastime in which they could immerse and develop themselves. The Popular Front brought in measures which potentially satisfied the desires of the previously deprived, whetted their appetites and awakened them to fuller possibilities but the gains were snatched away before they could be fully realised.

The Vichy regime, despite its difficulties and its expressed scorn for the *Front populaire*, to a considerable extent carried on the policies of that government through the expansion of youth work, of sports including the vigorous democratisation of ODP for all ages, attempts to get

more PE in schools with a half-day in the open air, the *brevet sportif* and the building of swimming pools and playing fields. These cannot redress the evil measures which were passed, though in a situation of *force majeure*, but they may have reinforced the effects of the Popular Front, though they may also have put some people off recreative activities because of their association. Whichever way the balance lies, the *Front populaire* was very much remembered during the Vichy years, and people were eager to extend its ideas as soon as the opportunity returned.

David's experiment under Zay of the half day in the open air during school time was repeated and elaborated by David under Borotra, and was then incorporated by Fourestier, under David, in the Vanves experiments. The extension of the two weeks of paid holiday has continued but it was the universality of having any paid holiday at all that was the landmark created by the *Front populaire*.

A substantive hypothesis could be that the Popular Front represented a legal landmark in the democratisation of leisure and a significant step in the process which had begun more than half a century earlier when workers had begun to take up hobbies and pastimes within their limited resources.

A formal hypothesis arising from the above could be that a government supported by a major part of the population will pass legislation in keeping with historical trends and for the good of the generality of the population.

Question 7 What continuity of thinking and policies was there from one regime to another?

At the time of the Popular Front the eighty year old negative attitude to PE still prevailed despite the best efforts of Zay and Lagrange, though outside school the new *Brevet sportif populaire* proved to be a success; many *instituteurs* helped in the youth hostels, Scouts and other movements, being modern equivalents of the work done with pupils fifty years earlier. Yet on the basis of the habitual resistance to anything except academic work in school, one can hypothesise that the attitude would need a great deal of persuasion to modify it within schools though Zay tried. Parents' attitudes continued in the same vein for they had been similarly conditioned in their time and wanted their children to succeed; but people welcomed the leisure time facilities that were being made available.

From the nineteenth century PE and Outdoor Pursuits were seen as quite unconnected subjects. The former had a low status, and used valuable study time. Outdoor Pursuits, however, were seen as being at the other end of the status spectrum. Mountain exploration had additional kudos because people studied such areas then published their results about glacial movement, flora and fauna, geology, folk customs, their maps and so on. A fresh approach by the *Front populaire* may have made a slight improvement in teachers' attitudes and the Vichy regime continued this trend, encouraging PE in schools by approving the Hébert method, a much more interesting way of presenting physical activity. But changing

the attitudes of tens of thousands of *instituteurs* proved almost impossible – there was certainly continuity of thinking and behaviour among them; a continuity that persisted for more decades.

Outdoor Pursuits on the other hand, starting from a position of esteem but beyond the reach of the ordinary family, gained in popularity in society as increasingly people had some spare money and time as Western Europe generally became richer. ODP were not seen as 'stealers' of time from other subjects since they were only done in vacations – until somebody took the model of the Latarjet experiment in Lyon and changed it into the *demi-temps pédagogique et sportif* format. The first experiment at Vanves was in PE only, though including games and swimming which put it ahead of its time; Saturday afternoons were spent in open country, a continuity from Demeny, David's half day of open air under Zay and then under Borotra. The second experiment included a month of *classe de neige* in each of the second and third years so PE and ODP were openly linked. This was not the first time the subjects had been joined, Lagrange had been in charge in 1937-1938 of school PE, and of leisure and sport out of school, becoming particularly known for his support of the youth hostels movements; and Borotra, during part of the Vichy period, had been in charge of *Éducation générale* which included school PE and was also in charge of leisure and sport which included skiing and other outdoor sports. But that is not to say that either Lagrange or Borotra managed to get the two fields joined in pupils' timetables.

We see that there were innovations being introduced over the years but they were almost always adaptations of earlier attempts to achieve improvement in children's lives.

One unfortunate continuation, despite the efforts of people such as Langevin, Wallon, Monod and others was that all-age elementary schools continued until 1959 because of political and religious in-fighting, final reorganisation into end-on primary and secondary schooling not being completed until the late 1960s. On the other hand, since specialist teaching in secondary schools creates problems if a teacher is away, they organise very few and only short *classes transplantées*. Children in unreorganised schools had a much better chance of experiencing school visits, and long ones.

Perhaps the most outstanding continuity of thinking and policy from one regime to another was at ministry of education level when New Education was used virtually continuously through the Zay period from 1936 to 1939 under Gustave Monod who was director of secondary education and an old boy of *l'École des Roches*, then during the Occupation under the ministry of Carcopino who was heavily influenced by that school, and with Garrone, a member of staff of the school working throughout the Occupation, then again after the war with Monod back in post working for experiments in New Education. Maurice David was also involved in the three regimes' experiments in ODP, especially the open air half day.

Continuity of the idea of allocating a significant proportion of each day to physical activity was carried forward from Latarjet in the early 1930s, through *mi-temps* in Vanves to some less radical formulae and on to *tiers-temps* in the 1970s; lack of sustained financial support finally frustrated these last attempts to give children regular activity in school time though it seemed that some progress had been achieved in raising the amount of time allocated weekly.

It is possible that during *classes de neige* the status and excitement of the activity and the wish to enjoy every minute, when the class is there for only a week or so in recent years, class work may be neglected. The same attitude was evident when attempts were made to avoid class work during *classes de cheval* (p 170 above). These would be breaks with a tradition lasting nearly two centuries of zealously guarding examination work time.

One may hypothesise that this would reinforce the idea that PE and ODP are seen as separate subjects and of different worths?

This suggests a formal hypothesis that the background of different disciplines affects their perceived worths and the likelihood of their being included in the weekly or yearly timetable.

## Question 2

What official agencies were responsible for the two events. Were there voluntary agency models already in use?

The hypotheses developed from the discovered facts were: chapter 7, perceived similar needs will produce similar solutions; and chapter 9, thinking at ministry level was keeping pace with modern developments in society but questioned whether the same could be said at school level.

The French ministry of education was in overall charge of the Vanves experiment while Derbyshire LEA was responsible for the White Hall move. This is in keeping with the long standing management of education in the two countries. Even in the 1830s, half a century before school attendance was made compulsory, the ministry of public instruction took charge of the child nurseries and called them *écoles maternelles*, while secondary education was under the same ministry from 1808. In Britain the government was reluctant to be responsible for education, its first grant to help provide education for the poor was given to religious societies in 1833 for them to do it. Secondary schools were not seen as a government matter until 1902 though there were a number of commissions of enquiry from the 1860s onwards. In 1870 school boards had been set up to provide elementary education, and county councils had been established in 1889. From 1902 those local authorities became Local Education Authorities (LEAs) and were made responsible for all provided school education. The tradition in England has thus been government control of education at arms-length, the LEAs working within guidelines based on successive Education Acts. LEAs could interpret Acts in ways appropriate to local needs, emphases varying with geographical conditions, density of population, the political colour of an Authority, and even the 'hobbyhorse' of some influential elected member, or a senior official. Derbyshire LEA was

fortunate in having a man of the quality of Jack Longland from March 1949 as Director of Education, and having territory well suited to ODP within its boundaries. The French claim their central control ensures that standards are maintained at a uniform level across the country. They would also claim that under their system when a centre such as White Hall was to be set-up it would be located where it was thought, by those with a nation-wide view, was the most advantageous for its purpose; and the fact that Longland, a first class climber, was in Derbyshire, was fortuitous. In chapter 9 above French central control is evident. The minister decided marine study centres were needed, so 14 appeared. They were all in the *académies* of Rennes and Nantes, that is they were concentrated in Brittany and the Vendée, meaning that most of the country was hundreds of kilometres away from a specialist marine study centre. Though these were to be the first of many more it seems strange to concentrate all the first ones in what was undoubtedly the most favourable, but not the only suitable, area of France for this discipline.

Both countries had charitable centres belonging to voluntary agencies such as the Ragged School Union (ch 3 above) doing 'good' work since it seems that people had responded similarly, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, to the needs of poor city children. But there were not, apparently, centres in France with methods and aims like the Outward Bound schools established from 1941 by Kurt Hahn, a New Education inclined German refugee. The first Latin country Outward Bound school came into existence in France in 1986 (Kerjean 1993). Its literature and an interview with Mr Kerjean suggest that it was mainly concerned to run courses for business management teams.

The structure of formal educational administration were, and are, so different that, over the two countries, marked differences of level of responsibility are evident, yet one wonders whether it would be noticed by a child who visited a centre in one country and then a centre in the other that there was any difference between them. A party of French teenagers met at White Hall expressed satisfaction but no surprise with the centre, except for the cream trifle which they refused to touch. Because of the concern for academic standards in schools already referred to several times, one feels almost certain that *classes transplantées* lasting a month in term time would not have proved acceptable to the French public if there had not been the safeguarding of classwork time by the *mi-temps* regime; the ministry would probably not even have broached the idea. But holiday time courses were, and are, not so constrained.

The hypotheses developed from the consideration of this question in chapters 7 and 9 seem to be both valid. Both countries, from the mid-nineteenth century, had voluntary centres for giving city children fresh air. As Popular Front and wartime induced changes of thinking brought activities more strongly within the orbit of formal education, both countries accepted the *éducatif* ideas, French schools doing so reluctantly whereas this has long been seen as a school's duty in England. Official centres were provided but the decisions to provide them

were made at different levels of authority. This produced some geographical unevenness of provision in England but there was unevenness in France too. However, whatever the spread of provision, the crucial factor of take-up in both countries is still teacher willingness to plan then supervise an ODP experience.

One may propose the substantive hypothesis that though the administrative systems in the two countries are different, the outcomes have similarities.

A formal hypothesis might be that despite differing administrative systems similar needs result in what might be called converging evolution of solutions to the needs.

Question 12 Why was *demi-temps pédagogique et sportif* so popular in the 1950s?

The idea of mixing classroom work and other activities is not new in France. *Colonies de vacances* mixed singing, artistic and modelling work and so on (which in England would be seen as a school's domain) with sport, indoor games and ODP, so the Vanves *classes de neige* were a modification of an idea, not an entirely new departure except that the indoor alternative to the enjoyable outdoor skiing was examination oriented classwork. It was not even a new idea for school time since Latarjet had allocated one-third of each school day to physical activity in his experiments with girls in Lyon. And from the 1880s *instituteurs* who organised *voyages pédagogiques* were mixing class work with the other activities of their visits in return for official financial support. This contrasts with the English school journeys in which it was thought the experience was sufficient justification in itself (p 56 above).

At Vanves there were several features in its favour. After the first year's experiment when examination results were presented as demonstrating a successful conclusion it must have been fairly easy to persuade the second cohort of parents to accept the three year experiment, with two residential months included. Another feature in favour of the Vanves experiment was that a specialist PE teacher was employed so that the *instituteur* avoided teaching that subject; the more marginal gains when an unwilling *instituteur* was pushed into teaching practical subjects in order to economise is evident in the results obtained in the Montauban experiment (p 127 above). The popularity of *mi-temps* was really in the *mi-temps classes transplantées*. When at school the format seems to have been downgraded fairly quickly to other formats containing less activity. Finally, even *tiers-temps* faded away for want of financial support and because *instituteurs* were not prepared to teach PE.

A formal hypothesis here might be that a successful idea can only be transferred to another slightly different context when everybody is familiar, and happy with, the original concept.

Question 14 Why were *classes de neige* seen as a turning point in French education?

*Classes de neige* were the more exciting and famous part of the Vanves experiments. The features favouring the Vanves experiments have been covered in dealing with question 12; the same features favoured the *classes de neige* but more so. The on-going *mi-temps* format of the school timetable involved continuing extra expense compared with a normal timetable and, in particular, it had much more of the age-old teacher and parent *bête noire*, PE, as a



large part of it. *Classes de neige* on the other hand were for a limited time, they had no PE but involved a glamorous *sport d'élite* instead which attracted children, parents and teachers. Though they became expensive they were at first cheap because they attracted generous subventions and, again at first, they tended to be organised by teachers who were enthusiastic volunteers. The glamour was less evident later when perhaps physically illiterate and unenthusiastic teachers found themselves expected to take their class away for two, three or four weeks when they had family or other responsibilities at home.

The main turning point however was that, for the first time, pupils in a publicly provided elementary school went away in term time with the State's blessing and a subsidy. Once that had occurred variations were introduced by those with different interests. Almost every feature of the landscape became the subject of a *classe de ...*, mountains, the sea, pure air, the environment as a whole, the city for rural children; activities besides skiing included sailing, canoeing, cycling, caving, riding and so on. But unlike most English school visits to ODP centres, there had to be maintenance of class work, and a project related to wherever the class was and what it was doing, i.e., there was an element of field-work involved. This fitted French society's concern for academic progress throughout the school year, was compatible with New Education ideas; and local *inspecteurs* could drop in to check that the work was being done.

Whether the average teacher was concerned with the *éducatif* side of the situation is uncertain but Fourestier certainly was, as is Giolitto (1983) in his writings on the subject of *classes de découverte*. Both considered that the residential experience coupled with the activity was *sur le plan éducatif* as well as complementing *le plan pédagogique* (Fourestier 1953b, 4-5) (p 131 above), and Giolitto said (p 171 above),

[The fundamental objective of these classes, ... is the global training of the child, in all his being, body, emotions, intellect, social adjustment ... ].  
(Giolitto 1983, 2, citing Note de Service of 17 Sept 1982).

The Vanves *classes de neige* could have been the break through to schools taking on some of the duties *éducatifs* which had been, and still commonly are, seen as family responsibilities (p 55 above), but the impression is that teachers in France, once back in school, still do not consider the pastoral side of teaching as their responsibility; organisations such as Les Francas or UGSEL, or parents are seen as a child's *éducateurs*.

A substantive hypothesis that this experiment chimed with several favourable factors at the time such as growing affluence and optimism for the future, while unfavourable ones (examination fears) were dealt with. Examination pressures may not now be seen as pressing as they were but teachers still do not accept pupil development responsibility.

A formal hypothesis suggests that the scheme changed as society changed over half a century, the pedagogical element, despite precautions, suffering some erosion but the *éducatif* element is still largely ignored in school.

## Question 6

What were the benefits claimed to be derived from ODP at different times?

It is taken for granted here that ODP are beneficial for the physical health of those taking part in them; industry and, especially, the family benefit offices have acknowledged this through giving generous grants to UCPA when they were building new centres, and Fourestier considered that a month of *classe de neige* built up a credit balance of health better than six months of ordinary physical activities back at home (p 137 above).

Less objective benefits from many activities have been subject to a variety of claims such as the development of tenacity, team-work and so on. The English Public schools were early in justifying the time given to competitive sport as being good for boys' characters but Töpffer was also early in making what seemed quite reasonable claims for the effects of his *voyages en zig-zag*. It is not known if there were similar excursions in the twenty or so years from when Gerlach, also of Geneva [the same school?], took parties including the young *marquis de Turenne* (p 48 above) to the mountains, to the time of Töpffer; if there were it is surprising that Töpffer does not mention them. It is unlikely that he had much trouble in persuading parents to allow their boys to join him for by now all Genevans would be aware of the growing number of tourists whose wealth enhanced the status of this pastime of exploring mountains. Töpffer's description of the effects of his expeditions still sound modern today. It should not be forgotten that Rousseau had died only some fifty years before Töpffer's *voyages en zig-zag* and was a native of Geneva. Another fifty years later other secondary school parties were taken to the mountains using the new trains, the new *Club alpin français* encouraging this tendency with travel bursaries; again they were of the same social class as Gerlach's. What was claimed to be gained through these is not known but they probably had the same savour as Töpffer's which included lessons both *pédagogique* and *éducatif*. Dussane also justified mountaineering on both grounds: *en même temps, une éducation morale et intellectuelle* (p 49 above). An hypothesis derived here is that adherents of a pastime justify their activity with arguments based either on their own experience or that of significant others. If they could not do so it would be a case of what Festinger (1957) called 'cognitive dissonance', arguing for doing something in which one does not believe.

During the Occupation the arguments for ODP tended to have a more tough or machismo tone. The officers running the youth organisations wanted their young men to be ready to be effective soldiers; *Jeunesse et montagne* being the outstanding example. This is hardly surprising under the circumstances. But people such as Carcopino and Borotra wanted all round development through the combination of general education and physical activities; the backgrounds of the officers and of Carcopino and Borotra would naturally give them different points of view though all wanted to do what they thought was best for France. The attitudes they wanted to inculcate in the young men were appropriate to each authority figure's position but whether any of them were successful in their efforts is uncertain. An

hypothesis here is that ODP can be used with many kinds of clients and the desired goals may differ, while achieving them is an uncertain matter. One must add [a personal opinion] that if the experience can be enjoyable or satisfying it is more likely to succeed and to be lasting.

The introduction of residential ODP to provided school pupils in term time began with the second Vanves experiment (Ch 7 above). Developing boys' personalities, improved physical development and health, maintaining academic work and enjoying school were the main objectives. The residential *classes de neige* seem to have been outstandingly successful in changing boys' attitudes to several aspects of their being. This is not entirely surprising since for a month the boys were in a (happy) community of themselves and their *éducateurs* with limited other contacts – almost what Goffman (1968) called a 'total institution'.

The *tiers-temps* experiments at Sables-d'Olonne and Les Rousses, though not residential, brought the children into close contact with adults who became their *éducateurs*. Adults and children had a common interest at which they worked together; this must have been very socio-educative since, in the sailing pupils and *instituteurs* learned together, and in the winter-time boat building the normal adult-child gulf would be much reduced since the pupils must have borne some responsibility in the totality of tasks. One can hypothesise that this was a maturing experience for the pupils.

For those experiencing the ski-jumping the child-adult contacts were for far fewer hours than in the sailing experiment but there were high, or stress, points when the pupils had to summon up their determination to master their fear, and go. Here one can hypothesise that the children could learn about themselves, learn that they were capable of mastering their fear. This relates to Longland (1955) when he says that the latent qualities within everybody, perseverance, courage, stamina, skill and so on, can be brought to the surface by ODP, so making the individual aware that they have these qualities, but it is then the way in which they are used that determines whether a 'good' character is developed. Longland never believed in ODP baldly being 'good for character' though he believed people should have the chance to experience them.

Giolitto discusses the claims for benefits derived from *classes de neige*. Some of the early claims had been abandoned, for example, tenacity (because the skiing had changed from *de fond* to downhill) but other benefits were still to be enjoyed, for example, by young children removed temporarily but happily from their family who then developed independence, while poor children gained in other ways. The hypothesis here is that ODP involve a widening of horizons and offer social learning experiences, changing over the years but valid and perhaps different for each child.

The UCPA continuation of *Jeunesse et montagne* offers ODP in holiday times to older school pupils and to adults, activities which stretch them physically and psychologically, in

other words, it offers them adventure through which, UCPA claims, they learn about themselves. The benefits in social development are appreciated by industrial firms who send employees on courses while private individuals pay with their own money for the experience. The substantive hypothesis here is that experiences and benefits may change over time and may differ for each individual but ODP are versatile and can be adapted to suit a wide variety of individuals' needs.

A formal hypothesis grounded in the data above could be that ODP, covering a wide range of activities, can be used for a number of purposes with different individuals.

Outdoor Pursuit centres, like schools, are part of the culture in which they exist. As society has become richer, so ODP have broadened their social catchment area and been brought into the educational field for children of any class and almost any age.

Question 8 What measures, and by whom, are taken to regulate risk in ODP in education?

The differences of central control in keeping with the tradition in one country, and the 'hands-off as far as possible' tradition in the other are currently changing, the French to some extent towards decentralisation and England to a more central legislative form of intervention. In 'risk' activities the French government early took charge of the structure of the training of instructors, making sure that there was some measure of standardisation from one activity to another. In England the National Governing Body of each sport was left to devise its own format for its instructor qualifications so that considerable differences appeared from one to another.

In both countries teachers who were interested put time into becoming qualified in an activity in which they were interested or which their school could use. The Sables-d'Olonne teachers who achieved the qualifications necessary to take their own CM2 pupils during the *tiers-temps* sailing are an example, and there were many teachers in England who did similarly; sometimes taking qualifications devised by their LEA outdoor pursuits advisory team for want of national ones – another indication of the dispersal of authority in such matters. As years passed national qualifications replaced the local ones but there has been little sign of the different sports bodies bringing uniformity to the overall picture. The situation in France remains that qualifications are recognisably of a similar format; the *Fédérations françaises* are closely involved at the volunteer instructor level, and their representatives have a say in who may apply for training for the *Brevets d'État*. Though the government has ensured some degree of uniformity this does not mean that qualifications remain static, changes in requirements are made as need becomes apparent. From chapter 8 above it is clear that the French government exercises its powers of control in the field of instruction in sport; the English situation is very dispersed but governing bodies keep up to date with changing needs – can one say that one system is superior to the other?

The growth of *classes transplantées* has meant that some teachers have been pressed into taking their classes, which has resulted at times in non-enthusiasts, unaware of the risks, being in charge. The ministry therefore lays down rules, for example, that for *classes de mer* there should be a holder of the appropriate *Brevet d'État* present for the sake of safety.

In society generally ODP have become so popular that the number of accidents to adults has markedly increased, though whether it has only increased in proportion to the number of people enjoying ODP would need separate research to clarify. However, the absolute number has increased and the ministry has started an experimental project to try to reduce future accidents by ensuring that pupils approaching school leaving age in a number of pilot schools have some skills and awareness of the risks in ODP. Whether enough PE teachers (the main channel of attack) will prove amenable or sufficient if the scheme is generalised remains to be seen.

One may hypothesise that at ministry level there is awareness and concern at modern developments; but the same may not necessarily be true at school staff level

One may surmise that central control of the training and safety rules makes for uniformity and therefore more widespread understanding and acceptance, especially when backed up by *inspecteurs* making their visits to *classes transplantées*.

In 1959 Malesset tried to persuade the ministry of education to start a *Certificat d'aptitude à la pédagogie alpine* [Certificate in alpine teaching method] but the idea was refused. This seems to be a pity; by 1959 mountain related work was attracting a wide range of people from many walks of life and it could be seen that there was a career structure developing for those drawn to that sphere of work whereas a decade earlier this was not so apparent.

A substantive hypothesis that such a government certificate might have raised the quality of the personnel drawn to the work, so reducing the criticism of ski instructors thought by *instituteurs* to be slapdash and dogmatic (p 179 above).

A formal hypothesis could be that entrance qualifications for an occupation affect both the quality of the personnel drawn to it and the public image of that occupation leading to a beneficent or a vicious spiral.

#### Question 16 Are ODP beneficial to the areas where they are practised?

There have undoubtedly been gains and losses through the growth in popularity of ODP. By their very nature these activities spread people from the towns over what were empty spaces and in doing so, even when the people have gone back to their towns they leave their marks. Some activities need little in the way of facilities except the space, for example, mountain walking and climbing but access implies transport and roads, and staying within easy reach for more than a day implies accommodation, all close enough to the mountains. Cross country skiing, as practised by the first Vanves *classes de neige*, needs no more facilities

than mountain walking but downhill skiing requires a great deal of investment in buildings and lifts which remain through the summer season even if no one visits the area.

Such investment from an environmentalist's point of view is destructive, from that of the local *Syndicat d'initiative* (Tourist Information Office) it is something to display (in winter garb) in leaflets to attract more visitors; it is the basis of local prosperity. Such a dilemma could be the subject of a project for children of a *classe de neige* towards the end of the season when bare earth begins to appear. The scale of development since Fourestier's first Vanves snow class has probably exceeded anything that he could have imagined. But balancing the destruction of natural terrain against the enjoyment and health inducing activity for millions of mostly towns people each year across western Europe alone is difficult. This balancing discussion could go on, taking each outdoor activity and its effects in turn but there is no way that one can balance environmental changes against individual human benefit and enjoyment – they are not comparable. All one can say is that the number of people enjoying ODP has grown enormously in the time since the Vanves experiment and the number of people making a living from that growth has multiplied many times over.

A formal hypothesis here could be that the recreation of large numbers of people will create benefit and loss according to individual points of view.

Question 1 Why, almost at the same time, did two nations so soon after a devastating war, start to introduce children in provided schools to ODP?

Both nations had experienced mixing of the social classes during the war when people had depended on one another for their lives, people whom they would not have known but for the war. It was realised that both societies, as they existed up to 1940, involved inequalities of opportunity and a great deal of wasted human potential. Conscription brought to light how the poorer people suffered from inadequate diets, and living conditions deleterious to optimum growth. Both countries planned to become welfare states with greater equality of opportunity for all.

Once the fighting ceased there were high expectations, and there were enough people concerned to ensure efforts to fulfil those expectations. As the *Guardian* newspaper said a half-century later, the 'collective spirit spawned by the shared burdens of the second world war - bombs, blitz and blackout – lasted for many years.' (Dean 1993).

The Beveridge Report provided a blue-print for the future of Britain as a Welfare State, and the French devised a series of five-year plans with clearly defined goals. The two countries intended that all children should experience secondary education and therefore have the opportunity of higher education if they could benefit from it. Physical Education was seen as essential in the efforts to lift all children nearer to the standards of the economically more fortunate.

With official financial support (p 98 above) people in France created voluntary agencies such as *Les Francas* which enabled children to participate in physical, recreational and socio-educational free-time activities since schools as a whole did not see them as their concern. But in England, under the 1944 Education Act, it became the duty of LEAs to ensure facilities for 'leisure-time occupation, in such organised cultural training and recreative activities as are suited to their requirements, ... for those willing to profit from them'. (Min of Education 1944, Part 11, 41, b).

The same Act laid on LEAs the duty to provide facilities including, *inter alia*, camps and holiday classes, expeditions and other activities; LEAs could defray or contribute towards the cost (ibid, Part 11, 53, 1). LEAs were to consider co-operating with any voluntary societies or bodies whose objects included the provision of activities of a similar character (ibid, Part 11, 53, 2). The way was open for co-operation between LEAs and Scouts, Guides, Boys' and Girls' Clubs, the Outward Bound and other voluntary movements. The contrast with the French schools' lack of concern for children's out-of-school activities is marked but the French ministry of education attached as much importance to such activities as did its English counterpart and dealt directly with the head and regional offices of organisations who could provide the appropriate services. It did not expect or require the schools to be involved.

Under the duty laid on LEAs the nature of provision would differ from one authority to another. That Derbyshire's response should include the first outdoor pursuits centre is not surprising; the terrain is extremely appropriate and the county has long been a mecca for enthusiasts living in the industrial cities around it. Longland was a member of the 1933 British attempt on Everest and he had been responsible for piloting the Duke of Edinburgh's Award in Hertfordshire. So White Hall was part of this LEA's response to the challenge of the 1944 Education Act, opening its doors on 31 December 1950. In France the Vanves experiment was centrally controlled and was a formal instructional, that is pedagogic, experiment coupled with PE, then ODP added – but academic performance had to be safeguarded. By now it was accepted that the age of leisure was dawning and the ministry could not ignore it. The English move assumed that personal development and enjoyment would happen among the pupils due to the activities and the setting; there were some people who equated White Hall courses with Outward Bound experiences and talked of character development but Longland dissociated himself and White Hall from that idea. The writer heard him say on one occasion words to the effect: 'We have umpteen schools where people learn to work but now we have one where they can learn to play.'

We see that important turning points occurred in English and French education at about the same time, through reforming motivations stimulated by the recently ended war but with differences related to the cultures within which they were operating. A common feature of both experiments, however, was the influence of New Education. Experiments in *éducation nouvelle* were going on in France, and that at Vanves was certainly affected by it. In England

Longland was a governor of the first Outward Bound school at Aberdovey and knew Kurt Hahn, the founder, well.

In his own writings, Hahn acknowledges the great influence which the ideals of Cecil Reddie had on him as a young man (Sederman 1989, 92).

Longland sent his two sons to Abbotsholme, Reddie's school, and was chairman of the school council from 1969-1974 (ibid, 94) so New Education was an influence here too.

It is a common occurrence for societies to re-plan their structures after a war so it is no surprise that Britain and France should do so. Some reforms may be too radical and are shelved but not forgotten until the time is ripe or another crisis makes them seem viable, for example, the *école unique* idea of the *Compagnons de l'Universitaire nouvelle* of 1918, an idea which took fifty years to be realised. But many ideas formulated during the 1939-45 war in France and in England did come about; more effective Welfare States, more open access to secondary, further and higher education; and growth of ODP as affluence and leisure time grew, and there was some breakdown of social class divisions.

A formal hypothesis here could be that fresh thinking engendered by the war caused both countries to plan for their futures through improving the education and well-being of their children.

### Early Enthusiasts

Windham and Pococke set the fashion for exploring the mountains. The type of person who followed them is exemplified by the *duc de La Rochefoucauld* who explored, made observations, took notes, asked questions and gathered information. The party of four young men engaged four porter/guides and two spare porters; the cumulative commercial effect of such parties visiting the area must have been considerable – a new occupation, porter and guide was being created. And the duke and others published their results which would popularise the area and activity still more.

The fact that the first recorded school parties going among the mountains were from Geneva suggests, hardly surprisingly, that nearness of facilities encourages practice of an activity, and the school parties of the 1870s further support it as the railways had effectively brought the mountains nearer to the cities.

A minority of a favoured section of French and English societies had, in the years following the writings of Rousseau and the *Siècle de lumière*, become enthusiastic about outdoor pursuits. They formed clubs for mountaineering and sailing. Regattas were held at Le Havre from 1856 (Rauch 1988, 187). They were *sports d'élite* and, because of their costliness, remained so for nearly another century, being joined by skiing in the early 1900s.



## Outdoor Pursuits and Education

Outdoor pursuits as an area in education is amorphous (p 2 above). In fact, the blanket term ODP can encompass a multitude of demands and rewards, differing according to initial intentions, ages, relationships between pupils and teachers, the nature of the weather, terrain and so on. And there is the experience of living amongst one's peers with the need to accommodate to each other. It is a twenty-four hours per day socio-educational experience in reality. The adults, as far as possible, are chosen as suitable to be *éducateurs* for their socio-educational roles.

Some benefits claimed to be obtained from ODP seemed to be almost bizarre. Immersion in cold water being good for young men is one example, though proving or disproving it – if defining being 'good for somebody' could be achieved – would be difficult if one is talking about personality or 'character' (ch 4). The Vanves experiments seemed to show changes in mien, especially the *classes de neige*, but how much were they the result of being fit and happy in congenial company? (ch 7). The Latarjet (ch 2) and the Vanves experiments claimed to find improved behaviour and academic work but the academic improvements have some doubt hanging over them; and people make claims about personality changes which are difficult to substantiate.

## A BRIEF SCAN

**Examinations** have a tradition at least a century longer than in Britain and are accorded much more weight when selecting personnel. The *agrégation* was instituted in 1766 (Green 1990, 139) or 1719 (Léon 1967, 35). Entry by competitive scholarship to *lycées* was the norm from their founding in 1802 (ibid, 65-6) though money could buy entry too, and competitive entry is still the norm for prestigious institutions, so anything apparently endangering academic performance is looked at askance.

### The less favoured

The bulk of the population did not benefit from industrial changes for several decades into the nineteenth century (ch 2 above). Religious and philanthropic organisations attempted to ameliorate the lot of the poor at least from the beginning of that century. From the 1840s in both France and England charities, usually with religious motivation, arranged fresh air visits. By the 1870s railways could be used for this purpose in virtually all parts of western Europe.

There is some conjunction of events around the time that Bion supposedly started the first Swiss *colonie de vacances* in 1876 (ch 3). Industrialisation had reached such a pitch that cities were stifling, the population of France grew by over 40% in the nineteenth century (Thomson 1966, 114), (the UK by 100%) overcrowding in cities was endemic, railways added to the pollution but provided the means of escape if money were available. The wealth that industrialisation was creating for the middle classes was tapped to help the poor escape.

Discovery of the preventative powers of fresh air and sunshine against TB and rickets, growth in the number of residential holidays, compulsory education and completion of the network of railways all roughly coincided in time. Teachers began organising *colonies*.

### **Growth of free time**

Gradually working hours became shorter (ch 2). The country became richer and the workers received some share of the increased wealth created by improved productivity, especially from 1870. Working hours were gradually reduced and a few workers received paid holidays from about 1900. From 1936 leisure time became available on a scale never known in France before. The population used their new leisure and paid holidays for a vast range of activities and recreation, ODP, including youth hostelling, experienced a boom.

### **Educational experiments**

From 1928 various educational experiments involving physical activities were carried out under the aegis of the medical profession and the ministry of education; this pattern carried on for several years after the war, the medical influence being less prominent but still present in the background. Most of the work failed to make an impression on teachers' resistance to losing time from examination work, and lack of financial backup spelled their ends except for the *classes transplantées*. An attempt in the 1990s (ch 9) to encourage ODP in secondary schools has been based on six pilot *académies*, the outcome is not yet clear.

### **Changes of attitude**

The Occupation was an extraordinary period of about four years resulting in, at least temporarily, new groupings of people working together and some changed values. With changes in attitudes to education and leisure, partly resulting from the well-remembered *Front populaire* legislation, people were ready for that legislation to be reinforced and widened. And working class people were more ready to aspire, for themselves and for their children, to a *civilisation de loisir* which would have been considered above their station only a few years earlier.

Generally PE and games still had low status whereas *classes transplantées* were seen as having a respectable academic element of a daily duration not unlike that of normal school. But it seems that the efforts of Zay to change educational values, and the energetic efforts of the Vichy regime, at the other end of the political spectrum, to do the same thing but in an atmosphere of many disparate emotions, had little impact on teachers' and parents' acceptance of PE and games.

### **Mountaineering, skiing and sailing**

Only in 1924 was there some recognition of the need for training of alpine guides and ski instructors but not until the Vichy government took responsibility was there official input. Vichy thus contributed considerably to the new popularity of mountain activities. Vichy was also responsible for a number of sailing schools being started (ch 5 above).

Some credit for changing people's perception of these three formerly exclusive sports must therefore be accorded the Vichy regime. Pétain and his senior officers believed French education to be over intellectual so they deliberately set out to encourage activities which involved discomfort, cold and fatigue as well as team work. Their belief in the benefits to be derived may be unproved, or unprovable, but they reasonably believed that physical activity and a healthy body went together, compared with the traditional French schools' dismissal of activity as wasted time.

### **Some Contrasts between French and English Practices**

Apart from the French pre-occupation with examinations there are some established practices which contrast with those in England.

#### **Age for starting activities and periods away from home**

One outstanding difference (chs 8 & 9) is the early age at which children are introduced to adventurous activities such as rock-climbing, caving, skiing and water sports, and there is inevitably the same early age at which French children seem to be happy to be away from home for lengthy periods which few English parents would countenance. The activities involved (Jolibois 1987, 19-21; Amstutz 1991, 11) (ch 8 above) cover practically the full range of sports by the age of ten, some beginning at age four or five.

The duration thought quite normal for being away from home at *maternelle* and elementary school age is encouraged, indeed was enforced, by legislation for *classes transplantées*. Minimum periods of 28 days for primary age pupils and two weeks for four and five year olds were laid down in the early 1950s though these have since been reduced for financial reasons. Such durations are not a new phenomenon; the 'first' French *colonie de vacances* in 1881 was arranged by the *Œuvre de trois semaines* (ch 3), its name suggests it must have been based on earlier models.

#### **Mixture of activities**

*Classes transplantées* include physical and academic activities, and holiday courses equally offer mixtures; rock-climbing and art or music for *maternelles*; skiing and foreign language teaching for adolescents; cycling, football, sailing and handicrafts for 4s to 10s for 1, 2, 3 or 4 weeks. Skiing is very popular among all ages, groups of four and five year olds will spend two weeks in a ski centre, developing considerable social independence, and competence on skis.

In one mountain centre 4s to 12s can have twenty-two days of mountain biking, rock-climbing, riding, tennis, bowling, walks, swimming; another centre offers one to four week stays for outdoor activities among the mountains, with artistic and manual expressive activities for 3s to 7s. For older children the range of activities is wider including nights in mountain refuges (Bambuck 1990, *passim*).

At the centre La Coûme, near Prades in the Eastern Pyrenees, climbing and skiing are taught from the age of six during courses which include artistic, musical and other aesthetic activities. One climbing instructor, holder of a *Brevet d'état* in climbing, told the writer he thought the age of four was not too early to start. At White Hall, Derbyshire, when it opened on 31 December 1950, the minimum age of pupil accepted was 13, the school leaving age then being 15, now the minimum age accepted is 14. In England introduction to 'risk' activities normally waits until secondary school age but in France there seems to be little nominal difference between the activities offered to almost any age though the presentations may differ.

One has to pose the question, with no means of answering it here, as to whether the age at which children can happily and harmlessly [beneficially?] leave their parents for a period of some weeks, is a matter of culture? Is it such a long-standing normality in France that there are no fears to be unconsciously transmitted from parent to child? There is scope for further investigation here.

### Climate

One unavoidable difference between England and France is that of climate. Amstutz (1991, 11-5) describes a centre where children aged from 7 to 13 stay for 28 days and are offered many activities including rock-climbing 'when it is not raining'. A centre in England dropping outdoor activity sessions when it rained would, some weeks, get very little done. The French custom of mixing outdoor and indoor (art, music, handwork ...) activities must make flexibility easier since the facilities will be available and the children would be adaptable since they would have come for those indoor activities too.

With the different climate go different needs for clothing. In nine photographs of rock-climbing in the bi-monthly *Jeunesse au Plein Air* between December 1992 and March 1998 no one was wearing more than a tee-shirt or singlet and shorts, footwear were basketball boots or 'trainers'. All were apparently adequately roped but in only two pictures were helmets being worn; ages appeared to range from a girl of about six to older adolescents. The lack of helmets was surprising, especially as for all other activities shown, equitation, mountain biking, rafting, caving, land yachting, miniature motor-biking and miniature motor car driving helmets were *de rigueur* for all ages. Another climate and terrain based difference is that an advertised course in skiing will almost certainly be a course in skiing; in England there might be no snow. Wet activities such as canyoning or rafting have a longer season in the warmer climate.

### Term time and holiday time

One should remember that expectations during leisure time spent at *centres de vacances et de loisirs* are different from when pupils are with a school *classe transplantée*. The French consider leisure to be valuable and ideally to be used for doing something purposeful, even if it is done playfully when the children are young. *Centres de vacances* are seen as times for

learning physical, artistic and social, i.e., *éducatif* skills, as well as for enjoyment. *Classes transplantées* on the other hand, in term time, when the *activité dominante* may be a study of some aspect of the environment with half of every workday spent in class work may be at the same centre. Examinations and parental expectations affect the atmosphere so that this is work time, although also enjoyable, socially educative and, normally, the whole class is there with the regular teacher. There is overlap of the two situations but the emphasis changes though Giolitto (ch 9) feared that *classes de neige* were in danger of becoming holidays rather than *classes transplantées*.

### **Transfer of practice**

With different cultural norms producing different parental and child expectations together with different climates, only two features could apparently be 'borrowed' from the French. They are the *demi-temps pédagogique et sportif* theme, and the mix of outdoor and indoor activities. One objection would be that in the short English visits there would be pressure to use the time entirely for ODP; there would be resistance to spending time on 'ordinary' lessons in a nominal five-day stay. Mixing indoor and outdoor activities would be vulnerable to the same argument since children would experience only a taster of, say, rock-climbing and would spend time on, for example, art which they already experienced each week at school. Does teacher resistance to practical work, e.g., art or music, make such activities more enjoyable and acceptable during holidays because they are novelties to French children?

### **Possible Further Research**

1. There would seem to be room for investigation into the possibilities of primary age English children trying 'risk' activities over longer stays. Ghyll Head Centre on Windermere (Manchester LEA) tried adapted courses for primary (10+) children and young delinquents in the 1970s but reverted to secondary age pupils after one year. The longest secondary courses were for 8 days; it was thought children younger than 13 would not enjoy a longer period away from home nor that the activities were suitable under that age. (Personal communication March 1997, Ken Ogilvie, first Principal of Ghyll Head). The 1993 programmes for this centre, its neighbour, Tower Wood (Lancashire LEA) and White Hall talked of courses being suitable for thirteen year old pupils going away from home for the first time.

What or where are the roots of these beliefs? Instructor training or interest and habituation? How many English instructors are trained in primary school work? Why do we believe that parents and children should not be separated at an early age? Does such separation in France cause unhappiness or psychological damage?

2. Questioning the permanent instructors at half a dozen English LEA centres showed that only one of them (Principal of the centre and a former Scottish ski champion) was a PE teacher, as were only three of the teachers accompanying visiting school parties at those

centres. Is there a personality difference between PE teachers, normally good at competitive team games, and those who prefer more contemplative outdoor pursuits?

3. Fourestier came to prominence with the Vanves Experiments. What were his qualifications and interests before this? Was he a product of Bordeaux or Lacretelle medical school and PE research institute, and what did he do after Vanves? And David's career would be interesting to follow-up.

4. A detailed analysis of the differences in methods used with young and very young French children when introducing them to various activities compared with secondary age French children and compared with English methods would be worth considering.

5. A study of the semantic associations and fine differences attached to the words 'leisure' and '*loisir*' in the two countries might throw up some interesting contrasts and also of the words 'educate' and '*éduquer*', 'instructor' and '*animateur*', 'instruction' and '*éducation*', 'training' and '*formation*', and so on.

6. A study of the differences between activities offered at children's holiday camps in England and *centres de vacances* could be interesting.

## APPENDIX 1

### Development of the boys in the second Vanves experiment with *demi-temps pédagogique et sportif* regime over three years. (Encausse 1957, 18-21)

#### Fig. 1. Mean termly weights

The *classe d'expérience* [experimental class] and the *classe témoin* [control class]

The experimental boys' weights increased markedly during term time when they were undergoing directed physical activities and receiving extra milk and vitamins but the growth rate fell during the long vacations when they were not so active. *Classes de neige* in February 1953 and 1954 were followed by sharp increases in weight.

#### Fig. 2. Mean termly heights

The gain in height of the experimental class was sustained so that, after 32 months, it was six centimetres greater than the control class. The first month of *classe de neige* saw a sharp increase then a temporary slow down in growth in height.

#### Fig. 3. Mean termly vital capacity.

This is the amount of air which an individual can expel in a maximum expulsion after a maximum intake. The control class's average went up by almost 40% in 32 months while the experimental class's increase was almost 59%. The first snow class had a marked positive effect while the first long summer holiday had a marked negative effect.

#### Fig. 4. Mean termly chest expansion (minimum to maximum) at base of sternum level.

This curve vividly shows the deterioration during the long holidays for both groups, very much more marked for the experimental class. The control class was apparently taking even less exercise during holiday time than the limited amount which it experienced through attending school.

#### Comments

1. There is a clear tendency for the effects of the change in regime to be more marked in the first year than in subsequent years. Would this be because the boys were initially in such poor physical condition that any increase in activity would be markedly beneficial whereas once they had reached a reasonable level of fitness only marginal changes would follow unless the regime had been made much more energetic?

When the graphs of the two classes for all criteria except height are compared from January 1953, the divergencies are consistent but not great.

2. The growth in height is fairly steady except in the Winter term of 1952-53 when there is a spurt from December, the spurt being sustained to the end of the *classe de neige* when it slows down through March to June, the former line of the graph then being resumed.

3. It is clear that the Gambetta class finished as a taller, leaner, fitter group of boys than the control class.

# LA 2<sup>e</sup> EXPÉRIENCE SCOLAIRE DE VANVES (sur 3 ans)

Moyenne trimestrielle du poids

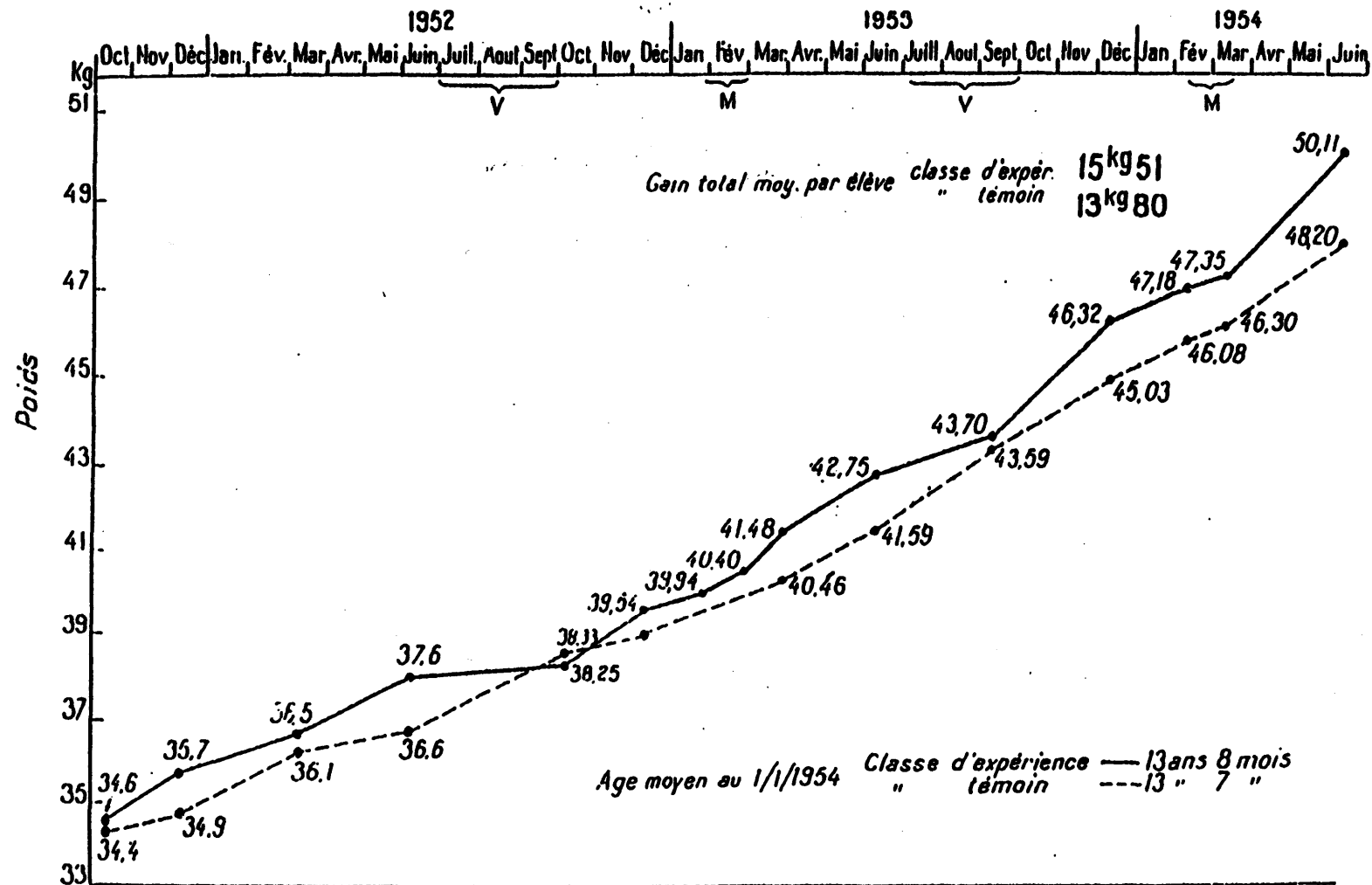


FIG. 1. — Moyenne trimestrielle du poids des enfants dans les deux classes : le poids augmente surtout pendant la période d'activité sportive bien dirigée et surveillée des mois scolaires.

**Figure 1 Weights** [Average termly weights of the children in the two classes: the weights increase especially during the months of directed sporting activity during school attendance].

**Figure 1. Weights**



# LA 2<sup>e</sup> EXPÉRIENCE SCOLAIRE DE VANVES (sur 3 ans)

Moyenne trimestrielle de la taille

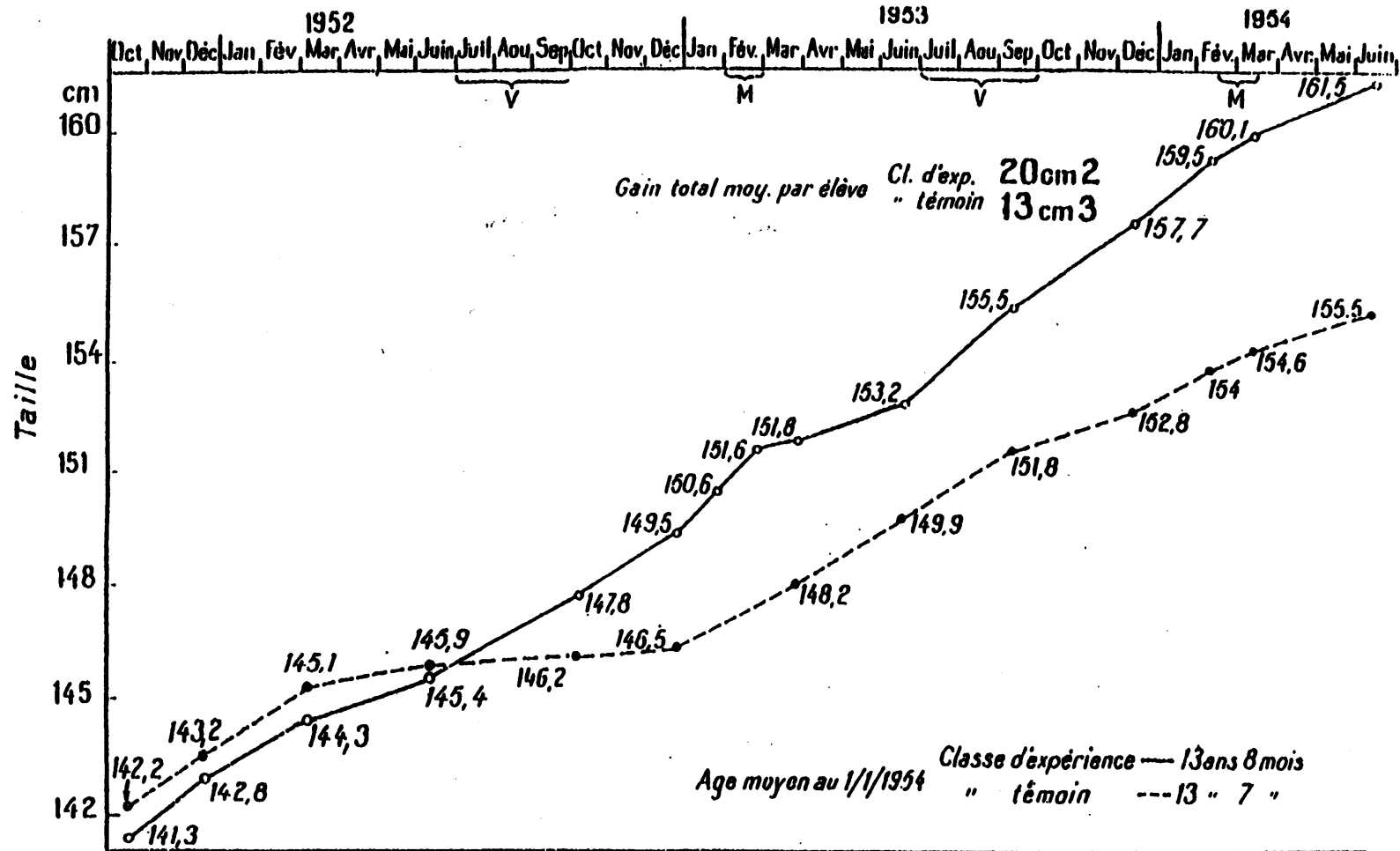


FIG. 2. — Moyenne trimestrielle de la taille des enfants dans les deux classes : le sport favorise surtout la croissance staturale.

Figure 2 Heights [Termly average heights of the children of the two classes: activity especially favoured the growth in height].

Figure 2. Heights

## LA 2<sup>e</sup> EXPÉRIENCE SCOLAIRE DE VANVES (sur 3 ans)

Moyenne trimestrielle de la capacité vitale

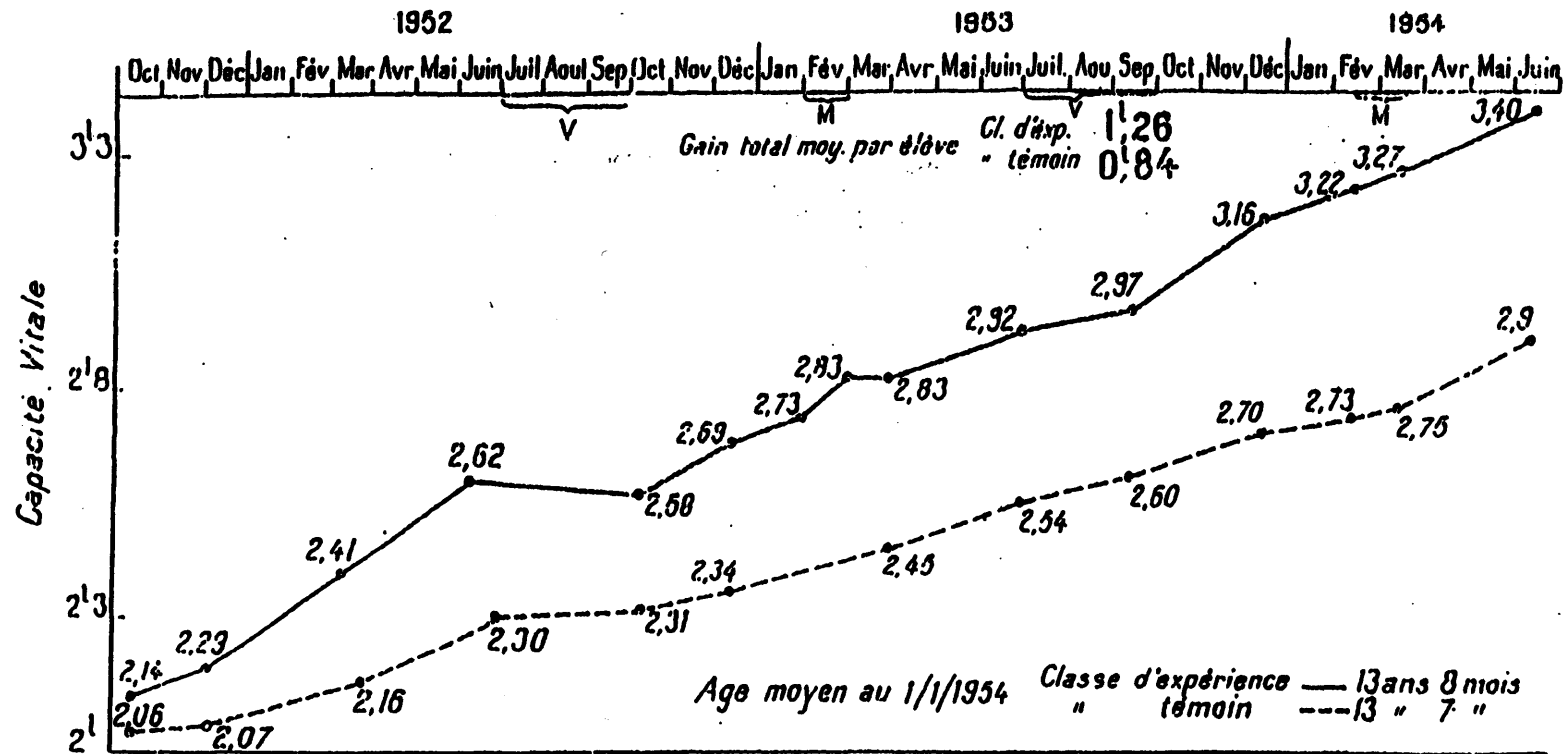


FIG. 3. — Moyenne trimestrielle de la capacité vitale des enfants des deux classes : après trois ans de mi-temps pédagogique et sportif les enfants de la classe d'expérience respirent infiniment mieux que leurs camarades témoins.

**Figure 3 Vital Capacities** [Average termly measures of the vital capacities of the children of the two classes: after three years of *mi-temps pédagogique et sportif* the children of the experimental class breathed much better than those of the control class].

Figure 3. Vital Capacity

## LA 2<sup>e</sup> EXPÉRIENCE SCOLAIRE DE VANVES (sur 3 ans)

Moyenne trimestrielle du périmètre thoracique différentiel xiphoïdien

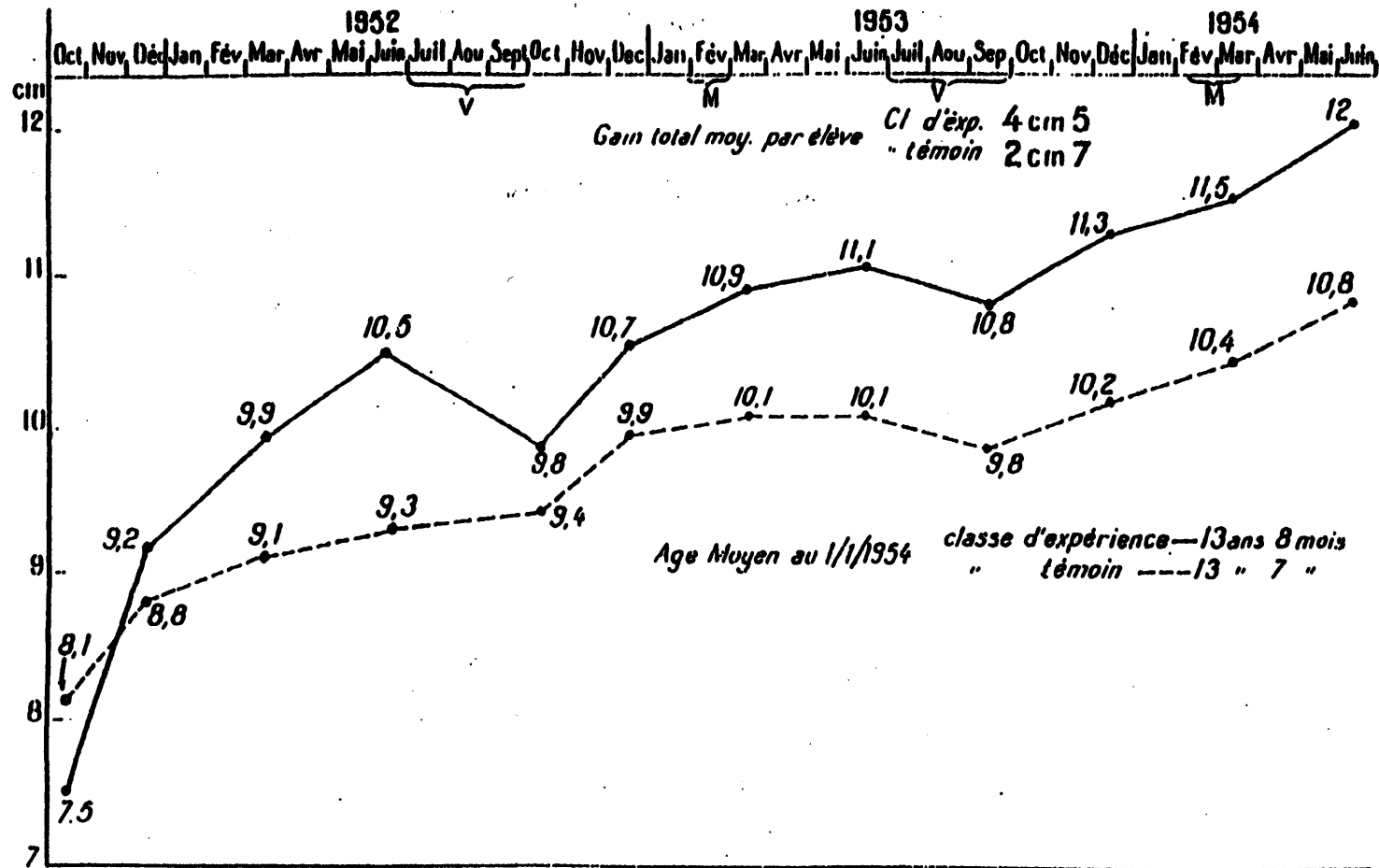


FIG. 4. — Moyenne trimestrielle du périmètre différentiel xiphoïdien des enfants dans les deux classes dans les deux groupes d'élèves, on sait moins bien respirer à la fin des grandes vacances. On doit en conclure que le simple repos à la campagne, sans exercices sportifs surveillés, n'est nullement profitable à l'éducation physique.

**Figure 4 Chest perimeter at height of base of sternum** [Average termly measures of differences in chest perimeters of the children in the two classes; they breathed less well at the end of the long summer holidays. One must assume that simply staying in the country without supervised activity is of no physical benefit].

Figure 4. Chest Perimeter

## APPENDIX 2

A questionnaire kindly answered in 1993 by Mlle Nathalie Duroux, PE teacher in a *lycée* in St Maur, south of Paris, made it clear that ski trips for secondary schools do not have to conform to the same rules as *classes transplantées* for primary schools.

A ski trip organised by her school in December 1992 was advertised much as it would be in a secondary school in England. All five PE teachers organised it with the permission of the head, and all were away for the week with fifty pupils aged 16 to 20, all in *terminale* (out of 2000 pupils in the school) but drawn from different classes. The school nurse made the staff ratio 6:50. Since there were more pupils wanting to go than there were places the teachers chose 'the most pleasant pupils'. The classes the PE teachers would have been teaching missed their two hours of PE for the week.

Other colleagues appreciated that the PE staff were taking on a lot of work for the week.

We 6 work from the moment the pupils are awakened to the moment they are all asleep, that can be late! ..., they are young adults and they want to stay up late and have fun for a week.

Some of the PE staff also hold the *Brevet d'aptitude aux fonctions d'animateur (BAFA)* delivered by the *Ministère de la jeunesse et des sports*.

The reasons for arranging the trip were:

- for the pleasure of the pupils and the teachers.
- to enable the students to discover the mountains in winter, they wouldn't be able to afford it by themselves.
- discovery of community life; better understanding among the pupils of the group
- discovery of a mountain sport

The pupils want to go for the fun, with their friends (and maybe to escape from school!)  
The benefits are not assessed.

Another informant, Madame Monique Duroux, mother of Nathalie above, teacher of English and wife of *Monsieur l'Inspecteur départemental de la jeunesse et des sports* Claude Duroux, said that:

Some secondary schools arrange trips in the mountains for skiing, or in other places for other outdoor activities with their PE teachers but it's never more than a week.

and:

It is in the primary sector that there are all these *classes transplantées* ... also for exchanges with England or the USA. ... at the moment, my cleaning lady's son, aged 10, is in Chicago with his class for 3 weeks. It's easier to do in primary schools as there is one teacher for one class.

In secondary schools, if a teacher takes one of his forms away ... the other pupils won't be occupied. (Letter dated 14 May 1993.)

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|                    | avril 1912                             | juillet 1912 | juin 1913    |          |
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File B 107      Outline of development of school camps, journeys etc. from 1895