CHAPTER XIII

EDUCATION FOR TOWN PLANNING, AND THE NEED OF CIVICS

A general advance of public opinion on these subjects is in progress ; and the technical education of the town planner has correspondingly begun : schools of town planning are being founded. The recent formation of the Town Planning Institute, as an organised profession, must tend to further educational advance. Discussion of the nature and scope of education for town planning is thus on all hands beginning.

If town planning is to meet the needs of the city's life, to aid its growth, and advance its progress, it must surely know and understand its city. To mitigate its evils, it needs diagnosis before treatment. To express its highest ambitions, it must appreciate and share them. Hence town planning and civics must be advanced together. Arguments against their separation, general and particular, and from cities ancient and modern.

The general education of the public as regards better housing and garden suburbs, though slow and difficult until object-lessons were ready, is now going on rapidly, and in the easiest and most natural of ways, of direct observation and experience. Every co-operative tenant, every new garden-city or suburb occupant, is helping in this, and by example. His associations are actively propagandist; and their exhibitions and conferences are now periodic and successful, alike in great cities and small—witness for

1914 that of the Victoria League at the Imperial Institute, and that held by the Surveyors' Congress at Cheltenham, as well as that of the Liverpool School of Town Planning, and those initiated at Glasgow and elsewhere by the indefatigable energy of Mr Aldridge and the National Housing and Town Planning Council. Press, and politicians too, are at length becoming fairly aroused. Thus the whole group of associated movements we have been discussing are ending their period of inception and sporadic initiative, and entering a new period, one in which civic reconstruction and reorganisation are claiming to occupy the very foremost place in public attention and policy. This, as already seen, is the case in Dublin, a city which seems ending its long period of superactivity in our national politics, with transition to a new and more harmonious phase, that of comprehensive endeavour in civics. For here not only immediate city improvement, but fuller city development are being considered on all levels, elemental and economic, idealistic and cultural; and these increasingly together, towards architectonic unity.

Now, if such be discernibly the trend of the times, corresponding educational questions arise, and these twofold, special and general: first, the question of the immediate and technical preparation of the architect and city official in town planning; secondly, of their further social education, also that of the citizen and his representatives in government,

municipal and central alike. In a word, then, what of education in town planning, and of education in civics?

The technical education of the town planner has for some time been in progress in Germany, but its effective initiative in this country has come from Sir William Lever by his foundation of a chair in the University of Liverpool, and his gift of a spacious building to house it. Here, under the energetic direction of Prof. Adshead, ably supported by Prof. Reilly, Mr Abercrombie, Mr Mawson, and other colleagues, there has been arising a school of town planning in the best sense, that of a school of thought as well as instruction, aud with its organ, the *Town Planning Review*, already widely useful and influential. In Birmingham University Mr Cadbnry has founded a lectureship, fitly held by Mr Raymond Unwin; while in London, beside a growing attention to town planning, as in the excellent extra-mural atelier of architecture, so largely due to the initiative and devotion of Mr Lanchester, and also in the Summer School of Town Planning which has appropriately arisen at Hampstead, the University School of Architecture has also acquired the needed department. The recognition of this new suhject is thus practically assured, as in every great educational centre, a matter henceforth but of funds and organisation, as these of the awakening of citizens.

Among town planners themselves the need of

organisation has been increasingly felt; and, after a useful year or so of deliberation, this has taken form; so that the establishment of town planning as a regular and organised profession may be dated with the incorporation in 1914 of the Town Planning Institute. The architectural (and traditional) grades of members and associates are themselves of two kinds, the one directly concerned with town planning as a constructive art, and the other with the administrative and legal regulation of it. The more each class understands of the other's work the better; without technical comprehension the administrator may easily hinder more than help. Yet for each town-planning education must be protected from falling into that too external and technical discipline which has been the bane of architectural iustruction. How may this be assured? In one way only: by accompanying it with a vital initiation also, that into the life and working of the city; in a word, then, by the study of civics. Architecture has always rightly claimed to be regulative of the arts; and now town planuing makes this claim in turn to be regulative for architecture. If so, there is no avoiding or escaping from a still further claim, that of civics, as regulative and educative for town planning.

The same holds good, and even more directly and obviously, for citizen and couucillor, for the constituent and for his member, for the minister and for his officials.

So far, then, the preceding argument will hardly

seriously be disputed, that the educational problem before us is a twofold one; not of technical town planning only, nor simply to be viewed as a top-dressing for our schools of architecture. Nor is civics a mere vague discourse of edification, for the citizen, for his servants and rulers. We need to establish educational facilities and opportunities in (2) town planning and in civics together, and these as fully as possible for all concerned. Yet at this stage the practical man may, and actually does, say: "All very well, in theory, no doubt: but when we have as yet scarcely the means to establish the needed technical side, that of town planning, why increase our difficulties by dragging in civics as well? Why not leave it for the present; it will no doubt come in time."

Very plausible. Yet to this two answers may be given: one long, general, and universal; the other brief, immediate, and particular. The first of these may seem theoretic, but it is really derived from the oldest and widest recorded experience of the rise and fall of cities without number. This answer is traditionally ascribed to an ancient writer in one of the most historic and deeply influential of all cities; one near the convergence of three continents, and thus centrally situated for observation of their cities—Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Mediterranean alike. He and his compatriots were thus uniquely familiar with the spectacle of civilisations and empires, each more magnificent and powerful than its predecessor,

yet each failing and falling in turn. So familiar, in fact, that their social thinkers were often able to diagnose such changes, predict such collapses, and this more clearly and boldly than any since have done; and are accordingly remembered to this day as "prophets," even to the predominance of the predictive significance of the word over its simpler hortatory meaning. In old-world way our writer's broad-based generalisation has survived, with much other invaluable sociological literature of his people; and it runs to the effect that unless the ideal build the house—and with it the city also—they labour in vain that build it. So much for housing, and for town plauning; and throughout their history. But our author does not forget the citizens, nor their rulers, their statesmen's strength or weakness after the city has been built, being himself a good deal of a builder, still more of a planner, for his own city, as to this day its most memorable king. Recalling doubtless also his long military experience, both in attack and in defence, as well as of civic and regional rule, he adds the further generalisation, that unless the ideal keep the city, its police, army, dreadnoughts, and watchmen generally, watch in vain.

This, it may be said, is all very fine, and even quite appropriate—on Sundays: but we are now in an age of science, and its professors ought hardly to quote such things: surely they are not going over to the old theological camp? Not indeed, as this has too long been standing. With it each successive science

has struggled in its youth, and on the whole imposed its terms—astronomy at the Renaissance, geology and biology in the last century. It is now coming to be the turn of civics to raise this discussion; and no turn-over of conventional and static concepts, as from the geocentric astronomy, the non-evolutionist geology and biology, such as our friends, clerical and lay, of all denominations admit as having been effected in the past by these preliminary sciences, has been so serious or so thoroughgoing as that which must soon be insisted on by civics and sociology. This insistence is indeed already begun by our scientific allies the psychologists, and particularly by the social psychologists, who are our very scouts and pioneers. These have already been discovering that many of the spiritual experiences, the moral changes—or, in their terminology, the arousal of ideals in individuals, and the conception and application of them by groups—which have been considered as unique and sacrosanct in every theological body, and are commemorated, even inculcated, accordingly on one day of the week (with a regrettable, yet apparently unavoidable, relapse to paleotechnic "civilisation," and its practices upon the other six days) are not so simply past or done with. On the contrary, for individuals and for groups alike, these individual experiences are now seen to be in principle still psychologically latent, and those group-enthusiasms and changes socially practicable; and this throughout all seven days of the week. What the

psychologists are thus seeing for individuals and groups, we are learning to see also for cities, and for present and future cities as well as for the past ones generalised by King David of old. An all-important thesis of civics therefore appears. With, and in the measure of, such eupsychic change, such idealism, social and personal, and of its expressions and application in civic development and in individual citizenship, our existing paleotechnic city and region are transformable. If so, the ideal of the city and region can so far be progressively realised; and even to renewing the achievements of past cities, or surpassing them. Otherwise not. Without these changes, specialised schools of divinity and philosophy here, specialised laboratories of research and invention there, or newly specialised schools of town planning and architectural design anywhere, must all remain ineffective; each as bnt a further enlargement of that dominant university and educational system which has been lately defined by a keen American critic as "the creation of a well-endowed moral vacuum." But with the arousal and upgrowth of the "University Militant," as the same writer states the positive ideal of education, and with that Civic Revivance which it aids and requires, the long-broken civic unity, of social life and industrial energy with constructive thought and vital education, correspondingly reappears.

What is it that we most value in our Occidental civilisation? Recent writers, of the Prussian school

especially, have insisted upon the importance of racial and barbarian origins, of militant aristocracy and conquering migrations (or as philosophers, upon all this, more or less thinly disguised from themselves, as the Hegelian "State"); and since Le Play we have been learning to do far fuller justice to the significance of occupational and regional elements. But while these are rightly discerned as fundamental, the civilisations which all such races and regions have long ago accepted as supreme are thereby more clearly justified; however our valuations of these may differ in detail, according to our various indebtedness, individual and regional. First the moral unity of ancient Israel, and then the spiritual intensity and human appeals of the later faiths, of which it has been the prepotent parent, have been justified in their survival, since exceeding our Western uplifts of idealism. And this still holds, as our scientific mythologists revive St Peter's vision of the net, and apply it to lands and peoples of whom he could not dream. So the intellectual search and grasp of Hellas, its power and charm of artistic creation, are but the more realised as we renew universities, and recover skill. The solidarity, justice, and peace of Rome at her best have given inspiration to each new endeavour of social organisation; and this whether imposed by the State from above, or renewed by revolutions from below. There in the past still stand Jerusalem, Athens, Rome: here in the present we progressive Americans, Germans, Anglo-Saxons, carrying on the

torch as best we may—what are we after all but the old barbarians, with our men of genius ever and anon rekindling our constantly failing lights from these old cities and their morning-lands of our civilisation? "For 'tis far in the deeps of history the voice that speaketh clear." Those who do not see and feel this indebtedness to the past, are they not for the most part but dulled in the smoke-cloud of paleotechnic industry which overpowers their overgrown working villages?—hypnotised by the shining pence, the spots of the dice, upon its "city" gambling tables?—whirling in the eddies, political or militant, of the "Great Capitals"?—or listening to the echoes from all these? If not poisoned by luxury, chilled or maddened by misery, are they not too much fixed by comforts into unthinking routine or sullen acquiescence? With this view, which we take it no one in his moments of reflection seriously differs from, of the paleotechnic city as in the main but neo-barharian, we have the explanatiou of the severity with which our social critics have long been judging it. Widely though they may disagree between themselves—as do Carlyle and Arnold, Gobineau and Marx, Ruskin and Kropotkiue, Meredith and Hello, Nietzsche and Tolstoi—they differ but little in their estimates of the paleotechnic city.

To discern, then, the ideals which build cities and which keep them, is thus the supreme prohlem of civics as history; and civics as science. To interpret them is civics as philosophy; and to renew them, city by

city, is its quest, its task, its coming art—with which our "politics" will recover its ancient and vital civic meaning. These lights that flash from the past upon our paleotechnic gloom are but from crystal faces shaped long ago by ancient group-idealisms. Yet our schemes of instruction—"religious" and "classical" alike—have proved and are still proving futile; and this must necessarily be while they too simply seek to impose these venerable forms upon us as authoritative from without, or even expect us strictly to reproduce them from within. Only as group-idealisms awaken anew among ourselves, can our modern towns become recivilised into cities worthy of the name. There is no essential disharmony between these past developments, and such as these incite us towards: after all, the flowering of cities has ever gone on like the intercrossing of flowers.

How, then, may this enhancement of social life be effected?—that is the question. The paleotechnic economists, to do them justice, have elaborated the conception of the division of labour: and it has long been recognised as the urgent task to promote its better organisation. It is, in fact, in the measure of their endeavours towards this that tory and whig, liberal and radical, imperialist and socialist, financier and philanthropist, syndicalist and even anarchist, have each by turns the public ear; and correspondingly it is in the measure of their failures to find the secret of social renewal that they lose it also. Church and State, town-house and college, business

and philanthropy, bureaucracy and compulsion, labour and revolution, each is tried, and each fails and goes on failing. Meanwhile everywhere, despite our suburb endeavours, our central replanning, slum and super-slum are still growing on and polarising apart, towards stagnation or catastrophe.

Is it not time, then, for civics to have its hearing? We cannot here venture into its many possible lines of policy: enough if it be granted that there is some virtue and value in that reconstructive effort especially urged in these pages—with its growing reunion of citizens with planners, builders with gardeners, labourers with craftsmen, and artists with engineers; and all towards the betterment of the city's homes, the corresponding future of its children. With this element of group-idealism, others will follow, and find expression, in time even comparable to those of old.

This general argument for civic education has been a long one; but the second and particular answer to the objection against its urgency may be brief: that demand is arising, and this at many points. Every civic survey involves further civic studies. But a more urgent instance may be given. As we have above seen, here are the town planners constituting themselves into a profession; a new Institute, like that of architects and engineers; like them with aims of education for their successors, and also that frank recognition which responsibilities ever

awaken, of fuller and wider access to knowledge for themselves. It is unanimously felt, therefore, that they must aim at nothing short of a metropolitan reference collection and bibliography, of adequate professional and studious completeness. What does this need of completeness involve? Obviously, in the first place, to collect, as fully as knowledge and means admit, all that deals directly and technically with town planning. But the general problem of this renewing art—what is it but the material expression of the growth and life of cities, and at every level; from the simplest problems of engineering and housing to architectural ones as great as ever in history.

Economisation of energies and time, improvement of communications, of industrial and domestic conditions, all these are plain; public health and recreation too; but what less immediately obvious elements of the life and functioning of cities can their planner afford to ignore? To deal with health one must be something of a hygienist; must it not be the like with other things?

Though always working with the best intention, the town planner, in the measure of his lack of foresight, has in each age been creating new evils. Medieval city walls have long been seen to have compressed the population they were made but to defend; but not yet, as our "War" gallery of the Cities Exhibition shows, has even the historian realised that multiplication of civic evils which were

brought about by the tremendous town-planning movement of fortification, as developed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and of which modern boulevard-rings are but superficial mitigations. Haussmann, cutting new interior boulevards through Paris at the expense of gardens and working-quarters, was of course consciously and strategically providing for internal city control by his imperial master's artillery and dragoons; but to do emperor and edile justice, neither they nor their public had a suspicion of how the new and stately architectural perspectives with which they lined these boulevards, and which evoked such unqualified admiration in their day—and this not only Parisian and provincial, but world-wide and with corresponding imitation accordingly—were soon to be socially and economically operative.

At first all seemed perfect, all was prosperity. Everything that Napoleon and Haussmann had dreamed, planned, and worked for came to fruit, and beyond the brightest anticipation. Unprecedented demand for labour, both skilled and unskilled, with influx and growth of population, yet regularity of employment: rents and values rising for the landlord's prosperity, and yielding increasing taxes for the city's growing budget; and this spent in new public works, or in multiplication of steadily salaried functionaries; while in both these classes of expenditure the State was proceeding no less merrily also. Fortunes were quickly made in building and con-

tracting, still more in land speculation and in finance generally: and these gains were as freely spent in increased luxury-expenditures of every kind, in foods and wines, in servants and equipages, in costumes, jewels, and artistries. Hence an ever-increasing attractiveness of Paris for French and foreigners alike, with further growth of shops, hotels and cafés, theatres and music-halls. Never had town planner such success before; what wonder, then, that other cities have since been following Haussmann's splendid precedent beyond all others?

Yet how all this megalopolitan development was connected with the debacle of 1870–71, how it led up to and through the Commune, and even helped to prepare the tragic disorder and ruthless repression with which it closed, are no less matters of historic reproach, and of lessons still far from exhausted.

Return to more everyday results, say those on public health. The physicians point out how the wholesale substitution of dusty boulevards and airless interior well-courts for gardens and playing-nooks told upon the health of children and mothers, and spread drink, tuberculosis, and other evils among men. Economists record how the high and costly new tenements raised house-rents, with depression of the family budgets in other respects, and with increase of social discontent and instability in ways manifold—and how, above all,

the standardising of small flats with tiny rooms has pressed on the limitation of Parisian families, as in turn their example on that of the strength and growth of France.

Such are but the simplest and most obvious examples of the many indictments which French social critics of all schools have made of Haussmann and his work. Of Berlin too, so dramatically the victor and the imitator of Paris, the kindred criticism has begun. Behind its monumental perspectives the student of town planning must not forget its innumerable working-class courts, well packed out of sight between the boulevards. Of their perfect internal order a recent town-planning poster (issued, it need hardly be said, by a younger school than the imperial one) gives a glimpse, one so unsettling as to have provoked its prompt destruction by the redoubtable police-president von Jagow. Yet this simply reproduced the woeful daily spectacle of a group of children standing forlorn under the notice of "Play is forbidden": and for its revolutionary appeal it gave only the plain statement, "Six hundred thousand children in Berlin!"

Paris and Berlin are assuredly not the only great cities of empire which are stunting their imperial race: but enough if our present point be clear—that in town planning, as in less widely important matters, every error, be it of commission or omission, soon tells upon our city's life.

And what of the arrest or the decline of cities?

—arrest, as in Edinburgh or Dundee; decline, as in Dublin. In what ways may the town planner here usefully intervene? In many, provided he be willing in each case to consider the respective cases and causes with the civicist before venturing upon treatment. And the many positive evils of cities, may he not more safely design changes towards abating these, with some deeper understanding of them? At no point of this deeper hygiene of cities dare we limit our studies without yet more limiting our efficiency, or perhaps negating it.

Must not therefore the town planner's reference collection and library, which is plainly needed, and not only in London, but for each and every conurbation, embrace the essential literature of civics, as well as its wealth of plans and technical reports? Thus no one who sits down to consider this problem but will come to aims as comprehensive as those of our Cities and Town Planning Exhibition—an aim dual yet unified, as its name implies.

Happily, the more responsible the town planner the wider becomes his outlook. Mr Unwin's well-known *Town Planning* thus devotes a chapter to the survey of cities. The Liverpool School of Town Planning is plainly embarking, by the very pressure of its daily technical problems, upon the fuller study of its own city, and its comparison with all others. In Germany and America the same deepening studies are pressing; so that if the very words sociology and civics had never

been heard of, every serious town planner would soon be inventing them.

Before long, then, the School of Civics, with its observatory and museum of survey, its drawing-offices and business office, must become a familiar institution in every city, with its civic library in rapid growth and widening use, and all as a veritable power-house of civic thought and action.

Since this prediction has been in proof, it has been strengthened by the resolute anticipation of the Dublin Civic Exhibition and of its School of Civics —with the continued help of the active and public-spirited Institute of Civics which has initiated them —to carry on in future years, if possible, a programme substantially of this kind.