

to 21 per cent. These figures are quoted in a survey appearing in a new periodical, *Higher Education Review*, and were compiled by Richard Layard, an economics lecturer at the London School of Economics, and John King of the City University (*Higher Education Review*, edit. by Tyrrell Burgess, Cornmarket Press, 10s).

Although the A-level forecast went wrong, nevertheless the Robbins estimates of the trend to stay at school have been fairly accurate. University development too has followed fairly closely the lines proposed by Robbins, the authors say, but the relationship between universities and the rest of higher education has developed quite differently. In 1962-63, universities provided 60 per cent of places in higher education, and Robbins recommended the same proportion for 1966-67. The actual proportion was, however, 54 per cent, and when the number of well qualified school leavers exceeded the Robbins prediction, the increased supply of students was channelled into non-university sectors. At the present time, an estimated 53 per cent of suitable candidates are accepted by universities compared with an earlier figure of 60 per cent at the time of the Robbins report. Subject balance in the intake has also been upset; in the late fifties and early sixties it was the policy of the University Grants Committee—reiterated by Robbins—that two thirds of additional places in universities should be in science and technology. But as the entry rates in arts and sciences have moved together, from 1961-62 to 1966-67 the proportion of extra places provided for science and technology has been only 37 per cent (43 per cent including colleges of advanced technology). On the arts side, the proportion of all places has increased from 40 per cent to 44 per cent instead of decreasing to 37 per cent. This, the authors say, is “undoubtedly a failure of planning, since it implies that the capital investment in sciences has been higher relative to arts than it would have been if the ensuing teaching commitments had been foreseen”. The result has been that the prospective growth of former colleges of advanced technology has been sharply restricted. Had they not become universities they would now be an important focus of expansion.

UNIVERSITIES

No Volunteers

THE British Government is obviously having an extremely difficult time trying to find a suitably compliant vice-chancellor or public figure to fill Sir John Wolfenden's chair at the University Grants Committee. At the end of May the trustees of the British Museum announced that Sir John had accepted their offer of the top job in the British museum service, the directorship of the British Museum. The trustees no doubt realized their choice would create problems with the Museums Association, which immediately took umbrage at the appointment of an outsider, even if only as a stopgap measure for the next five years. But the trustees' problems are nothing by comparison with those the Secretary of State for Education must still be facing in his search for a new chairman for the UGC.

Sir John was to have moved to the museum this month, but he has apparently agreed to stay on at the UGC until his successor is found, which means he is likely to be there until some time next year. In the

meantime at the museum Mr B. Gray, keeper of the Department of Oriental Antiquities, and a member of the museum staff for about forty years, has taken over as temporary director.

Relations between the Government and the vice-chancellors must be close to breaking point, especially after the Government's letter of August 1, which, delivered when most of the vice-chancellors were away in Australia, instructed them not to authorize any new building projects this year. The effects of this moratorium are now beginning to be felt in several universities and they are not increasing the popularity of the Government or of the UGC, which failed to make even a murmur of protest in August. Presumably the Government knew of the negotiations between the trustees of the museum and Sir John long before the May announcement. Its failure to announce Sir John's successor can only mean it has so far failed to persuade a vice-chancellor or an outsider to take on his invidious job.

EMPLOYMENT

Where the Graduates Went

THE University Grants Committee's sixth annual returns covering the first employment of university graduates who graduated with first or higher degrees in 1966-67 were published on October 22 (HMSO, 7s). British universities produced 36,528 graduates in the year, 26,411 men and 10,117 women, which is an overall increase of 13.6 per cent over 1965-66. The returns reveal all the now familiar trends, the dislike of industrial careers, the trend to social sciences and the trend away from school teaching.

The Government and industry continue to fail to persuade graduates of the advantages of an industrial career. The proportion of all graduates entering commerce and industry fell from 62.7 per cent in 1965-66 to 62.2 per cent in 1966-67. These overall figures conceal significant divergent trends between men and women graduates; the proportion of women entering industry rose by 5 per cent to 32.3 per cent while the proportion of men entering the field fell by 2.1 per cent to 70.2 per cent. This year's returns are also gloomy reading for education authorities short of teachers; in 1966-67 only 13.9 per cent of all graduates entered the profession compared with 15.5 and 17.2 per cent respectively in the two preceding years. The expansion of the civil service, on the other hand, was duly reflected in an increase in recruitment of graduates, from 14.8 to 15.6 per cent of the total. The proportion of graduates in further study was virtually the same as in 1965-66, 41.6 per cent, but this figure conceals a drop in the numbers going on to teacher training and other training and an increase in the proportion starting research or other academic work.

The number of higher degree graduates increased by 27 per cent, and all the statistics in the returns confirm the trends in university education and the attitudes of the graduates which emerged in the Swann and Dainton reports. The only trend which is in line with any of the recommendations in the Swann report is the decreasing proportion of doctorates amongst the higher degree graduates. In 1966-67 the proportion fell yet again to 47.4 per cent; in 1965-66 it was 55.5 per cent and in 1963-64 as high

as 61.4 per cent. 1966-67 was in fact the first year in which the proportion of doctorates fell to less than half of the total number of higher degree graduates. Except for the applied scientists, higher degree winners in all the other fields chose careers in education rather than industry, public service or anything else. In the arts, for example, 84.4 per cent of men with higher degrees went into education compared with a derisory two per cent in industry.

PUBLISHING

All Human Life is There

AT first sight, there is little similarity between *Progress in Material Science* and the *News of the World*, or, indeed, between Chambers's Encyclopaedia and the Walton Heath Golf Club. But if Mr Robert Maxwell, Britain's most energetic publisher, has his way, they will find themselves under the same management quite soon. Last week, Pergamon Press, Mr Maxwell's scientific publishing house, made a bid for the *News of the World* organization, which, as well as publishing a weekly saga of unoriginal sin, also owns a golf club, several provincial papers, book and directory publishing interests and printing, papermaking and printing machinery businesses. Mr Maxwell, the boss of Pergamon since 1949, has in the past two years made a whirlwind series of acquisitions, although he failed recently to take control of Butterworths, the publishers. But he has succeeded in taking over Bletchley Printers, Religious Education Press, Speedwriting, the History Book Club, the Co-operative Press and Sun Engraving, among many others.

Although Mr Maxwell's methods have made him rich and successful, they have not always gained him friends in the publishing industry. To some extent this is to his credit, and few would deny that since his arrival British publishing houses have had to become more efficiently managed. The Pergamon technique is to calculate with great precision how many copies of any book can be sold to libraries and institutions, and to budget accordingly. Shareholders find this more agreeable than do the libraries which have to pay Pergamon prices, and it is a technique which can hardly be applied to the *News of the World*.

The bid has been greeted with the distaste which always faces any newcomer who has the effrontery to treat a newspaper as a business proposition. Although the bid—now raised by Mr Maxwell—is generous in financial terms, the managers of the *News of the World* were this week making determined attempts to repel boarders. The fact that Mr Maxwell is a Labour Member of Parliament is unlikely to help his cause, although he has disavowed any intention of changing the political character of the paper. The *News of the World* is independent editorially in that extraordinary British way which is indistinguishable from being Conservative. In any case, everybody remembers that Mr Maxwell's ambition some months ago was to start a Labour daily paper, and the suspicion is that he has not yet forgotten it.

As *Nature* went to press, it was not at all clear which side would win. Both Pergamon and the *News of the World* board were buying shares in the market through their merchant bankers, and it seemed clear that Mr Maxwell had cornered the 25 per cent shareholding

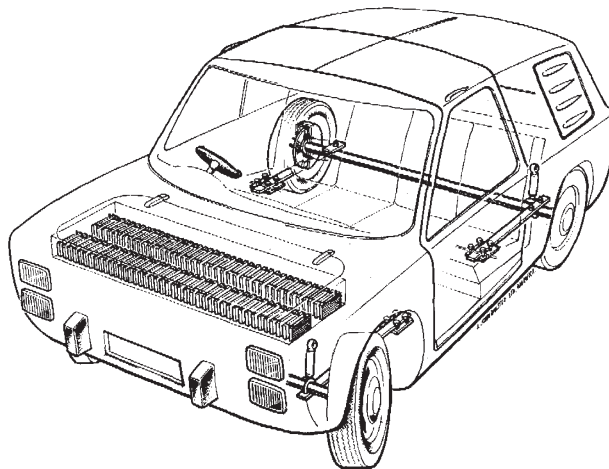
owned by Professor Derek Jackson, once a professor at Oxford and now a man of leisure. But the *News of the World* board were claiming almost 50 per cent of the shareholding, and it seemed quite likely that the bid would be repulsed.

TRANSPORT

No Electric Shocks

WITH tongue firmly in cheek, the Institution of Electrical Engineers chose the week of the Earls Court Motor Show to arrange a colloquium on electric cars, the second in what seems intended to be an annual series. In the event, it has to be admitted that the internal combustion engine, for all its faults, remains very definitely the best way of propelling vehicles from one place to another; supporters of the electric car, for the most part, agreed with Mr L. Martland of Ford, who said that he was "waiting for a commercial battery with several times the energy density of those available at the moment".

One who disagrees is Mr A. Carter, from Carter Coaster Ltd of Tamworth. He declared to a disbelieving audience that "there are no further technical barriers to overcome in producing such a vehicle". Indeed, Mr Carter has already produced one, called the Carter Coaster, which embodies his conception of the ideal electric car. As the picture shows, the Coaster



The Carter Coaster.

is really stripped down to essentials; the suspension, in particular, with single leaf quarter elliptic springs, has a charming vintage air, and the passengers are likely to need the foam plastic seats which Mr Carter intends to provide. The two electric motors are contained in a space no larger than conventional brake drums at the rear, and the power is supplied by an 84 cell 168 volt lead acid battery. The bodywork on the production vehicle would be vacuum moulded ABS (acrylonitrile butadiene styrene), although Mr Carter has been forced to use fibreglass for the prototype by a shortage of ABS in Britain. Like Henry Ford, Mr Carter intends to provide only one colour, and his choice is dark grey. He expects the design to remain acceptable for twenty years, which will keep the price stable at £350 and maintain second-hand values.