

UNIVERSITIES

Student Participation

THE University of Manchester seems to have been the first to react officially to the joint statement on student participation in academic affairs issued last October by the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals and the National Union of Students. The report of a working party consisting of twelve members of staff appointed by Senate and thirteen students appointed by the University Union has been adopted by the University Senate.

The Manchester working party endorses the joint statement of the vice-chancellors and the NUS which said that student participation in academic affairs and decision making is not only desirable but essential to the smooth functioning of the university as a community. The working party recommends that there should be active staff-student committees at department, faculty and Senate levels. Student discussion, however, should be restricted to matters concerning content and structure of courses, efficiency of teaching methods and methods of assessment; certain subjects, including admissions, appointments, promotions and examination results, must be reserved for the academic staff.

The most important step forward is the suggestion for a Committee of Senate consisting of equal numbers of staff and students which would be able to report directly to Senate. Furthermore, it is suggested that some of the student members of the committee should be present at appropriate Senate meetings. This is certainly the biggest advance yet towards getting student representation on a Senate. Whether it will satisfy the radicals is doubtful, but it is to be hoped that other universities will follow Manchester's lead.

ADULT EDUCATION

Extramural Studies

THE extramural departments of British universities continue to expand at a rate of more than six per cent a year according to the annual report of the Universities Council for Adult Education. There was a grand total of more than 7,000 courses and 170,000 students last year. But the supply of tutorial classes still trails behind: there were 710 in 1967-68, and more than half came from just four centres—London, Leeds, Durham and Hull.

The newest universities are, however, beginning to stake out areas for themselves within adult education. Bath and Strathclyde, for example, started running courses a year ago, while Surrey is preparing to offer a wide programme. It is encouraging to see that extramural education is not being restricted to print culture. Bristol University has organized a course in archaeological air photography which involves flight, camera work and subsequent earthbound interpretation. Leicester has provided a course in making teaching films, while several universities run courses in television techniques. Other extramural departments have been experimenting with courses on local radio: this is most advanced at Nottingham, where arrangements have been made for pupils to meet their radio tutors.

The report makes much of the contribution of the

small corps of full time extramural tutors. They are a breed unique to Britain: university budgets are much ampler in the United States, but the lack of teachers fully committed to adult education sometimes means that evening extension courses are modelled too closely on daytime degree courses. Although the report does not make this point, it is remarkable how much we owe our present understanding of mass culture and social communication to a small group of men, Raymond Williams and Richard Hoggart among them, who have been full time extramural tutors.

The Open University is, of course, a big question-mark hanging over adult education. The radio and television university might compete with traditional extramural studies, it might collaborate with them, but it is unlikely to replace them. Solitary communings with a television screen are unlikely ever totally to replace the campus. As the report says: "One may look forward, perhaps, to the eventual time when it is generally accepted that men and women, from whatever walk of life, ought to spend at least an occasional few weeks as adult students on a university campus."

LIBRARIES

Success at Boston Spa

IN 1968, the number of requests for loans received at the National Lending Library for Science and Technology at Boston Spa was 715,700, and the total number of requests received since the library started lending passed the three million mark (*Report of the Department of Education and Science, 1968*, HMSO, 14s 6d). The demand for photocopies of articles is also increasing; 63,300 were requested in 1968, an increase of 9,240 since 1967, and 19,700 went overseas. The director of the library, Dr J. Urquhart (*Library Association Record* 71, 77; March 1969), is, however, disappointed that requests for photocopies have not increased still more now that the true cost of a loan for many libraries exceeds the true cost of a photocopy of less than ten pages.

The library carries nearly 32,000 current periodicals, but these are no longer all scientific or technological. As an experiment in 1966, the library began taking social science periodicals and the experiment seems to be working; it now has more than 4,000 current titles. A survey carried out last year by D. N. Wood and C. A. Bower of the library (*Library Association Record*, 71, 39; February 1969) showed that the library was meeting about 80 per cent of the requests for social science periodicals.

While the NLLST is widely known and used for loans of periodicals and photocopies, it is anxious to enlarge its holdings of books. In 1968 it lent 42,300 books, compared with 29,000 in the previous year and 22,234 in 1966, and it is adding some 30,000 books to its stock each year. As a lending library conducting all its business through the post, the NLLST can streamline its library routines. For example, the library does not catalogue its English language books even in the simplest way. On receipt, the books are bookplated and the first effective word of the title is underlined in pencil. The book is then put on the shelves according to its title, and the staff find it, if requested, without any reference indexes. Such a shorthand approach only works, of course, with a