

Corps, which harnesses the energy of young volunteers who devote their leisure hours to repairing fences, clearing ditches and other such practical tasks of conservation. But the trust will also encourage the foundation of local corps, which could take on much of the work involved in the day to day management of nature reserves and similar sites of special interest which need careful tending. It is to be hoped that the trust will attract sufficient financial support to maintain the present high level of activity.

With the Conservation Corps no longer pulling at its purse strings the council's financial load has been lightened. An excess of expenditure over income of £2,387 in 1968 was converted to an excess of income over expenditure of £497 in 1969, and the accumulated fund increased from £1,633 to £3,130. Time will tell how permanent this improvement is to be.

MEDICAL EDUCATION

New School for Leicester

ON the advice of the University Grants Committee, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, Minister of Education and Science, has finally accepted the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Medical Education to establish a medical school at Leicester. The school should be functioning by 1975, with an intake of 100 students. In its report, published in 1968, the Royal Commission recommended that in order to meet the future demand for doctors, the number of medical school places should be increased to at least 3,700 a year by 1975—an increase of over a thousand on the current figure—and that these should be found by expanding the existing schools and by building new ones at Nottingham, Southampton and Leicester. At the time, only the first two were scheduled but now the UGC has advised the government that the target cannot be reached by 1975 unless a start is made soon on a new school at Leicester.

According to the commission, Leicester, Southampton and Nottingham are, at present, among the very few towns that can provide the combination of resources that are necessary for a new medical school. The school must obviously have access to a hospital with adequate facilities for undergraduate clinical teaching and it must be an integral part of a university that can provide a full range of instruction and research opportunities in all sciences relevant to medicine. Less obviously, the general scale of the university's development must be big enough to accommodate a medical school without distortion and imbalance in the pattern of the university's activities. Leicester goes a long way to meet these requirements. The commission predicted that within ten years the town's population and hospital facilities should be sufficient to support a medical school with an annual intake of 200 students. The university is also expanding rapidly and it already has excellent teaching and research facilities in the biological sciences.

If the Leicester medical school does have a student intake of 100 by 1975, it seems, as far as the new schools are concerned, that the commission's target will be reached. At Nottingham, although work on the new building is not expected to start until next May, forty-eight students have already embarked on their preclinical training in temporary buildings; and at

Southampton, where the new school is well under way, sixty-five students are to be accepted for next October. Between them, these new schools should, by the mid-seventies, be able to add 300 students a year to the present intake capacity of Britain's medical schools. Whether the remaining 700 places will be found by expanding the existing schools remains to be seen.

GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT

Reversed Trends

STATISTICS for the flow into employment of graduates from British universities in 1968-69 show some worrying trends. (*First Employment of University Graduates*, HMSO, 13s.) Although the total number of first degree graduates increased by 2,388 compared with figures for 1967-68, the number who entered employment in the UK fell by 337. This reverses the trend established during the 1960s of a steadily increasing percentage of graduates entering employment. The proportion of scientists who went on to teacher training colleges also remained small (9.5 per cent of the total), compared with the proportion of arts students (15.1 per cent).

But perhaps the most alarming trend is in the number of first degree graduates still seeking employment six months after they graduated. In 1965-66, only 2.3 per cent of the total output from the universities failed to find employment, but in 1968-69, this proportion had increased to 4.2 per cent. Social science graduates fared worst—5.7 per cent were unemployed at the end of 1969—but 3.9 per cent of the scientists who graduated in 1969 were still seeking employment six months later. The largest group of unemployed scientists were again chemistry graduates, who made up more than a fifth of the unemployed scientists.

The swing away from science is reflected in the proportion of students who graduated from individual disciplines. Although the proportion of first degree graduates in both arts and sciences fell by 0.4 per cent in 1969, compared with the previous year, the applied sciences fared particularly badly, with its proportion of graduates falling from 19.2 per cent in 1967-68 to 18.4 per cent in 1968-69. The trend towards the social sciences accounted for most of these decreases, with social science graduates comprising 27.8 per cent of the total in 1969, compared with 26.2 per cent in the previous year.

Table 1. DISTRIBUTION OF GRADUATES BETWEEN EMPLOYMENT AND FURTHER EDUCATION

	1967-68	1968-69
Entering employment		
First degrees	17,508	17,271
Higher degrees	3,182	3,348
Total	20,690	20,619
Further study		
First degrees	17,047	17,885
Higher degrees	1,672	1,844
Total	18,719	19,729

Of the higher degree graduates, 41.6 per cent entered into employment in the UK, but again the universities snapped up many of the graduates, either for teaching posts or for further research. Only 16 per cent of this group chose to go into industry, while 8.0 per cent took up employment overseas.