

### THE GALTON LABORATORY

The evacuation of London University has been represented as carefully planned and smoothly carried out in accordance with prior arrangements, and I am sure that the central officials of this loose federation have done what they can in difficult circumstances. The position in which the Galton Laboratory finds itself may be typical of other research departments in the university, or it may be, as I hope, exceptional, but it is scarcely what could have been intended by the careful planners.

The laboratory was founded on a generous bequest of the benefactor whose name it bears, and has, I presume, an unquestioned right to the provision of facilities for the prosecution of its researches. Nevertheless it has been ordered to evacuate the accommodation it now occupies at University College without alternative accommodation being provided. Worse than this, when in my difficulty I approached my former chief, Sir John Russell, Director of the Rothamsted Experimental Station, and he had helpfully and generously offered to provide alternative accommodation for my department and equipment rent free, I was informed that my assistants, while still in receipt of their salaries, are forbidden to continue their duties.

As the head of this department, therefore, the only determined policy which I can recognize on the part of the College Committee is that of suppressing research work and dispersing the research units such as that which it has been my work and, as I understood it, my duty to build up.

During the last war our administrators learned, though perhaps with some reluctance, that men trained in research were essential for the success of the national effort. The remaining nucleus of my department, if I may speak in its praise, constitutes a unit for heavy mathematical computations as efficient, both in machines and men, as the country can command. Obviously no work of first-class national importance can be found for such a unit at a few days' notice. I submit that it is almost equally obvious that in certain contingencies its continued existence might be of the greatest value, so long as the machines and the expert knowledge had been kept together. Can not a little patience be exercised before completing its demolition?