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of the city schools. Commenting upon this danger, and, indeed, present disadvantage, Mr. Williams makes a strong plea for the institution of smaller classes. If fewer subjects are submitted to the moulding hand of the child-builder, it is certain that the result will be a finer product. It is of great importance to bring out the individuality of children—to place the sympathetic finger, as it were, upon those chords in the mind which are responsive to the touch, and to create for the rising youth an intelligent interest in life which is as strong armor to the soul that has to do battle with the temptations presented by the world to the weak and indolent. Capacity in any sphere of life must be the result of earnest energy, and the sense of duty alone is seldom strong enough to supply the vital force needed in a strenuous age. We have not merely nowadays to live, and to earn the means of subsistence; it is necessary to hold our own in the acute competition of enlightened and progressive peoples. To train a race of strongly-marked individualities is the true function of the teacher who has the future citizens in his hands, and to do this effectively his energies must not be diffused over too wide an area. But to make this reform possible, with others such as the establishment of kindergartens in connection with manual work, and the offer of attractions to men of ability to join the educational staff, requires, as Mr. Williams freely admits, the recognition of their necessity by the people in order that some sacrifice should be made to ensure their realisation.

Criticism of the present scheme of primary instruction has come from without as well as from within. Professor Henderson's trained and observant eye has been directed to the methods in vogue in the elementary schools of the State, and he gave the conference on the opening night the benefit of his views upon one of the aspects presented to him, while reserving comment upon another to a future occasion. While conceding that a certain preponderance of female teachers in the State schools is desirable, seeing that women are more suitable for junior work than men, Professor Henderson is persuaded that there is at present an undue proportion of women engaged in teaching work, and he emphasises the well-known reasons for regarding this as a danger to the true interests of the State. The maintenance of discipline is better achieved by men than women; the strain of management is often too great for the latter; and the formation of character in boys especially is more safely entrusted to the former. This defect in the State system, with many others described during the conference, has its origin in the grudging spirit of parsimony in which it is too frequently regarded, and many reforms will be possible, which are not practicable now, when those in authority, and the community at large, realising the benefits without measure of national instruction, accept literally the reasonable admonition of Mr. Tate that "we should sympathise with our teachers, and believe in them—to the point of paying them decent salaries." The remarks of the Victorian Director of Education were particularly apposite in the present state of political parties. He complained that a leading Melbourne newspaper argued that it was the State's duty merely to give a smattering in the three R's, and all that was needed for the future young Australian was the ability to read the newspaper and to be able to write a neat hand and do a little ciphering. This opinion is, unfortunately, not confined to Victoria, but is to be met with and is fostered in Conservative circles in South Australia. The Liberal view of education is expressed in Mr. Tate's own words—"Education is nothing less than giving every boy and every girl the chance of being all and doing all that their Creator intended they should be or do." In other words, Liberalism means equality of opportunities, and any body of opinion which denies that principle either in education or any other phase of civic life can never truly claim to be Liberal. It should be clearly recognised by all those who have the cause of education at heart that the accession to power of a political party whose leaders and organs of opinion voice the sentiments which were quoted in sorrow by Mr. Tate, constitutes a real and imminent danger.

#### Conversation at the University.

In the evening a large company of educationists visited the University, at the invitation of the council. They were received in the Elder Hall by the following members of the council:—Mr. F. Chapple, B.A., B.Sc. (warden of the senate), Dr. Paton, Dr. Hayward, Dr. Poulton, Mr. J. R. Fowler, M.A., Mr. N. Henderson, Professor Bragg, and Professor Mitchell; and Professor Rennie. The guests then passed into the laboratories, where experiments and apparatus were shown. In the chemical laboratories, under the direction of Professor Rennie and Mr. A. J. Higgin, experiments were conducted to illustrate combustion, the formation of supersaturated solutions, the diffusion of gases, the absorption of gases by charcoal, the silvering of mirrors, the decomposition of solutions by the electric current, and the action of a geyser. In the Tate museum, under the direction of Mr. Howchin and Dr. Woolnough, were exhibited working collections of rocks, mineral and fossils, and mineralogical apparatus. In the physiological laboratory, which was in charge of Mr. W. Fuller, were displayed such instruments as recorded a muscle twitch, a heart beat, and a pulsation; and microscopic sections of animal and vegetable tissue. Mr. R. W. Chapman conducted tests on the breaking strength of iron and steel bars on the 50-ton testing machine; and Mr. R. Kleeman and his assistants conducted experiments in the physical laboratory illustrative of the procession of the earth by means of spinning tops, &c., Lord Kelvin's vortex theory by means of smoke rings, the structure of vowel sounds by means of manometric flames and other theories. In the electrical engineering laboratory some of the most interesting experiments were performed under the direction of Mr. J. P. V. Madsen. The process of the electric welding of 1/2-in. steel rods was shown in the heating of the rods by heavy alternating currents derived from a transformer; and a new experiment, known as the "floating ring of copper," was conducted as an illustration of the fundamental principles of all induction motors. A heavy copper ring was floated above an alternating current magnet by the repulsion exercised by the eddy currents induced in the ring from the current which induced them. The ring was anchored by means of threads attached to the machine, and considerable force was required to press it down. The experiments were closely investigated by most of the visitors, who were greatly indebted to the University students, who acted as cicerones. Professor Bragg delivered short addresses on radium.

Subsequently a musical entertainment was given in the Elder Hall under the direction of Professor Ennis. There was a large attendance, and the items were much appreciated. The following were the contributions:—Piano solo, "Nocturne in B" (Chopin), and "Valse allemande" (Rubinstein), Miss Carlien Jurs; vocal duets, "The angel" and "Wanderer's night song" (Rubinstein), Miss Gladys Edwards and Miss Hilda Klintberg; song, "My dearest heart" (Sullivan), Mrs. Hawkins; violin solo, "Spanish dance" (Sarasate), Miss Winifred Cowperthwaite; songs, "Afar in the woods" and "Synnove's song" (Kjerulf), Miss Martha Bruggemann; organ solo, overture to "Rosamunde" (Schubert), Professor Ennis.

Mr. John Raymond Wilton, B.Sc., was a passenger for Melbourne by the express on Thursday afternoon. Mr. Wilton, who was accompanied by his mother, will proceed to London by the White Star liner *Runic* on July 22, and probably enter Trinity College, Cambridge, London, on October 1. He has had an exceptionally brilliant career. He was dux of Prince Alfred College in 1900, won several scholarships at that school, and in the year indicated passed the senior public examination in eight subjects, seven of them with credit. He then left the college to pursue his studies at the Adelaide University, having won the Angas exhibition, valued at £60, and tenable for three years. Subsequently he graduated in science, and gained first-class honours in mathematics and physics. He is the only graduate of the University who has taken first-class honours in both these subjects. Mr. Wilton was urged by Professors Lyle and Mitchell, of Melbourne University, and Professor Bragg, of Adelaide, to continue his mathematical studies at Cambridge, a course which he has decided to adopt. He expects to take the mathematical tripos while at Cambridge, where he hopes to remain at least three years. A large number of friends were at the station to bid him farewell. They included among others Professor Bragg, Mr. R. W. Chapman, and Mr. F. Chapple.

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#### THE ELDER CONSERVATORIUM.

The staff of the Elder Conservatorium gave their third concert of chamber music for the season at the Elder Hall on Monday evening, when the performers were Herr I. G. Reimann (pianoforte), Herr H. Heinicke (violin), Herr H. Kugelberg (violincello), and Mr. A. H. Otto (vocalist), assisted by Mr. Eugene Alderman (viola). The programme, which was both interesting and instructive in character, was initiated with Saint Saen's quartet for piano and strings in B flat, op. 41, which is a notable example of the talented Frenchman's best concerted work. The opening allegretto is pregnant with light and fanciful melody and in the second and final movements the composer has introduced a German chorale with singularly happy effect. The concluding allegro is bright and fascinating in character, and the instrumentalists were rewarded with warm acclamation after each movement, and again at the end of the quartet. Equally successful was their delightful interpretation of Beethoven's quartet, op. 16 in E flat, which is an arrangement for piano and strings of the composer's celebrated quintet in E flat for piano and wind instruments. The bold and majestic strains of the initial movement formed a striking contrast to the airiness of the succeeding allegro ma non troppo, while the exquisite harmony of the andante cantabile greatly delighted its hearers. The final movement was very finely played, and evoked enthusiastic acclamation. Herr Reimann played as a pianoforte solo Liszt's Grand etude (Ricordanza) in A flat, and his brilliant rendering of this captivating work won him a demonstrative reception. Mr. A. H. Otto, who chose for his first song a charming composition by Jensen, "Murmuring breezes," invested it with such taste and refinement as thoroughly to warrant the hearty demand for more made by the audience, but although he had thrice to bow his acknowledgements of the applause he could not be prevailed upon to supplement the number. Subsequently Mr. Otto again pleased his hearers by his singing of "Woo thou thy snowflake," from Sullivan's "Ivanhoe."

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#### CONVERSAZIONE AT THE UNIVERSITY.

A most entertaining and educational function in connection with the gathering of teachers was the conversazione at the University on Tuesday evening. A large number of the teachers and their friends who accepted the invitation of the council had two hours' keen enjoyment examining the interesting exhibits in the museum and laboratory, witnessing experiments in elementary and advanced chemistry, in electricity, and with radium. More was learnt in a few minutes watching the tests and listening to the lucid explanations by the operators than could be gained by hours of reading. It was an object lesson few who were privileged to enjoy will forget. Truly it proved that an ounce of practice was worth a ton of theory. The guests were received by the Rev. Dr. Paton, Drs. Hayward and Poulton, Professors Bragg, Mitchell and Rennie, and Messrs. F. Chapple, R.A., B.Sc., J. Henderson, and J. R. Fowler, M.A., members of the council. The visitors were first directed to the chemical laboratories, where Professor Rennie and Mr. A. J. Higgins conducted several experiments to illustrate combustion, the formation of supersaturated solutions, the diffusion of gases, and the solubility of ammonia gas in water, in connection with which a pretty ammonia fountain was displayed. More domestic information was obtained when the spectators were shown how to silver mirrors. The exhibit of geological and mineralogical apparatus in the Tate Museum, explained by Dr. Woolnough, was most interesting, but when the model of a geyser began to work the ladies in their charming dresses moved back. Mr. R. W. Chapman gave a demonstration of the use of a 50-ton testing machine, and Mr. W. Fuller conducted operations in the biological laboratory, and showed instruments for recording the twitch of a muscle and the beat of the heart. In the engineering laboratory Mr. J. P. V. Madsen did all sorts of things with electricity, and Mr. R. Kleeman showed the discharge of electricity by ultra-violet light, gyrostats illustrating the procession of the earth, and smoke rings. Professor Bragg twice gave a short, simple, and entertaining address on radium. At 9.15 the guests assembled in the Elder Hall, where the following musical programme was carried out, under the direction of Professor Ennis:—Piano solo (a) "Nocturne in B" (Chopin), (b) "Valse Allemande" (Rubinstein), Miss Carlien Jurs; vocal duets (a) "The angel," (b) "Wanderer's night song" (Rubinstein), Miss Gladys Edwards and Miss Hilda Klintberg; song, "My dearest heart" (Sullivan), Mrs. Hawkins; violin solo, "Spanish dance" (Sarasate), Miss Winifred Cowperthwaite; songs (a) "Afar in the woods," (b) "Synnove's song" (Kjerulf), Miss Martha Bruggemann; organ solo, overture to "Rosamunde" (Schubert), Professor Ennis.