



The Rev. Principal Bevan.

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nus belonged to what are called the Liberal Jews, and they are far less conservative and tied up by the old traditions than the Jewish community in general. I suppose I was the first Christian minister to take part in a Jewish meeting, and it created a good deal of discussion at the time. Rabbi Boas is going to deliver an address at the forthcoming Congregational Union meetings, and that shows how changed the religious relationships have become. Fifty years ago it would have been an unheard-of event for a Rabbi to speak at a Christian church gathering. On my last visit to England I met Sir Philip Magnus at the house of Sir Albert Spicer and renewed an intimacy that had been lost for nearly 40 years.

Men Who Have Become Famous.

"The present Chairman of Convocation of the University of London is Sir Edward H. Busk, one of the leading members of the legal profession in London. He was a boy at school with me, and we took our degree in law at the same time. He has been a most distinguished worker in the advancement of education in England. Another old schoolmate of mine was Estlin Carpenter, now principal of the Manchester College at Oxford. He is one of the most illustrious theological and critical writers of our time. Another great man who took his degree of Bachelor of Laws with me was Dr. John Clifford, whose life work in one of the leading churches of London is so familiar. He has been the leader of the Liberal ecclesiastical movement for the last generation, and was one of the most prominent of the passive resisters. He is honored not only by the denomination to which he belongs, but throughout all churches and by the nation at large. One of the friends of my boyhood belongs to the medical profession—Sir John Williams, Bart. He has now retired from the active duties of his profession. We were not associated in school or college, but were contemporaries in our different studies in connection with the London University. He was for many years physician to the late King Edward when he was Prince of Wales. He has spent the later years of his life in connection with the development of Welsh education, and especially the Welsh University. One of the most valued memories of my life is bound with that institution. Going back to the seventies, I had a good deal to do with the establishment of the Welsh University, and it is very interesting to me to remember that the concluding acts in the settlement of the arrangements for the opening of the original college took place in my own house.

Higher Education.

"I think in some ways the University of London formerly held relatively a more distinctive position in the higher education of England than it does to-day. This arises from the fact that 50 years ago it stood alone among the universities outside of the old institutions of Oxford and Cambridge. The Chancellor of the University in those days was Lord Granville, the famous Liberal Minister of the Crown. Robert Lowe, afterwards Viscount Sherbrook, was connected with the university. Its registrar was the eminent scientist, Dr. Carpenter, father of my schoolfellow, Estlin, to whom I have referred. The Chamberlain family were pupils of University College School, but Joseph Chamberlain was before my time. Arthur and I were together at school."

Asked if there was any striking difference between education half a century ago and now, Dr. Bevan said he was very much struck by the fact that education was now much more extensive than it formerly was. The great work of the education of the masses almost entirely belonged to the last 50 years. There was an extension in the higher forms of education, as represented by universities, in the study for such degrees as belonged to science, to the arts of practical life, and agriculture, which were entirely new departures. Sometimes the older men were startled by the novelty and extent of educational application nearly as much as by the extraordinary titles which now figured at the end of people's names. However startling they were, he hailed them with the spirit of progress which they indicated.

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EDUCATION BILL.

Mr. Coombe resumed the debate on the

Education Bill. He emphasised the fact that it would be the future generation who would feel the benefit of what they now did, and who would suffer by any mistakes they made. There could be no better legacy for their children than a sound system of education and training. South Australia had had 40 years' experience of the principal Education Act. Were the people satisfied with the results? Certainly people had learned to read and write. Forty years ago there was no University or School of Mines. To-day there was a fine higher educational institution, and a magnificent technical institution in the School of Mines and Industries. But during the 40 years, in his opinion, there had not been a material strengthening of the moral fibre, and so far as social efficiency was concerned the State had scarcely made any advance. There were a great many people about who were dishonest, and a great many more only honest by Act of Parliament. Social efficiency should be uppermost in the aims of education. There was lacking in the general scheme of education a thorough recognition of the lessons of Christian philosophy. The altruistic spirit was not sufficiently developed. He believed there was more good than evil in human nature. The doctrine of the natural depravity of man was repugnant to him. There was more angel than devil in the human being, especially in children, and an effort should be made to develop the best that was in them. If they instilled into their young minds some of the simple lessons of Christian philosophy they would be conferring a greater benefit than if they gave the children the finest intellectual education possible. He was glad the Government proposed to extend the compulsory age, and thus give the teachers a better chance of influencing the children upon proper lines. The teacher should be treated well and paid well. The teacher should inspire in the mind of the young a desire for self-development, self-discipline, and self-realisation. The teacher who could do that was an extremely valuable member of the community, and he ought to be well treated. The teacher should be given a better show. What chance had a teacher to mould the characters of the children when some left school before they were 13 years of age? He would make the compulsory age 16 at the least. This Bill would, he hoped, make a considerable advance in the system of education, and relieve the State of the stigma which had rested upon its system as compared with those of other parts of the world. He agreed with the proposal that children should attend every

school day. Boards of advice had been a failure, mainly through the unsympathetic action of the Education Department or the Public Buildings Department. The way in which some of the boards had been treated had been disgraceful.

Mr. Moseley—Time after time they have been ignored.

Mr. Coombe said he hoped the Minister in this Bill would guard the school committees against a repetition of such conditions. The Bill met the wishes of the teachers in regard to the boards of classification and appeal.

Mr. Ryan—Not a bit of it.

Mr. Coombe said the teachers were not quite satisfied with the constitution of the boards, as they wanted an outsider to whom they could appeal. There was to be an Advisory Board of Education. He had seen numbers of boards of one kind and another, and all had been abolished. He thought better results would be achieved by having a director. There should be a seventh Minister to control only the Education Department.

Mr. James—Is there another bunch of carrots hanging out somewhere? (Loud laughter.)

Mr. Coombe did not know anything about a bunch of carrots, but he was serious in what he said. The work of the Education Department was important enough to command the attention and best services of one Minister. It was a disgrace to South Australia that the Education Department could not attract teachers, and had to have school classes of 60, 70, 80, and even 100 and more.

Mr. Ryan—And pay the teachers 5/6 a day.

Mr. Coombe said the question of registration of teachers was the most contentious in the Bill. The proposals were very far-reaching.

Mr. Ryan—Exceptionally drastic.

Mr. Coombe said it had been construed as an attack upon denominational schools, but the majority of members of the House did not desire that. He knew there was a strong feeling among State school teachers that denominational schools should be abolished, but he believed Parliament would not be prepared to go even so far as this Bill proposed. Instead of establishing continuation classes in the country the institutes could be used much more than at present for educational purposes. He hoped the Bill would result in a considerable advance in the next generation.

Mr. O'Connor said he recognised a number of acceptable parts in the Bill, but it was not a wise time to put into operation a system that would add £90,000 to the annual expenditure, seeing that in some parts of the country the settlers were without educational facilities altogether for their children.

The Premier—The expenditure of £90,000 is not proposed at this juncture.

The Hon. A. H. Peake—The Premier intends to introduce the Montessori teaching, which establishes a new system altogether.

Mr. O'Connor said although the Minister had given his assurance that it was not intended to put into operation the clauses that would mean more expense to the country, he felt that Parliament would be held responsible if, as the result of outside pressure, the Government did put them into operation.

The Premier—The most expensive parts could be put into operation now by regulation—the Montessori system, for instance, if you call that expensive.

Mr. Ryan—We should remove such reproaches as overcrowding and underpaid people first.

Mr. O'Connor said in many parts of the State the school furniture was deplorable. All those things should be remedied before Parliament was committed to an expenditure of £90,000 a year under the Bill. The existing arrangements for the training of teachers in Adelaide were most unsatisfactory, and as soon as circumstances permitted an up-to-date residential college should be provided. He opposed the compulsory registration of private schools. It would be advisable, however, for every German or Lutheran school to be subject to inspection irrespective of the Bill altogether. Lurking in the minds of a great many people there was suspicion, and in justice to the German schools and those conducting them they should be given the opportunity of an official examination to clear them.