

THE EDUCATION SOCIETY CONFERENCE.

The Past and Citizenship.

Value of History in the Schools.

Professor Hancock declared that there would be fewer conferences on citizenship if people's relations one with another were happier. He laid stress on the value of the proper teaching of history in the schools.

The annual conference of the Education Society was resumed at the Institute Building on Friday afternoon, Mr. D. H. Hollidge presiding over a good attendance.

Professor Hancock spoke of "The past and citizenship." He said if their relations one with another were happier, and if they spontaneously did what was fitting and due from one to the other in the cities and the States, there would be fewer conferences on citizenship. The word citizenship with its lurking reminiscences of moral discourses, of teachers in conference, and of benevolent propaganda, had only come into fashion with the advent of democracy. A member of the British House of Commons, when the franchise was extended, had exclaimed, "We must educate our masters." In Australia they claimed that they had no masters. They were all masters. And yet doubts would obtrude. They had learned their letters, but had they learned how to be masters? They turned to their education departments exclaiming, "Will you teach us how to be masters and how to shoulder the burden of ruling our country?" He warned them that he was a heretic, and that many of the enthusiasms of the age had passed him by. He had little belief in the efficacy of textbooks. He suspected that the word citizen had come into popularity in modern times, because of the immense vogue which Rousseau's "Contract Social" gained for itself. According to Rousseau, a citizen was a master.

Modern Democracies.

He feared that modern democracies, in their use of the word citizenship had retained some of the original taint of intolerance. No people were fonder of speaking of citizens and citizenship than their democratic cousins, the Americans, and no people were so ready to damn persons who disagreed with them as "bad citizens." (Laughter.) On many occasions he had been told by Americans that those who did not accept the principle of prohibition—a question on which there was at least room for diversity of opinion—were not citizens. He did not suggest that people in Australia were so ready in their abuse of the word citizenship. He did fear, however, that they, like other democracies, might in the end raise up for themselves an idol of the perfect citizen. What would happen if he suggested that they had overdone democracy, or failed in it? What if he suggested that Adelaide, so beautifully laid out by Colonel Light, had been blemished by base and spurious architecture. What he greatly feared for modern democracies, including Australia, was that the word citizenship, like loyalty, would be given a narrow, intolerant interpretation. It could hardly be hoped to find the inspiration of a living past in Australia, whose past was no more than the world's present. They could be proud of their achievements because these had been so rapid. Yet that rapidity of creation had its drawbacks; it had not left behind it those monuments of age and beauty which linked the Italian or the Englishman with his past and gave him an inspiration for the future. It was good that they were beginning to mark with monuments the routes followed by the explorers in their struggle against distances and deserts. (Applause.)

No Apology for History.

It was of history that he wished to speak. He thought the time had passed when a professor of history need apologise for his subject because it was not useful. History was the memory of mankind, and it was too small a thing to say of memory that it was useful. Memory was one of the faculties which distinguished men from brutes. A nation which cared nothing for history and a nation without a memory was a brutish nation. People who lacked memory could only be an aggregation of individuals or tribes low down in the scale of civilisation, like the Australian blacks. History, if rightly taught and read, could not fail to arouse that manly pride without which they could never hope for strenuous and fruitful citizenship. They should frankly go to history for what they would find in it, not with the idea of digging up ammunition for their own particular war or peace cries. They might sincerely believe that the one thing worth fighting for on earth was the British Empire or Australian democracy, or the League of Nations. Because they believed that, they must beware all the more against twisting history into a shape satisfactory to their own preconceptions. History had only one direct moral purpose, the discovery of truth,

and the training of minds which respected truth. But, just as the finest art, while seeking only the truth of art, and eschewing all manner or moral propaganda, yet appealed, in virtue of its sincerity and beauty, to all that was fine and noble in those who beheld it, so history could not fail to awaken in those who read it feelings and aspirations which would enrich their citizenship.

Perversion of History.

Professor Hancock spoke of the perversion of history to serve the ends of a false patriotism, and said that was not a specially American disease. The honest study of our own history could not fail to develop within them such a manly pride as would give a deeper and richer quality to their citizenship. And that, he believed to be true, not only for Australians or Englishmen, but for Frenchmen, Germans, Dutch, and Italians. He assumed, of course, that the history of our own country—of Australia, and of the islands from which Australians had sprung—must take the first place in the schools, and an important place in the Universities. They did not want to teach "insular" history; but they should and must make the beginning from that which was nearest to them; their blood, language, institutions, and all those things by which they recognised themselves as a nation, were surely of more intimate meaning to them than the blood, the institutions, the language of Frenchmen, Indians, Turks, or Spaniards. A realisation of their past could not fail to make them proud with that pride which belonged to every people worthy of the name. And, at the same time, it could not fail to make them humble. For, just as he suggested that the people who had no memory alternated between boastfulness and self-depreciation, so he believed that the people, mindful of their ancestors, must at certain seasons mingle their pride in their achievements, with thorough and humble examination of their own. (Applause.)

Spirit of Citizenship.

It was in that spirit that he would have the boys and girls of the schools learn to think of their citizenship. It was important they they should learn something about the structure and working of their institution, something about commerce, something about social legislation. These things, he was told, they might learn from their little books on "Civics." But "Civics" was not a sufficient preparation for citizenship. Citizenship, he firmly believed, could not be taught as a school subject. It was a thing of the spirit first, and of the intellect afterwards; it was pride, it was responsibility; it sprang from intimate knowledge of, intimate affection for, noble men, noble deeds, and noble writing. He desired, in conclusion, to speak specially and directly to those who were teachers. From every quarter there came to them demands for the inclusion of this subject in the curriculum, for the extension of the time given to that; until, in perplexity, they must feel inclined to cry "mercy." He made no special claim for history upon the driven and hustled hours of the teaching week. The important thing was that the hours which were given to history should be properly used, that the history classes should have something of that spirit of which he had tried to speak, and that the same spirit should carry itself from the history period into other periods of the school day. He would urge upon them the necessity of not forcing on their classes their own ideas of right and wrong, of the value of this or that. All had their own opinions on the value of the past; some of them would be in agreement with his; some, no doubt, in conflict. Let their classes find in history what they could; encourage them to get away from the dogmatic summaries in their text-books, encourage them to turn over the pages of the great historians, and set before them, when they could, examples of those very records from which these historians wrote. The past had voices to speak for itself. And there would always be some who were ready to listen. (Applause.)

THE EVENING SESSION.

"CULTURE AND CITIZENSHIP."

Mr. W. R. Bayly presided at the evening session of the conference. In introducing the speakers, Professor Sir Archibald Strong and Professor Darnley Naylor, he said in the professors mentioned there had two speakers who had been singularly

successful in their own particular spheres. **Culture and Citizenship.**

Professor Sir Archibald Strong, in his address on "Culture and Citizenship," said that culture, compared with its original form, was hardly recognisable. "Culture" nowadays was frequently used to denote the intellectual superiority of a person over his neighbor. A Philistine was not necessarily an ignorant person, but might be a person with considerable knowledge. He was a Philistine, nevertheless, because the knowledge and education he possessed did not alter him and his attitude towards the finer things of life. The cultured person, to which he had referred, was the cause of fear and dread felt by many of meeting people who had been described to them as possessing culture. Another type of culture was that possessed by the man who acquired learning for a career, and who thought of nothing except the career. That man would not have the spiritual side of his nature awakened. There were other types of men, who simply learned to command success. He had known such men to go through life with their souls quite unawakened to the beauty, interest, and genius to be discovered in noble works in art and literature. He did not think they could call those men cultured in any sense of the word. Another type was the insidious one, the man who gathered learning in literature, art, science, philosophy, and history in the spirit of the collector, without any ulterior aim in view. He was no better than the man who collected stamping and put them in a book. He gathered learning, but it did not affect his spirit. He did not think all that made true culture could possibly be realised unless passion of some kind was aroused in the mind of the learner. Unless the intellectual was aroused, the learner would not be spurred to greater things. Until the glow of awakening spirit, teaching was a most heart-breaking undertaking.

The Way to Produce Civil Culture. He thought the only way to make people fond of the good thing was to give them the good thing and to awaken the joy in them. No good had come from trying to dissuade people from choosing the inferior thing by railing against it. He illustrated his meaning by saying that if one of his pupils was in the habit of reading such "masters" as Charles Garvice and Marie Corelli he would not abuse his choice of literature, but would offer him what he thought was a good thing in such works as those of Stevenson, for a start, and later Henry James, and would then exchange opinions with his pupil on his choice of literature. Culture did not proceed in its attempt to ennoble life by the direct inculcation of moral teaching. No man could live long with literature without being brought into contact with the purity of its various forms. The right way to produce civil culture was not to rail so much at the weakness, at the follies, or even the vices of the individual, or always to be hedging individuals round with restrictions and repressions, but to point out to the individual the right thing, the noble thing, the fine thing in life, and encourage him to follow that thing, and to show him that if he did that the taste for the inferior thing would disappear. In Australia there were rather too many attempts to hedge the individual round with restrictions. The method he proposed would form a great link between the man of culture and civic life. Tolerance was the great civic virtue needed in Australia to-day. (Applause.)

When Culture is Detestable. Professor Darnley Naylor said "culture" was derived from a Greek word, which originally meant cultivating the land. Later it developed into meaning the cultivation of the mind, then eminence, luxury, and finally fashion in dress. Culture, he said, if untrue and a sham, was one of the most detestable things. The nation that was really cultured was most certain to show it in the words it employed with reference to conduct, ethics, and art. If people were composed of the worst qualities, if they lacked sympathy, and were without ideals, they could not count themselves in the ranks of the cultured. The cultured man strove to understand all arts, all literatures, and all civilisations. He was not a man who would throw stones at a stranger or jeer at new songs or at new customs. Rather he would wish to understand them; it might be culture of the best kind would be found there in an increasing degree, and when regarded as the "be all" and "end all" of university education, he also thought the same thing would be true of their universities. The cordial appreciation of the audience to the speakers was conveyed by the Chairman.

Moving Pictures. If a nation contained a large proportion of cultured persons it would find the best excitement of the emotions in music, the drama, and literature, or even in moving pictures. The moving picture managers should realise that they underrated the taste of the public. They were erring greatly in believing that they could not get audiences with very much better pictures than they provided. (Applause.) Such a nation as he had referred to would

be full of generous sentiments, and would not be easily moved by passion. That should be a distinguishing characteristic of the ordinary cultured man or woman. They would not be the victims of passion. They would not be carried away by any emotions which a foolish press had excited. They would also be anxious for justice and right rather than mere gain, and finally the national ideal would be a perfection of body and perfection of soul. (Applause.)

The Need of Tolerance. If one turned his fellows away from bad taste in respect of books, pictures or music simply by substituting a good example, the speaker continued, might not that be done in respect of citizenship, when one passed from the sphere of culture into the civic virtues—courage, loyalty, kindness, and tolerance? He could not conceive that any man who had lived long with the great examples of poetry, painting, music, and drama would not find himself enabled by a call to respond to those civic virtues, the right way to produce those virtues was not to rail so much at weaknesses and follies, or to hedge an individual but to point out the noble and fine thing in life and encourage him to find it. The inferior thing would then disappear. Tolerance was the chief civic virtue needed in Australia to-day. If culture were true, the example left upon civic life would be directly for its ennoblements.

The National Ideal. Professor H. Darnley Naylor, after referring to the origin of the word "culture," showed how it had gradually passed into meaning elegance, luxuriousness, and outward aspect. It had tended to become a thing of the body instead of the soul. Culture, if shammed, was one of the most detestable things in nature. In respect of a nation, they could find out what was its true culture by the words its people used. The man who did not know the world in which he lived did not know where he was trending, and did not know how to make the best of his environment. Such a man would be brutal and unkindly. One could not forget that the Greek words which implied falsity of character and possibly sin, were drawn from aesthetics, and a word which approximated to that was one which meant to strike a wrong note, failing to produce the best in their art. The idea of beauty in colour, form, and conduct was derived from a simple Greek word which meant suited to its surroundings. True culture did not dwarf the spirit in any way. Any one studying Henry Jackson could feel the power of his impassioned intellect, which was infectious. There was a great danger that one might know many facts, and yet represent all that was worst in human nature. If they lacked sympathy with ideals then they could not count themselves in the ranks of the cultured. The cultured man tried to understand arts, literature, and civics. Such a man would not throw stones at a stranger or jeer at new songs or customs, but would desire with a fine curiosity to examine and understand. Above all, he would be modest, because he knew his own limitations. The half-educated man often "gave himself away" by his lack of the sense of proportion. The cultured man loved to share his pleasures with others. He also enjoyed the excitement of appreciation and the excitement of exposition. Those things came to a man who had an impassioned glow in his soul. One realized the amount of culture that existed in the sports of the Englishman to-day. A cultured nation found its best excitement of the emotions in music, drama, and literature, and even in the moving pictures. Managers of picture shows should realize that they underrated the taste of the public and erred gravely when they imagined that they could not get audiences with a much better class of production than they provided. The cultured nation would be full of generous sentiment, and not easily influenced by passion. It would also be anxious for justice and right rather than for mere gain, because the better world it was helping to make measured its greatness by its contribution to humanity, and even a small nation might make that contribution. The national ideal should be perfection of body and mind. Those things could be achieved if education of the best kind was prevalent everywhere. In the Workers' Educational Association they had the seed of very great possibilities for Australia, and he believed that culture of the best kind would be found there in an increasing degree, and when regarded as the "be all" and "end all" of university education, he also thought the same thing would be true of their universities.

The cordial appreciation of the audience to the speakers was conveyed by the Chairman.

ADV. 10-4-26. GRADUATES' ASSOCIATION. The annual meeting of the Graduates' Association of the University of Adelaide will be held on July 23 in the Prince of Wales Lecture Room. The business will include the adoption of the annual report and financial statement, election of officers and of two representatives on the committee, approved by the council to proceed actively with the project of the students' union building and war memorial. Professor W. K. Hancock will deliver an address on "National Characteristics."