

FAITH IN EDUCATION 29 AUG. 1935 Conservation Of The Right Kind "COMMON SENSE"

The English public school system says the vice-principal of the Adelaide High School in this article, is based on a claim to develop common sense, involving the growth of a mental posture. Mr. Ward discusses the part played by academic education in preparing youth for the conduct of the politics and commerce of the nation.

By C. M. WARD, M.A.

THE resolution passed recently by the conference of vice-chancellors, approving the appointment of University-trained men to the Commonwealth public service, made explicit the blessing which they had already given to the scheme now operating. The faith on which this policy is grounded is that a sound academic training, without technical bias, proves in the long run the best foundation, even from a vocational point of view. Such a belief is backed by a strong tradition in England, and persists in the face of criticism. Those who hold it have no such deluded notion that, by reading Caesar's campaigns or Plutarch's republic in the original, the prospective public servant will pick up definite hints on how to govern India; or that a knowledge of the calculus will help him to balance budgets. Rather, faith in what is usually called the "higher" education is based on its claim to develop common sense. This is a word of varied meaning. The Latin original, which means fellow-feeling, and covers the "good form" and "corporate spirit" of the public school, is now almost forgotten, although the fact that which it stands plays so large a part in education. The second and popular use implies something akin to horse-sense, and, although as such it might offend, yet there are ambitious spirits who think more of uncommon sense, or even common sense. We have already seen another meaning when we refer to development of common sense through the study of certain subjects.

Academic and Vocational Training.

Here we imply the growth of a mental posture that is good for anything, not merely for the particular subjects of study. The fact that there are many big academic attainments, but good for nothing is understood, and an argument against education, this is the other meaning and tainted heritage. On the other hand, the fact that many reformers, in pushing the claims of certain subjects against those of the ultra-violet brigade, attack the very basis of the old creed. In their warmth, they go so far as to question whether there is such a thing as common sense, or common Mathematics, they say, or Latin, may develop a capacity for more mathematics and more Latin, but not a capacity for administering a government, managing a business, or governing a country. The argument sounds at first reasonable enough, but it really begs the whole question. It is not a special technique must eventually be acquired. But the point at issue is whether their attention may be confined to common sense (in all its meanings) or whether, for instance, a place in commercial training, that has answered the question by finding a way for them; and it seems likely that, at least in the present circumstances (for example, in the university departments), medicine there will be no retreat. But even the students in these courses have their special training in subjects that are not entirely academic; and, during the course itself, they may like it or not, they must study many things that are not supposed to be of obvious use. They learn that this is waste of time, it is hard to the fore. Nevertheless, even the most common-sensical, who possibly may have no conscious, when of education beyond the vocational, has found a great deal. He at least looks for a prospect of improvement in a prospective employee, though it is not clear why these should be of primary mental to dividend.

There is, too, a large number of employers who, rightly or wrongly, pin their faith to purely academic training than vocational training.

Developing Mental Power

On the other hand, the sturdy conservatism that has so long resisted the inroads of new subjects of study, has gradually yielded some of its ground. The monopoly by the sciences of the mind and Greek is now gone. Science, at one time banned as "stinks," is at last fairly generally accepted as a valid part of the general youth's training. Arts, crafts, commerce, and agriculture, whatever their claims, have not yet found so secure a footing as they deserve, even "less" things like algebra, geometry, and trigonometry, are studied very generally, and will cease to be modern youth's uncharted, of course, so an adding indefinitely; the new, if its claim succeeds, will have to displace some of the old. But it is clear that the old has a greater dividend producing value, or even that it promotes more fun for learning than the new. One thing that it is better able to arouse intelligent interest and develop power of mind. And here the method of procedure, the habit of thinking is another thing. So long as hidebound conservatism lays too much stress on the disciplinary aspect, and neglects the creative, the purpose of education is being thwarted. To face difficulty with courage and hard thinking is one thing, but it is merely poisoning the wells to force on students the rote-learning of, for example, grammatical rules and exceptions, and the memorizing of the meticulous reproduction of formal and often pointless proofs in mathematics.

Safeguarding The Best

While it is true that educational policy must be always open to modification, there is at the same time need for conservatism of the right kind to safeguard the best that we have. This constitutes a problem on which the last work will never be said. It is only to be expected, however, that education should not improve itself. And it is this faith that has led to the negotiations between the university and the public service. It is not so surprising since similar policy was arranged between the education department and the university, for the purpose of educating the public, not merely to their job, but well above it. The system has triumphantly survived the charge of over-education, and here doubt is cast upon it merely by occasional failure. The policy is now to be put to the test in another sphere, and it will be interesting to see how they will encounter criticism from worthy competitors whose education has been mostly in the university of the past. The hints they can take hints from the junior clerk on routine matters. It is, however, confidently expected that they will be able to adjust themselves, they will "make good," through their common sense; not merely the common sense of the common man, but the power of mind, ability to grapple with a problem, or to formulate a policy.

JUBILEE Exhibition Open To Public Tomorrow

29 AUG. 1935

Several Adelaide doctors will assist at the University of Adelaide medical school jubilee celebrations, which will open at the University tomorrow with a special programme and exhibition. The medical exhibition, open to the public tomorrow night, and on Saturday afternoon and night, will be held at the City Theatre. (Sir Winston Dugan) will attend the conversations tomorrow afternoon. The committee responsible for arranging the celebration includes Sir William Mitchell (Vice-Chancellor of the University of Adelaide), Professors E. J. Wilkinson, J. B. Cleland, A. J. Toles, Macchett, L. H. Johnson, Drs. Sir Henry Newland, A. M. Chidmore, C. T. de Crempigny, C. J. Hackett, S. Hesel, F. S. Hone, H. M. Jay, A. D. Lambhe, Helen May, W. Ray. This exhibition will be the first of its kind to be held here, and the screening of cinematograph exhibits, and demonstrations will be arranged for the public. The exhibit will be obtained from the registrar's office, copy of the Adelaide exhibits. This book includes an interesting survey of the advances in the science of medicine and surgery during the last century. The brochure contains details of the exhibits, a guide to the buildings, a plan of the site, and particulars of the films to be exhibited.

BONTHON HALL FOR AN AGRESTE ORGAN MUSIC 29 AUG. 1935 Transmission By Wire From Elder Hall Planned

SPECIAL PROVISION FOR ACOUSTICS

By H. BREWSTER JONES

Provision is being made in the Bonthon Hall, which is in course of construction, for music from the Elder Hall pipe-organ to be picked up by a microphone, and carried to the Bonthon Hall for loud speaker transmission. Initial steps have already been taken to transmit organ music from the Elder to the Bonthon Hall, and telephone wiring is also being laid down. This will enable the organist in the former, for instance, to receive his cue when to begin the National Anthem at a function being conducted in the latter.

Everything possible is being done to assist the acoustical conditions of the Bonthon Hall by the application of special ceiling treatments in order to create reverberation. The ceiling will be panelled with an insulating substance, an absorbent composition will be placed on the floor and on the lower walls will be panelled to a height of twelve feet with oak. Compared with the Elder Hall, it will have a shorter reverberation time, due to volume, and the breaking up of wall surfaces into vaults which are covered with special ceiling treatments in order to assist the acoustical conditions. These provisions are as much for "speech-aid" as for organ transmission. Two high-fidelity, or dynamic loud speakers, will be installed above the dais. These will utilize the induced wave as a baffie, thus reproducing the organ as it comes from the organ. The high-fidelity amplifier, capable of giving a flat response of 35 cycles to 10,000 cycles a second, to be placed in the north-west corner of the hall, will be the medium of amplification from a microphone pickup point suitably placed in the Elder Hall.

Much experimentation will be needed to determine the final location for this pick-up point and the type of microphone to be used.

Volume Range Limited

Owing to the definite limits of volume range which can be accommodated upon a system of microphones and amplifiers, the organ in the Elder Hall must necessarily have to be played at a low dynamic level, and built up to the requisite volume by means of amplification in the Bonthon Hall.

With such an organ as that of the B.B.C., which represents the last word in modern organ-building on the system of extension and total enclosure, no such problems exist. The builders of the B.B.C. organ, who have also evolved a miniature organ for use in many churches and halls, which, with the aid of specially designed amplifiers, can shut off most of the empty auditorium, and the total enclosure, no such problems exist.

Amplification Of Reed Organs

Another aspect of organ music transmission, which may have a bearing upon halls and churches which do not possess a pipe organ, is the amplification of the American reed organ. This can be made to imitate closely a pipe organ, both in timbre and dynamic range, and a system of amplification, as has been used in the Norwich Cathedral, when the pipe organ was out of commission, for the reed organ has proved of great value. As has been recently proved in experiments conducted in an Adelaide church and at station A.D., a small reed organ, with the aid of a microphone, can produce enough power to lead a congregation of 500 or even 1,000 people.

The amplified organ will no doubt prove in the hands of an artist a valuable aid to studio broadcasting, and be a great boon to those churches of low maintenance which cannot afford to purchase a pipe organ, or to provide funds for upkeep, organist's salary, maintenance, and so on, as its cost is about a sixth of that of an organ of equal power, and the cost of maintenance is negligible. Any musical girl in her middle teens could play it for a couple of hours a week, and a good musician would be able to produce remarkable effects after studying all its possibilities.

NATIONALISM WIN FOR MELBOURNE

Melbourne University defeated Tasmania in the semi-final of the Inter-University debating contest at the Town Hall last night. The decision of the three adjudicators was unanimously in favor of the Melbourne team, but the margin must have been small, and the audience had cause to feel thankful that it was able to leave its seats made room for it. The debate was of an appreciably higher standard than is normally met in the present series, both sides presenting clear, logical, and knowledgeable. The subject of the debate, in which Melbourne took the "minus" side, was "That modern nationalism threatens the stability of European civilisation." The Lord Mayor (Mr. Cain) presided.

The method of debate of the two teams afforded an interesting contrast. The Melbourne representatives all adopted the vitriol of a stage actor, and crushed under the despotic administrations of Hitler and Mussolini, fervently and ruthlessly. They stressed if nationalism ran its full course, and calling to high heaven to witness that the present had enough of national jealousy, ambitions, and self-interest. The Tasmanians, on the other hand, treated the subject, one might say, in an "old-fashioned" manner, and Mussolini they held to be exceptions, proving nothing. They argued that nationalism was the logical development of a nation's life and an essential condition of internationalism. They sought to disprove the contention that modern nationalisms were synonymous, and disclaimed the theory that, even if war resulted from the present badly regulated and unregulated nationalisms, it would be a step towards civilization itself would disappear.

Melbourne Speakers

Melbourne probably owed its success to the conviction with which it spoke its case. Mr. R. W. Willmott, who led the team, set the standard with a speech in which he could not find a single good word to say of the nation. He began by blaming the speaker, and in an aside, he blamed it even for the subjugation of women and the "massive" and "clumsy" and "made flabby." Like his colleagues, he spoke fluently, and like them, too, was never at a loss for a metaphor. He gave the impression of believing in his subject, and, on the whole, survived the cold, matter-of-fact speech of the opposing leader, who spoke after him. The second speaker, Mr. W. G. Kelly, his speech was in the best electorizing manner. He slapped the table, he was surprised, he rounded an argument, he invited the audience, and he took it into his confidence. He spoke at a rate which would have been the despair of any rounder, and he had a good knowledge of the history of practically every country in Europe in half as many minutes, and he did it very well. His account of the "Arabian Nights" of the "King of Arabia," across the north of Africa, over Gibraltar, up one valley, down another, over one mountain range, and up another, was a most interesting and point-to-point speech. The third speaker, Mr. B. A. Santamaria, gave what was, in his opinion, the best of the debate. He reminded even his two colleagues in his recital of the crimes of nationalism. He felt that Mr. Santamaria would be in his hall meeting in his hall meeting. He showed a great fondness for Scriptural metaphor, pointing most of his arguments, which were made well aloft, to the direction where the true fraternity of man lay. He also made good use of the Scriptural metaphor, which was not enough, all the other speakers ignored.

Tasmanian Team

Mr. J. L. May, the leader of the Tasmanian team, concentrated for the most part on the historical growth of nationalism. He put forward a logical development of the family, then the village, and, finally, the racial group, and he seemed to be in a good condition in issue that it had produced civilisation as it now is; and that it was a necessary stage of progress towards civilisation. He spoke clearly and unburiedly, and held the attention of the audience throughout. Courtney-Pratt, who supported Mr. May, was the only woman member of either team. She developed a similar line of argument to his.