

# Why we Should Seek Pleasure

(By R. E. P. BARBOUR, M.A., assistant lecturer in ethics at the Adelaide University)

THE question, "Is pleasure desirable?" is not as readily answered as it seems. There have at all times been thinkers, known by the general name of hedonists, who have regarded pleasure not only as something desirable, but as the only truly desirable thing. These thinkers, from the Cynetics of classical Greece to Bentham and J. S. Mill, and the utilitarian philosophers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, have all agreed in the view that it is pleasure in some form at which all human actions aim or ought to aim, although for some of them this pleasure is that of the individual himself, for others that of "the greatest number." The greatest amount of pleasure produced the better the act.

It is quantity, not quality of pleasure that matters. "The attempt of later utilitarians to admit a difference of quality in pleasure ("it is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied)" makes them view more acceptably, but means surrendering the case for hedonism altogether; logically the hedonist cannot talk of "higher" and "lower," but only of "greater" and "smaller" pleasure.

IT is admitted that pleasures differ in quality and that small degrees of intellectual pleasure, for example, may be preferable to a greater amount of bodily pleasure. It follows that the desirability of any pleasure depends, at least in part, on the value of the source from which it is derived, and that value is not determined solely by the quantity of pleasure derived from it.

Experience shows that we do not always do what is likely to produce most pleasure, either for ourselves or for others. Pleasure is not the sole object of desire. Ancient and modern psychologists alike insist that what we desire is not always, if it is ever, pleasure as such. What we desire is always some object or activity, and these objects have a value not limited to their capacity to produce pleasure. The prospect of pleasure is not the only thing that can determine our desires and move us to action; certain things—goodness, for example—are to be sought independently altogether of considerations of pleasure and pain.

WHAT does determine our desires is our total self or character. If that self were primarily a feeling self—that is, if man were, as Rousseau claimed, above all a creature of feeling and only secondarily a creature of reason—then the hedonist view might prevail. But of the three elements—reason and feeling—of which the human self is composed, the element of reason, which raises man above the rest of the animal creation, is never to be regarded as subordinate to either of the other elements. All desire aims at satisfying a total self, of which pleasure or pleasurable feeling is only one aspect.

Can we, then, seek pleasure? If by "pleasure" we simply mean pleasant feeling, something independent of the object in which it is found—then pleasure is an abstraction, and is not anything that can be sought. We try to seek such a pleasure is to miss it. What we can seek are certain objects which involve pleasure.

DIFFERENT men "seek pleasure" in different objects, and it is the nature of the objects he seeks that indicates each man's character. But although we can say that a man seeks pleasure in certain objects and although the attainment of those objects may bring pleasure, what we really seek is satisfaction for a total self or character, and since that self is only partly feeling, pleasure alone cannot bring it satisfaction. We ought to seek pleasure so long as that seeking is not inconsistent with true satisfaction for the whole self. Pleasure is an element in the moral end, although it is not the moral end itself.

ADV. 21-35

Professor J. McKellar Stewart, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Adelaide, returned by the express on Saturday from Melbourne, where he attended the Science Congress at the Melbourne University. Professor Stewart will leave by the Ormonde on February 7 for England, where he will remain for some time before visiting America. While in America, Professor Stewart will investigate certain phases of education at the invitation of the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Professor Stewart will be absent from Adelaide for about a year.

Dr. A. Grenfell Price, Master of St. Mark's College, left by the express on Saturday for Melbourne to attend the Science Congress, at which he will give two addresses.

Professor Prescott left for Melbourne by the express on Saturday to attend the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research on his trip abroad.

Dr. R. H. Pulleine, a foremost authority on Australian trapdoor spiders, who has prepared a work on spiders for the series of handbooks of the Flora and Fauna of South Australia, issued by the British Science Guild (South Australian branch), has returned to Adelaide after having attended the Science Congress in Melbourne.

ADV. 21-35

## DR. PULLEINE RETURNS FROM SCIENCE CONGRESS

### Remarkable Woman Anthropologist

On his return from Melbourne yesterday, Dr. R. H. Pulleine, a member of the anthropological board at the University of Adelaide, said that one of the most interesting addresses which he had heard at the Science Congress in Melbourne was that given by Miss Olive Pink, of "Land Ownership Among the Australian Aborigines." Miss Pink went out alone near the Western Australian border in Central Australia, and lived among the aborigines during part of 1933 and 1934. While the annual expeditions of the anthropologists here were more or less of a winter holiday, it was a different matter for Miss Pink, who remained for a summer and a winter in that isolated area. "The singleness of purpose and determination in a woman to give up her time in the interests of the aborigines are remarkable," said Dr. Pulleine.

One of the biggest things that he had never attended, said Dr. Pulleine, was the presidential reception and conversation at the Public Library, Museum, and National Gallery of Victoria, held during the congress. "For three-quarters of an hour, films on the cultural side of anthropology were screened. Dr. Pulleine remarked on the great preponderance of South Australian anthropologists at the congress. Many questions dealing with the anthropological excursions undertaken in South Australia and Central Australia were brought before the anthropological section by South Australian members.

NEWS 21-1-35

## SPEED RECORDS ON HOLIDAY

### New Timing Set To Be Used

MEMBERS of the Sporting Car Club will set up the A Class flying mile in his double-engined Essex car. Mr. J. M. Dutton, of Anlay, has at his car timed, with the intention of making a Class national record for the same distance, and Mr. C. W. Bonnyton intends to attempt the 1,100 c.c. record in his M.G. car. Notice of the attempts has been lodged with the A.A.A. in Sydney and the recently appointed A.A.A. officials for South Australia will be in control.

The chairman of the Australian Automobile Association competitions committee Sydney (Alderman Primrose, M.L.C.) arrived in Adelaide on Saturday and visited the Adelaide Automobile Club with the secretary of the R.A.A. (Mr. Christopher) Mr. Campbell, Dr. G. H. Howard, and the secretary of the Sporting Car Club (Mr. C. G. Moran) to inspect the timing apparatus to be used.

### UNIVERSITY TEST

Alderman Primrose said it was the first apparatus in Australia which complied with the A.A.A. regulations. He expressed satisfaction with its efficiency. It has been constructed by Mr. Ayliffe and Mr. Fuller, of Physics Laboratory at the University, and will be accurate to one-hundredth of a second. The records attempts will be made between 12 noon and 1. During the afternoon, starting at 2.15, there will be three races—10-mile handicap under 100 c.c., a two-mile open handicap, and the 50-mile open handicap.

The property has been loaned to the Sporting Car Club by Mr. Brooks, of Buckland Park.

## Sir Horace Lamb's Funeral

HAROLD G. Olyphant, Angus road, Westbourne Park, writes:—"Dear Vox—Old Oxford and other correspondents interested in the late Sir Horace Lamb, at one time Professor at our University, might like to read this reference to the old professor's funeral service at Trinity College Chapel, Cambridge (Lamb was a fellow of Trinity) which I extracted from a letter received from my son, Dr. M. L. E. Olyphant, lately of Trinity, and now a Fellow of St. John's—

A very nice touch, which pleased me a lot, was the singing of the 'Master and the Fool,' the sixth service of the Mass, before leaving the entrance for the last time.

"Those who are acquainted with that ancient gateway, with its towers and battlements, will have no difficulty in picturing the solemn and impressive scene. Olyphant adds: 'It was a fitting service to one of Trinity's most honored sons. Cambridge has a genius for that kind of thing.'"

ADV. 22-1-35

## ARTIFICIAL RADIUM FOR MEDICAL USE

### Professor Kerr Grant On Production Of New Atoms

"American factories will be turning out artificial radium in appreciable quantities in the next year or two. Professor Kerr Grant, Professor of Physics at Adelaide University, told members of the physics section today in a lecture on "Recent Advances in Atomic Physics."

"Already 40 or 50 new kinds of atoms have been produced by bombarding atoms of the ordinary lighter elements, and all the new atoms have been radio active, disintegrating into more stable atoms and radiating Beta and Gamma rays in the process. Most of these have been produced in only very minute quantities, but recently American workers have produced appreciable quantities of a substance which they have named "radio-sodium," the activity of which is comparable to that of radium used for therapeutic purposes. The radiation is more homogeneous and more intense than that of any natural radio active substance."

This was one of the several extraordinarily interesting results that would arise out of the study of atomic phenomena in the immediate future, Professor Kerr Grant said. The science of atomic physics had advanced

so swiftly that it was all but impossible to keep abreast of the subject.

"Almost all physicists have adopted the proton and the neutron as bases of theories of nuclear structure, but it would remind you up three things done in 1931 by Professor Orme Masson (now Sir David Masson), of Melbourne," he continued, "that atoms that all nuclei could be built up of particles which are identical with those now known as protons and neutrons."

Referring to the conversion of metallic sodium into "radio-sodium," Professor Kerr Grant said that all the recent transmutations of elements had been effected by bombardment of atomic nuclei with deuterons (particles consisting of one proton and one neutron found in the hydrogen in "heavy water"). To make the bombardment effective, the neutrons were first whirled in an intense magnetic field until they had attained an enormous velocity, and then they were hurled into a mass of sodium. Some idea of the intensity of the energy involved in the deuterons can be gained from the fact that the electro-magnets which energized them weighed more than 35 tons.

ADV. 22-1-35

Dr. R. B. Knight, a graduate of the Adelaide University in 1922, who recently returned to Australia after having spent a holiday with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. L. B. Knight, of Glenelg, has been appointed medical superintendent of the Fremantle Public Hospital. Before his appointment he was junior resident in medical officer at the same hospital. Dr. Knight was studied at St. Peter's College, and later joined Wesleyan College, Perth, as a master, for two years. He returned to South Australia and entered the University here.

NEWS 22-1-35

Dr. Ivan Phillips, of the Waite Research Institute, accompanied by his wife and daughter, is on a two months' visit to Melbourne. He is attending the Science Congress.