

HUMAN NATURE IN INDUSTRY

(By Harry Thomson)

It was a compatriot of Anatole France who not long ago discovered that the Darwinian theory was not merely true in principle but true in circumstance. The facts according to this distinguished writer are that the real origin of man was an accident. A young monkey by hazard one day became drunk and began posturing on his hind legs before admiring relatives.

His success was so great that it turned his head and led him to continue his buffoonery until he became a thorough nuisance and ultimately was excluded from his tribe. His behaviour and that of his descendants have never been such as to lead to their readmission to the ancestral fold. Always at crucial moments there has been a sudden falling away from dignity and an access of irresponsibility that would be out of place in any self-respecting Simian family.

It is this streak of human nature that keeps popping up at all sorts of times, convenient and otherwise, that our great reformers are apt to forget—unless it happens in the Botanic Park on a Sunday afternoon. These considerations arise out of the interesting Fisher Lecture recently delivered by Sir Henry Braddon on the Guild system. Human nature made them, human nature broke them up, and Sir Henry would have it that human nature needs them again.

He suggests that some such system as the Guilds is much preferable to the Arbitration Court methods in Australia today. He even seems to think that the reversion to a modified Guild system might be practical politics. There is more than a germ of truth in his criticism of the compulsory arbitration system as it has developed. The modern highly complex plaint in the Arbitration Court is a strange and wonderful document, and quite unintelligible to the uninitiated. The mere preparation of a plaint or log is a highly technical matter.

Prussian Thoroughness

The undoubted effect of the system is to develop and emphasise the antithesis between employer and employe. It attempts to legislate for every detail, and so far as form goes is Prussian in its overpowering thoroughness. Human nature in time revolts from Prussianism. Age and the seasons, children, the measles, and even the weather affect Jack, but the system goes on tirelessly. More than all else monotony depresses Jack, and most of all the monotony of a system. To save his soul and to preserve his ego he must revolt at times from the best of systems—and revolt merely because it is a system.

Whatever doctrinaires may say, it is not enough merely to be Citizen Number 10051. A man may not be a hero to his own valet, but he must occasionally persuade himself that he is a hero, or at least different from others, to his own wife. And every successful wife knows perfectly well that she must aid in that deception. That is human nature on the one side—the best.

On the other, it is essentially selfish, which is why Arbitration Courts have grown up at all. Man is an acquisitive animal; and two men cannot acquire the same bone at the same time. It is not looking facts in the face to believe that all employers will put the welfare of their employes ahead of or equal with their own.

Similar might no doubt be said on the other side. The principles underlying the Guilds of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were the protection of the artisan and at the same time the standard of craftsmanship. The Guilds were fellowships almost in the monastic sense, and, strange as it may seem so many centuries ago, inside the Guild hours of labor were restricted, friction between members checked by fines, relief administered from the communal chest in case of disability or unemployment.

PROFESSOR RESIGNS

Unpleasantness Alleged

TUITION FOR STUDENTS

Commenting today upon his resignation from the Adelaide University as Dean of the Faculty of Law Professor Coleman Phillipson stated that he was desirous of returning to Great Britain.

Professor Phillipson, in his letter to Professor Mitchell (Vice-Chancellor) tendering his resignation, said:—"Owing to an attack recently made on me, which I consider unjustifiable, and the unpleasantness thereby caused, I beg to tender my resignation. I do so in accordance with our original agreement, which provided that after five years' service the engagement might be terminated by six months' notice."

"I wish to return to Great Britain to continue my researches, and to complete the materials for two books which I could not finish here, because of the lack of documentary sources. I am anxious, too, to resume practice at the Bar. In Great Britain the right to practise is usually granted to the holder of a legal chair. You will remember that I came here understanding that I could be admitted to the South Australian Bar; but the council's subsequent objection I have observed loyally throughout the whole period."

"Having regard to the fact that I have now completed five years' service, I would ask the council to be kind enough to allow me leave of absence until the end of the present year."

PAY TO CONTINUE

Accepting Professor Phillipson's resignation, the University advised him that the council had decided to grant him leave of absence and pay him the salary of the professorship until the end of the year.

"This will leave you free to resume the valuable work which you gave up to come to Adelaide," the letter concluded.

"I am keenly interested in international affairs," said the professor this morning, "and at the Paris Peace Conference I was counsel in international law for the British delegation."

"I shall resume practice at the Bar. Some time ago I was offered a case for the Privy Council by the South Australian committee of producers. I could not have taken it because of the Council's objection to my admission to the Bar here."

"During the past two years," he continued, "especially after the council objected to my call to the Bar, I have been desirous of returning home, and but for the dissuasion of my wife, who loves the climate here, I would have already returned to London, that glorious and incomparable centre of life, scholarship, culture, and international affairs. It is only there that I can continue my researches."

PRIVATE LESSONS

"You ask for the meaning of 'the attack' and the 'unpleasantness' mentioned in my letter." Well, the crux of the whole affair was my willingness to give private tuition to one or two backward students. The council objected to it. There is nothing dishonorable or wrongful in it, though it may be inexpedient, as there is always somebody ready to place the worst possible construction on it, and somebody did.

"It is possible, of course, that the practice may be abused, but why necessarily regard a possibility as an accomplished fact? Anyhow, I am sick and tired of the whole thing. I wish no one ill, not even he who is maliciously disposed to say and think the worst."

"Let the person stick another paper on my door, worse even than the last one, which was this:—'Coleman Phillipson, Blackmailer. Get out, you dirty twine.' Also let the person who said he wondered I did not snatch his wife's bag say something worse."

PROFESSOR PHILLIPSON.

A PERSONAL EXPLANATION

In a statement yesterday Professor Coleman Phillipson, whose resignation as Professor of Law at the University was accepted by the Council last Friday, said:—"I have heard so many rumors in regard to my resignation and the committee of enquiry that it is fair to me and to the public that I should emphasise the vital point involved and leave them to judge of the drastic and unparalleled treatment that has been meted out to me. Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Rymill made the charge against me to the Council to the effect that I was willing to coach their son, who was a backward student, at a fee of two hundred guineas. That is the crux of their charge against me. That was interwoven with all sorts of details which placed a different color on the charge, for example, that it was I who had approached them, when it was they, in fact, who had approached me. This was corroborated by my wife, whereas the statements of each of them were not corroborated in the least. Further, they denied that I had added the proviso, 'subject to the consent of the Faculty of Law or the Council of the University.' I considered from the interpretation of clause 6 of Chapter IV. of the University Calendar that I was not debarred from undertaking such work. The clause says, inter alia—'No professor shall (without the sanction of the Council) give private instruction or deliver lectures to persons not being students of the University.' I took this to mean that I was only debarred from instructing or coaching non-University students."

"At the enquiry I admitted at once it was true I was willing to coach Mr. Rymill's son, subject to the approval of the council. I am assured that nothing whatever has been found against me except what I had already voluntarily and readily admitted. I ask the public, therefore, to say whether the step taken by the council is in accordance with British ideas of justice and sense of proportion—namely, to be suddenly asked to resign, especially in view of the fact that I had come here, as is known to all, with a distinguished career and had engaged in work of the most delicate and confidential kind for the British Government and was respected and esteemed by great numbers of people in this city and for making a suggestion which was at most inexpedient and contained nothing whatever in it that any sane or fair-minded person would regard as dishonorable or wrongful."

"It has been alleged by Dame Rumor that such coaching might influence your marking at the examinations," suggested the interviewer.

"My answer, in the first place," said Professor Phillipson, "is that there is always an outside examiner who is entitled to see the whole of the papers, and then there is a board of examiners which considers the result of every student. Secondly, are we going to condemn a man beforehand because there is a possibility that he might do wrong, or do we wait until he has actually done a wrong, and then take steps against him? Is not the latter course the only one sanctioned by public conscience and by the dictates of commonsense and humanity, as well as by all civilised law? Does not the law presume every man innocent until he is actually found to be guilty beyond any doubt? Is a trustee condemned because there is a possibility on his part of committing a breach of trust, or is he condemned after it has actually been established as an accomplished fact? I protest to the public of Adelaide against this drastic action. Any public board would at most have found it sufficient, say, to utter a warning that to engage in work of this kind would be inconsistent with the holding of the chair, and therefore, that the holder of the chair should choose one or the other. I emphasise again, before the whole of the people of South Australia, that the initial suggestion I made may, perhaps, have been inexpedient or an indiscretion, if you like, but surely it did not merit the application of a sledge hammer wielded in the dark."

ELDER CONSERVATORIUM.

CHAMBER MUSIC RECITAL.

The chamber music recital given in the Elder Hall last night was heard under changed conditions. The large and interested audience found seats arranged in a semi-circle and the Conservatorium string quartet, pianoforte, and assisting artists provided with a platform towards the centre of the floor space. It has been the subject of comment for some time that chamber music lost a great deal of its intimate charm and much tone and effect escaped when the players used the usual platform. The innovation was tested by several musicians, who changed from one part to another of the hall during the recital, and the conclusion was unanimous that greater intimacy was realised between the audience and the music performed. The sensation of echoes was absent, and every movement of the interpreters was under close scrutiny. It is still apparent, however, that the Elder Hall is not an ideally-constructed building with regard to acoustics, and that the Conservatorium String Quartet has yet to solve the problem of how best to overcome the situation.

The works chosen for this concert were by Haydn and Brahms. Mr. Charles Schilsky (first violin), Miss Kathleen Meegan (second violin), Miss Sylvia Whittington (viola), and Mr. Harold Parsons (violincello) were exponents of Haydn's "String quartet in F major," the four characteristic movements of which had been minutely regarded in the realm of gradations of tone and brightness, rhythm. With each succeeding performance the Conservatorium quartet gains in unanimity and understanding, elements which contributed largely to this particular number. Mr. William Silver was the pianist in Brahms' "Quintet in F minor," for piano and strings. It is a work of powerful and broad construction, the four movements being so widely contrasted and full of depth and meaning that they command interpretative skill and musical outlook of great breadth and vision. Throughout its course many Brahms moods were realised with striking clarity, notably in the turbulence of the Scherzo, the repose of the trio which followed, the beautiful introduction to the last movement, and the delicate texture of the first subject in the finale. Mr. Silver appeared to revel in the complex pianoforte part, to which he brought wide experience of technique, unerring skill, and judgment in tonal coloring.

Miss Hilda Gill, the assisting vocalist, sang the Brahms songs, "Gracious and kind art thou, my queen," and "Love song," both of which were carefully interpreted and replete with expressive tenderness. As customary, the popular contralto was asked for an addition, which was the same composer's "Slumber song," and proved highly acceptable. Mr. Harold Wyde was accompanist.

After having spent about 18 months in Great Britain and the Continent, where he went to do research work, Dr. R. F. Matters, youngest son of Cr. T. J. Matters of the Adelaide City Council will return to Adelaide from Sydney by boat next Friday. On the outbreak of war Dr. Matters joined the Australian Imperial Forces and served as a captain in the Army Medical Corps and the



DR. R. F. MATTERS.
who is expected to reach Adelaide on Friday from a trip abroad.

Artillery. On his return he practised at Woodside. While in London Dr. Matters visited several of the leading hospitals. In Edinburgh he took his F.R.C.S. degree. He then spent some time on the Continent, visiting Berlin, Vienna, and Switzerland. He has returned to Australia by way of America, where he visited many of the leading hospitals to obtain further information with regard to his special work. Dr. Matters is an old Prince Alfred Collegian. After leaving that college he studied at the Adelaide and Sydney Universities, completing his course at the latter. His father expects he will practise in Adelaide.