

## LITERATURE

One of the severest criticisms which is made of present-day Education, is that it fails to inculcate in our children, a real and abiding love of literature. To leave school without an increasing desire to read, is to be robbed of the joy of other worlds, to remain ignorant of other lives, a study of which provides us with a great incentive to well-being and well-doing. Such remain ignorant of a form of entertainment which never stales, and which is ever increasing in volume and in interest. Much is said of Adult Education; with a love of reading, Education is available to all; reading is its key. A man who reads educates himself. He is never at a loss as to how he shall spend a leisure hour. In itself therefore, a love of reading becomes both the vehicle of Adult Education, and at least a part solution of the problem of the leisure hour both for young and old.

*"Some there are who regard reading as a distraction from life; they read books as they drink coffee or chew gum, taking them as an opiate to take them out of themselves, and they have such pleasure as they deserve. But rightly considered, a book is an enhancement of, rather than a distraction from life. It helps us to see in life more beauty, more passion, more scope for our sympathy and interest than we saw before, and, in making us realize life more keenly, it helps us to realize ourselves. Therefore, I say, if you would find significance in the most trivial incidents, if you would see your fellows, not as a drove of meaningless creatures doing pointless things, but as actors in the most moving of all the dramas, the most fascinating of all peepshows, take with you as you go through life the great commentators and interpreters of life; take, in other words, your book."*—C. E. M. JOAD.

The educative influence of great literature is beyond question. If we are to be a great people, we must be readers of great literature. The reading of notable books is important from two national or collective points of view. For one thing it is indispensable if we are to have a sense of the vital continuity and solidarity of human effort. Any anarchic action or tendency is possible for a generation or society that divorces itself from the books that are the universally recognised embodiments and monuments of the effort of the past. On the other hand, only when widely animated by a knowledge of the past can a nation or a generation be counted upon to make those responsible adjustments to new conditions that are essential to real progress. In the second place the reading of great works is imperative if, as a people, we are ourselves to achieve that distinction in literary production that has been the mark of all great ages and great people.

*"Far more of our mistakes come from want of fresh knowledge than from want of correct reasoning; and, therefore, letters meet a greater want in us than does logic."*—MATTHEW ARNOLD.

**"We claim further that an English humanism, including the study of literature, of history, and of the language as an instrument of thought and expression, if made actual by being brought closely into touch with the main pre-occupations of the students, might go far not only to enable the education of the industrial worker, but also to bridge the gulf between industry and culture."**—Newbolt Report on the Teaching of English.

## THE CINEMA

The importance of the Cinema in Education has only just begun to receive general acknowledgment and then chiefly with relation to the so-called Educational Film. In the opinion of many competent authorities, however, the problem of the Cinematograph is the biggest one with which we have at present to deal, for it is obvious that no system of Education, providing only for school years, can ever hope to answer its challenge successfully. The Cinema emphasises and capitalises the weaknesses, abnormalities and falsities of human life, and these are the things which are persistently put before the child's mind, and which he therefore assumes, represent the average in the life of his elders and of those about him.

**At the present time the Cinema is one of the outstanding resources of the leisure hours of our people; consequently the problem of the Cinema is one which requires the most careful consideration of our entire citizenship.**

From the East too, startling accounts are received of the damage which is being done by the growth of the Cinema habit. It is now common for films to be shown which display the Western World in the worst possible light. In connection with this problem the British Prime Minister, Mr. Stanley Baldwin, speaking in London recently said: *"It is too early yet to say what the influence on civilisation of the moving picture may be, but I confess that . . . I look with the gravest apprehension upon the effect of the commoner type of film."*

Lord Newton, in the British House of Lords: *"During the war the Americans realised almost instantaneously that the Cinema was a heaven-sent method of advertising themselves, their country, their methods, their wares, their ideas and even their language, and they had seized on it as a method of persuading the whole world that America was really the only country that counted."*