

POOR DOCUMENT

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AMBASSADOR PLEADS FOR POLITICAL AND EDUCATIONAL STATESMANSHIP

Sir Auckland Geddes Says History Teaching in the Schools Makes Future Policies of Nations—Explains Progress Made by England.

Washington, June 4.—Pleading for both political and educational statesmanship that would make history teaching in the schools of all lands "fair and true and sympathetic to the real virtues of the great nations," Sir Auckland Geddes told the international session of the National Citizens' Conference that the "heart of the British public, made wonderfully sympathetic by the war, and shining through its department of education, is the organ which will protect and nourish the millions of young British 'guys' and will provide the axle upon which the great educational machine of its own creating will revolve at it shapes the future, not only of the people entrusted to its care, but also of the nation which it is my high privilege to represent here among you."

The Ambassador reviewed recent English developments in education in some detail, characterizing them as deeply significant for British democracy. He said: "The war showed us Britons many things in a new light and one of the most important things that we saw or thought we saw was that the old social order which has stood the test of time was not going to stand much longer, and that in order to make the transition from the old to the new possible without catastrophe we had to get busy first to bring every adult female as well as male into the circle of responsible citizens, next to do our utmost as speedily as possible to equip those citizens, or at all events the recruits to their numbers, with educated minds."

How System Was Changed.

"It was this thought that made Mr. Fisher, British Minister for Education, say in February, 1917: 'The Proclamation of Peace and Victory will summon us not to complacent repose, but to greater efforts for a more enduring victory. The future welfare of the nation depends upon its schools.'"

The Ambassador told how he and others in Parliament had set to work to modify the education laws to give the following results:

- (1) To extend the age of compulsory attendance without exemption to fourteen, or to fifteen or sixteen, by local by-law.
- (2) To provide for medical inspection and treatment and physical welfare before, through and after school to the age of eighteen.
- (3) To establish nursery schools for children between two and five or six.
- (4) To establish a system of compulsory continuation (part time) school attendance ultimately to eighteen.
- (5) To arrange for the promotion of poor but able pupils by a system of scholarships and maintenance grants past the higher rungs of the educational ladder in the hope that in the future the nation may have the best mental capacity of all its sons and daughters to draw on for its service, instead of having to content itself with such brains

but in countless ways in countless places facilities are being provided. Soon the situation will begin to clarify itself and as it clarifies will come a coherence that is still lacking."

Politics and Education

"After asserting that 'Britain is thoroughly democratized and its government is in fact more immediately and directly under the control of the people' than that of your country," Ambassador Geddes pointed out that the general and constant interest in politics colored all English educational practice.

"Education with us is tending to become less and less directed toward the conscious end of simply fitting a man to earn his daily bread," he said. "Man does not live for or by bread alone. He is a member of a family, a trade union, a club, a city, a nation, a church and every citizen, regardless of his social position or wealth, has claims which are prior to all economic claims on him—claims of opportunities to enable him to fulfill his manifold responsibilities as a member of widening social groups from the family to the community. His responsibilities are no less if he be a ship's riveter than if he were a naval architect. The locomotive fireman is no less a citizen than the railway director or the most wealthy railway shareholder."

The Spirit of Education

"There is, of course, a danger which has to be avoided through the spirit in which education is given. We all know (who does not?) the type of half-baked, half educated puppy, male and female, who from the pinnacle of doleful experience obtained between the age of twenty and twenty-five, looks down with pitying contempt on all the grown and hearty men who have dared to say a good word for life since the beginning of the world. Young prophets—and who that is young is not something of a prophet—tend to be prophets of woe, which they tell us can only be escaped by what we call revolution. Young thinkers, speakers and writers are apt to suffer most uncomfortably from possession by 'blue devils' which in bad cases they assure us can only be exercised by blood. This is no new phenomenon."

"The cultured mind is like a richly filled dye vat, and the object of education is to select the dyes. A moment's thought, and we can name four of them—courage, cheerfulness, sympathy and some humility. These are spiritual dyes, and there are also historical pigments which are so different that they are really of a different kind and should be thought of separately. To make any meaning plainer let me take an example from my own experience. Twenty more years ago there were two brothers, one largely educated in England, the other in Scotland. The English one, as a boy, hated and despised the French; the Scottish one, at the same time, admired and sentimentally loved them. Both minds were approximately equally cultured, but they were differently charged with color. This explanation is simple; for centuries England and France were enemies, Scotland and France allies. The school histories of England and Scotland reflected this,

and the result was as I have said. So you can pass through the whole range of the results of education, and you will find the same sort of thing true."

The "Color" of Education.

"Anyhow, beyond the machinery of education and the avowed purpose of education stands the color of education. As a matter of fact the most vitally interesting thing to foreigners in connection with any national education is this thing I call its color. It ultimately tells more to your state department than any other thing in the whole range of their manifold duties to know the color of the education being given in the British Empire, in France, in Germany, in all the countries of South America; yes, in all the countries of the world, for if your secretary of state knows, let us say the French color of education he will know well how that nation will be thinking ten years hence."

"Now, the present British educational color I can tell you something about. It is strangely anti-militarist, and is, as it has always been, intensely friendly to you. As a matter of fact it is almost too sentimental about you. It presents you so favorably as to misrepresent you slightly, and the result is the common people of England are apt to be surprised, perhaps even a little disappointed, when you are most yourselves, but at any rate it is a most friendly and appreciative color. I trust that nothing will ever happen to change its tint, but I would be less than candid if I did not say this:

Fair and True Perspective.

"The teachers of England are in the main young men whose minds have been ploughed and harrowed by the war. Their eyes see things less through a veil of tradition and custom, and if there ever were a time that could be fairly called anxious in this particular respect it is this time."

"Now is the day both for political and educational statesmanship so to think and so to act that the color of the historical education given in the schools of all lands is fair and true and sympathetic to the real virtues that every great nation possesses, and when it has to deal with their vices and backslidings, as it must (for every nation has black pages in its history), it should be that the perspective is kept true and fair and the extenuating circumstances honestly presented."

"There is still one thing more. Beyond the machinery effects of education, beyond its avowed purpose, beyond its spiritual, beyond its color, stands last, greatest and most precious of all, the color of the 'guys.' I used to tell my assistants to remember that these ten words of Walt Whitman's, 'Nothing, not God, is greater to one than oneself is,' contained, if they would only dip deep enough into them, all the low and the high, all the prospects for them to remember in relation to their pupils."

At the Yarmouth Y.M.C.A. Boys' Camp, held at Tuskett Falls in August, I found MINARD'S LINIMENT most beneficial for sunburn, an immediate relief for colic and toothache. ALFRED STOKES, General Secy.

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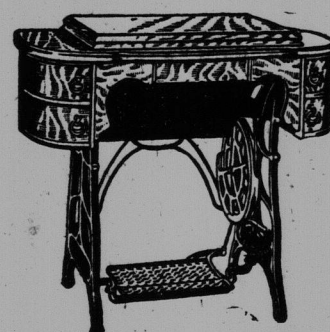
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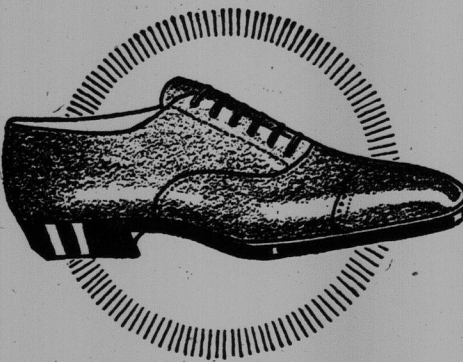
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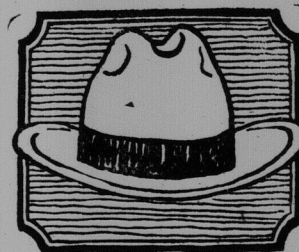
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