

But little thought has yet been given to Education in its relation to Leisure, though at the present time voices of great educationists are being raised in its behalf and it is becoming generally recognised that the great social problems and the vitiating social ills of our day have their origin in the leisure hours.

**"Second only to drink, the real cause of crime is the difficulty of  
"finding healthy recreation and innocent amusement for the young."**

So said the Lord Chief Justice of England recently. His Lordship's words bring home to us the urgency of rectifying one of the most outstanding deficiencies of present-day Education, corrective for which is, perhaps, more clearly seen in the English Public Schools and schools of a similar character in Canada and the other Dominions, notably Australia and New Zealand. In such schools, a wise and in general well balanced division of the days round between work and organised play so occupy the boy's waking hours that the minimum opportunity is found for the mischief generally attributed to the machinations of Satan against those with idle hands or mind unoccupied by worth-while interests and wholesome activities.

***The free hours of a large proportion of youths and adults are occupied with harmful and trifling pleasures. We must realise that it is when the young are idle that they form the habits which may later ruin their lives.***

**"Plato's ideal education is also ideal leisure. It is one unbroken human life for which we have to plan, in school, in industry, and in leisure, and if the environment of any one of these three be poisonous, it is the whole life that is poisoned."—M. V. HUGHES: "Citizens To Be."**

Modern machinery which is steadily displacing man in the production of man's material needs, is producing an ever increasing number of leisure hours, which in general have been or are being capitalised for commercial ends.

The educational and socializing advantages of manual labour and craftsmanship have in great measure been lost to man through the advent of the machine. An effort is being made to make good this loss, by a system of Adult Education, but at thirty or forty a man has lost much of his zest for Education as a process apart from the normal round of life. He cannot escape the machinery with which he earns his daily bread; how then can his leisure be made a source of both profit and pleasure, and provide him with that satisfaction in living which his mechanised work so completely fails to give. Herein lies the immensely important problem of Adult Education,—in itself the true "*accompaniment*" of life, only the opening chords of which are struck in the School-room.

*... An educated Nation is one that has learned to pursue its interests to the point of a true and catholic culture, to penetrate its prejudices until it has come at truth, and to discover that every man has a contribution to make to the great society in the service of which he attains to freedom.*

—BASIL YEAXLEE in "*An Educated Nation*"

**Play constitutes but a small fraction of leisure, and education must therefore concern itself with the provision and the enhancement of interests both for the child and the adult. It is in the stimulation of these interests that Education has so largely failed. Without "interests" life becomes dull and sordid and a breeding-ground of vice and selfishness. There must be interests, which only Education can give, "if" to use the words of Dr. Ernest Barker, "*men are to gain the faculty of using leisure easily, happily and fruitfully.*"**

Thus it is, that not only in adult life, but in childhood, Education must essentially be devised as a means to the right use of leisure. "*The wisdom of a learned man cometh by opportunity of leisure; and he that hath little business shall become wise.*" ECCLESIASTICUS: CHAP. 38, V. 24.