

"Education is entering upon a new era. If society is to meet that era half way, it will insist on having its best minds and greatest hearts in the schools where life is in the making. If parents are to do their part they must give more time and more thought to the great adventure of parenthood. If teachers are to rise to the new opportunities they must elevate the basic aims of education above grades and degrees in their own minds and in the minds of children and the general public. The basic aims, the great objectives of education abide. Methods change and the setting varies, but health is fundamental, the tools and technics of learning are necessary, citizenship is inescapable, service is a radiant star, home is man's great joy, leisure is liberty, and character is humanity's highest good."—JOY ELMER MORGAN, Editor of *"The Journal of the National Education Association"*.

The Conference organised by the National Council of Education and held in Toronto in 1923 had as its purpose the emphasizing of the essential relationship between Education and Life. The Speakers to this theme were men and women of wide experience in teaching, in educational administration and in public life.

It was generally conceded that the purpose of that Conference was in the main achieved. Contrary to the oft-reiterated definition of Education as a "preparation for life", the programme of the Conference was designed to, and did unquestionably sustain the contention that Education and Life are synonymous terms. Education IS Life, for it is both the ACCOMPANIMENT and the EXPERIENCE of Life.

Life it may be contended is divided into hours of work and hours of leisure. It has become a commonplace attitude of mind to consider Education almost wholly in terms of work and this in turn very largely of the hours of work normally assigned to the School,—in the aggregate, a comparatively small part of the child's waking time.

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.

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.

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.

"The child's life, says James Drever, "is largely play; play is his serious business. This is so because play is necessary for his development. He plays himself into the activities, the interests, and the duties of the adult in such a way that, when these activities, interests, and duties become serious, he is prepared to answer the call of the real world."

Dr. Marsh, speaking at Boston University, epitomises matters as follows:—

"Labour unrelieved by recreation produces fatigue, and fatigue produces hate, lawlessness and despair. Recreation undirected, unregulated, furtive, produces vice, degeneration, and helplessness. Play is the natural expression of all the inborn instincts. When a man is natural and at his best, it is his spirit that plays".