

that the right gores — about three hundred tons in all — should be embarked in the right ships, and the force was on board the fleet, anchored about five miles away from the harbor, soon after 5 P.M. The men, few of whom had had much chance of sleep since leaving England, at once volunteered to man some of the ship's guns at night, to give their chums at sea a stand-off; and they had a little shooting directly

The Cornhill Magazine

after we got under way; but that is another story.' The whole population of Ostend seemed to be on the jetties and along the sea front to cheer us, and we left our Belgian friends with much regret, little thinking that nearly four years of misery under the heavy hand of the Hun would be their lot before a force of Royal Marines landed again on the coast of Belgium — on the Mole at Zeebrugge.

DOES EDUCATION MEAN HAPPINESS?

It is a specious and a shallow saying of the conservative thinker that to make the many wise is but to multiply misery. To fill a man doomed to navvy's toil or the dullest routine with Platonic dreams and liberal aspirations is to mock his chains. Why bring beauty to the caged clerk and leave him to mourn her violation? Did not those very Greek philosophers, of whom our sentimental Democrats are apt to discourse so fondly and so ineptly, segregate the herd of artisans from the fair and fine? They knew well the truth which Pope rhymed later for our guidance, that short draughts from the Pierian spring are the most fatal intoxicants, that culture to be culture at all must be complete, and that the learned illiterate is the most hapless of beings.

Thus the argument runs and those who, in Lord Morley's striking phrase, hold 'a vested interest in darkness,' are only too eager to use this screen against the insurgent rays. Many and various are the answers made to the charge, and yet another is forthcoming in a little book of recent publication. Mr. Harold Begbie in his *Living Waters*

(Headley Bros.) has jotted down a series of interviews with workers of many types, a clerk, a doorkeeper, a collier, a Leeds Bolshevik, a Birmingham Ruskinian, all of whom describe for him the invasion of thought and learning into their souls. It is a plea for the energies of the Workers' Educational Association, a journalist's plea if you will; but the interest of the book lies in the revelations of the talkers rather than in the comments of the listener. And so far from supporting the conservative assertion that book-learning brings only misery to those in poverty, the general verdict justifies adult education on grounds that would satisfy the strictest utilitarian. For those men, at any rate, communion with the wisdom of the ages and the beauty of the world has not made their workaday lives intolerable. Rather has it so widened their gaze and increased their responsiveness that only by this communion can life be endured. Their ignorance was never bliss: their wisdom has never been folly. The Pierian spring has quenched a raging thirst and brought happiness

without frenzy, joy without reaction.

The word education suggests always to the British mind something hard and unlovable. Mention the word and we visualize a dreary room, bare forms, meaningless maps, and textbooks of jejune erudition, mere compendia of trivialities. That dread adjective 'educative,' clumsy and cacophonous, brings with it shuddering memories and dark imaginings: we think of stories with a high moral tone, topographical cinema films, lectures on the ant, and football for character's sake. Of all nations we are most apt to call whatever we are doing our duty and to frown on any admission that we are enjoying it. It is typical of our ingrained Puritanism that we are always stressing the ethical side of education, never the hedonistic. Small wonder that education is unpopular, for there is nothing the public schoolboy hears more of and more heartily detests than the eternal chatter about character. If he is always being told that the object of his cricket is not the thrill of a well-timed drive nor the ecstasy of bowling an unplayable over, but the splendor of combination and 'playing the game,' if Virgil is presented to him not as poetry but as a mental gymnasium, wherein the difficulty and drudgery will bring out his perseverance, he will soon be equally exasperated with compulsory athletics and compulsory *Aeneid*. The utilitarians made a tremendous assault on the permanent British assumption that happiness is something to be ashamed of, and in the end they failed. The assumption stands, and nowhere more firmly than in the class-room. We must seek truth to be good: we must seek truth to be rich and to be respectable; but we must never seek it to be happy.

Yet against the conservative argument that education, save for the elect,

is a short cut to misery and against the ascetic argument that happiness being a snare should never be the goal of education, the results achieved by the W.E.A. are a permanent refutation. Once and for all it has been proved that the quest and capture of truth has been a source of real and abiding pleasure, not only to the academic few strutting it in some riverside hencoop of the Muses, but also to the nameless many, colliers and clerks, weavers and wives, snatching half-hours in seemingly impossible conditions in order to fling their net upon the flying joy. The case for the playing-fields of Eton does not rest upon the hope that the future administrators of the Empire will never do what is 'not cricket.' Nor does the case for extending adult education rest upon such grim phrases as 'betterment,' 'purer social order,' 'amelioration of existing conditions.' True, these things matter; but the cases rest fundamentally upon a simpler and a nobler word, Happiness.

It may seem strange to the academic mind that the pursuit of knowledge and of truth as something good in itself should need any justification. Yet such a defense is gravely needed. Education is in danger to-day because it is being so much belauded. Its praises are sung in Philistia and reëchoed in the cities of men. We must seek truth and ensue it, but not as an end. We must study history in order to be better imperialists, we must study science to increase production, we must study languages to control new markets and engineering to 'speed up' anything that is not already rattling itself to death. Education is becoming popular. We are at last setting out to capture truth, and we may end by merely capturing trade.

Technical education is necessary, and no balanced critic would disparage it. Ethical education is necessary and

no sane citizen would see it banish. But most necessary now, because most neglected, is truth for truth's sake. Let us not in our commercial ambition and moral zeal forget the joy of knowledge. And what a creative joy it is! A knowledge of history may seem dull enough; yet it can turn a few odd hours in some old English town from a boredom to a pilgrimage of pleasure. Give but a slender pile of facts and a mere spark of imagination, and what a flaming beacon may not be kindled by things so common as an old earth fort, a Roman road, a Norman castle, some pots and pans, a harbor of the old adventurers, a town of the mediæval woolmen forgotten in the western wolds. It needs but a little history to set the plainest things teeming with suggestion and to render them fruitful in ideas. Science we may need to be civilized, but also to be happy. A country walk may be good enough with its gift of air and health, but it becomes an infinitely richer thing when the secret of the birds and the flowers, the reasons for their coming and going, the chart of their seasons and the conditions of their flourishing are known to the passer-by. Then not only are the senses medicined with the sleepy charms of the air, but every glade becomes an adventure, the movement of every beast a challenge to further understanding. Who has dipped into the lore of the earth finds gold in every quarry: who has read the ways of the birds finds joy unspeakable when by his own espionage he can disprove the wisdom of the books and yet add another pebble to the pyramid of truth. Pedantry kills: the classifying specialist with his hoard of specimens and musty Latinity is the very miser of mental treasure, mistaking in true miser's fashion the sorry means for the noble end. But ignorance is not a whit better. Creative knowledge, fact kindling fancy—here lies the form and

body of culture and this true education brings.

Never was there a time when men were more busily scheming and dreaming for the future: never, therefore, a time when men should have a clearer knowledge of the end they desire and be less easy prey to catchword and confusion. Big words are on every lip and big ideals in every mind. Only let them be clear. We talk of happiness and welfare: let us have them clearly defined. If happiness be the emotional companion of free functioning in response to the call of normal instinct and desire, if it be the by-product of unrepressed energy and balanced self-determination, then the happiness we aim at must include the free activities of the mind. Knowledge and thought must be recognized as being as essential to life as food and movement: they must be treasured as ends, not as means. Thus education will be released from its ancillary position. No longer will the teacher be one who only opens the road to riches and position, or even to the negative virtue of 'good form': he will no longer create only paths to the good life; but the good life itself. He will show to all and sundry that, be their handicraft what it may, there is a pleasure of knowledge and a happiness in understanding. He will recognize that while education is concerned with making efficient workers and competent citizens, its highest function is the creation of good and happy men. And happiness can exist only in individuals. Call the State what you will, organism or mechanism, person or fiction, godhead or devil: it remains a collection of individuals, and all the philosophy of the world will not make it otherwise. The end being happiness, and happiness being free activity, the individuals of the truly great community will seek truth and love it as naturally as they seek food

and sleep and life itself. Truth, in Milton's simile, is ever born a bastard into this world, hated and despised. There are many still to revile her, many to crush her: but among the legions of the oppressed there are some, it seems, who, outcasts themselves, have made friends of this outcast and found her

The Nation

company enchanting. They sought her for no gain, nay, even lost by the search. But they were faithful, and perhaps they will soon have many followers; and small wonder when men learn that she, who once seemed most drab and most severe of maidens, is in reality most radiant and kindly.

A PLAY BY PAUL CLAUDEL*

POSTERITY, it has been said, begins at the frontier, because those contemporary writers who are read and admired by foreigners as well as by their fellow countrymen are likely to possess qualities that will make them live. If this be true, M. Paul Claudel can count upon posthumous renown. His name has become known within the last few years to many people outside the borders of his native land, and at least three of his books have been presented to the English-speaking public by American translators. But he is as yet far from being as widely known as I believe he deserves, and if I venture to suggest that, with the exception of M. Anatole France, a writer who is the antithesis of him in almost every possible respect, there is nobody now using the French language with greater dignity and force, I trust that a majority of those acquainted with M. Claudel's writings will acquit me of exaggeration.

A few years before the war, M. Paul Claudel was, even in his own country, almost unknown to the general public. He had, it is true, a certain number of enthusiastic admirers who held that he

was a man of genius. That, however, was not without precedent, above all in France, where the younger generation always knocks with such vehemence at the door that the probability is that a writer of a new school who is not proclaimed a genius by some literary group or other, can be credited with the possession of very little talent indeed. But in M. Claudel's case, there was the unusual fact that he appeared genuinely desirous of escaping public notice. His first books were published in limited editions and without their author's name, and it was not until the appearance of *Connaissance de l'Est* in 1907 — a work that gave expression to the peculiar and intense mystery by which he was affected in the Far East, where he held a position in the French Consular Service — that the band of his admirers began to increase. This was followed by a couple of very remarkable plays, *L'Annonce faite à Marie* and *L'Otage*, and since the war he has published a few volumes of verse. His whole work is steeped in mysticism. It presents and emphasizes the Catholic and Royalist aspect of traditional France; and the French religious revival, which was one of the results of the war, probably accounts

* *Le Pain Dur: Drame en Trois Actes*. By Paul Claudel. Paris: Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 3fr. 50.