

dilemma. Sooner or later, for example, the problem of reparations and the Ruhr imbroglio will come up in the conference and the Dominion delegates will be invited to expound their views.

Today western Canada has just reaped a crop which, although rust has slightly impaired its quality, is the most abundant in its history. Yet the movement of grain out of Montreal in September has this year declined to one-half of the volume shipped in September 1922, the buying demand from Europe is weak, the crop as it pours down from the prairies is piling up at the head of the Great Lakes, and prices, already too low, are, as a glut develops, falling on the Winnipeg Grain Exchange to the dismay of the whole farming and mercantile community. And why? Because France has for the last three years pursued a policy which has made impossible the economic recovery of Europe and has left its population unable to pay prices for grain which will give the Canadian farmer any margin of profit. Yet the press of Quebec, possibly under the impulse of judicious subsidies from Paris, has, with the notable and honorable exception of M. Henri Bourassa's *Le Devoir*, been a unit in support of French policy, just as practically the whole press of English-speaking Canada has been a unit in criticizing it. Furthermore Senator Dandurand, the government leader in the Senate, not long ago made an eloquent speech eulogizing M. Poincaré and French policy, and other important politicians on the Liberal side have been equally cordial to that statesman.

When, however, the Dominion delegates are invited to express their views upon these arresting problems, what is Mr. King to say? Is he to risk offending Quebec, which has been educated to believe that M. Poincaré deserves the support of every human being of French blood, by backing Mr. Baldwin in his plans to checkmate him, or is he to refuse countenance to these plans and thereby expose himself to the charge that he is damaging the material interests of Canada? The Ruhr question indeed provides an acid test of the different attitudes of Canadian groups to international problems. The national isolationists hold that it can be neglected with impunity and that France should not be interfered with, while the advocates of Canadian cooperation in the tasks of the British Commonwealth want Canadian influence to be vigorously exercised in favor of an equitable settlement which will permit the restoration of indispensable markets. The British government must be profoundly disturbed at the portent of the policy of "benevolent aloofness" which many of his supporters prescribe for Mr. King, but if it is developed at the conference they will of a certainty sit back and allow Mr. Bruce of Australia, or Mr. Massey of New Zealand to challenge it. Mr. King will then resort to a Fabian policy and plead that he must consult his Parliament. To it, and thence to the Canadian electorate the decision will be shifted, and the result may be a bitter election, a healthful realignment in Canada's political life, and a dangerous internal crisis for the British Commonwealth.

J. A. STEVENSON.

## The Great Discovery:

### *Sanderson and the New Spirit in Education*

WHEN Sanderson first came to Oundle his ideas seem to have differed from the normal scholastic opinion of his time mainly in his conviction of the interestingness and attractiveness of real scientific work for many types of boys whom the established classical and stylistic mathematical teaching failed to grip. He developed these new aspects of school work and his earliest success lay in the fact that he got a higher percentage of boys interested and active in school work than was usual elsewhere and that the report of this and the report of his wholesome and stimulating personality spread into the world of anxious parents. But it early became evident to him that the new subjects necessitated methods of handling in vivid contrast to the methods stereotyped for the classical and mathematical courses.

There have been three chief phases in the history of educational method in the last five centuries, the phase of compulsion, the phase of com-

petition, and the phase of natural interest. They overlap and mingle. Mediaeval teaching being largely in the hands of celibates, who had acquired no natural understanding of children and young people and who found them extremely irritating, irksome or exciting, was stupid and brutal in the extreme. Young people were driven along a straight and narrow road to a sort of prison of dusty knowledge by teachers about as distressed as themselves. The mediaeval school went on to the chant of rote-learning with an accompaniment of blows, insults and degradations of the dunce-cap type. The Jesuit schools, to which the British public schools owe so much, sought a human motive in vanity and competition; they turned to rewards, distinctions and competitions. Sir Francis Bacon recommends them justly as the model schools of his time. The class-list with its pitiless relegation of two-thirds of the class to self-conscious mediocrity and dufferdom was the symbol of this

second, slightly more enlightened phase. The school of the rod, gave place to the school of the class-list.

By the end of the eighteenth century school-masters were beginning to realize what most mothers know by instinct, that there is in all children a curiosity, a drive to know, an impulse to learn, that is available for educational ends and has still to be properly exploited for educational ends. It is not within our present scope to discuss Pestalozzi, Froebel and the other great pioneers in the third phase of education. Nearly all children can be keenly interested in some subject and there are some subjects that appeal to nearly all children. Directly you cease to insist upon a particular type of achievement in a particular line of attainment, directly your school gets out of the narrow lane and moves across open pasture, it goes forward of its own accord. The class-list and the rod, so necessary in the dusty fury of the lane, cease to be necessary. In the effective realization of this Sanderson was a pioneer.

For a time he let the classical and literary work of the school run on upon the old competition-compulsion, class-list lines. For some years he does not seem to have realized the possibility of changes in these fields. But from the first in his mechanical teaching and very soon in mathematics, the work ceased to have the form of a line of boys all racing to acquire an identical parcel of knowledge, and took on the form more and more of clusters of boys surrounding an attractive problem. There grew up out of the school science a periodic display, the Science *Conversazione*, in which groups of youngsters displayed experiments and collections they had cooperated to produce. Later on a Junior *Conversazione* developed. These *Conversazioni* show the Oundle spirit in its most typical expression. Sanderson derived much from the zeal and interest these groups of boys displayed. He realized how much finer and how much more fruitful was the mutual stimulation of a common end than the vulgar effort for a class place. The clever boy under a class-list system loves the shirker and the dullard who make the running easy, but a group of boys working for a common end display little patience with shirking. The stimulus is much more intimate and it grows. Jones minor is told to play up, exactly as he is told to play up in the playing field.

In the summer term the *Conversazione* in its fully developed form took up a large part of the energy of the school. Says the official life:

All the senior boys in the school were eligible for this work, the only qualification necessary being a willingness to work and to sacrifice some, at least, of one's free time. There was never any dearth of willing workers, the total number often exceeding two hundred. The chief divisions of the *Conversazione* were: Physics and Mechanics; Chemistry; Biology; and Workshops. A boy who volunteered to help was left free to choose which branch he would adopt. Having chosen, he gave his

name to the master in charge; if he had any particular experiment in view, he mentioned it, and if suitable, it was allotted to him. If he had no suggestion, an experiment was suggested, and he was told where information could be obtained. As a general rule two or three boys worked together at any one experiment.

Some of the experiments chosen required weeks of preparation; there was apparatus to be made and fitted up, information to be sought and absorbed, so that on the final day an intelligent account could be given to any visitor watching the experiment. This work was all done out of school hours. Four or five days before Speech Day, ordinary school lessons ceased for those taking part in the *Conversazione*; the laboratories, classrooms and workshops were portioned out so that each boy knew exactly where he was to work, and how much space he had. The setting up of the experiments began. To any one visiting the school on these particular days it must have seemed in a state of utter confusion, boys wandering about in all directions apparently under no supervision, and often to all appearances with no purpose. A party might be met with a jam-jar and fishing-net near the river; others might be found miles away on bicycles, going to a place where some particular flower might be found. Three or four boys would appear to be smashing up an engine and scattering its parts in all directions, while others could be seen wheeling a barrow-load of bricks or trying to mix a hod of mortar. Gradually a certain amount of order appeared, some experiments were tried and found to work satisfactorily, others failed, and investigation into the cause of failure had to be carried out. As the final day approached excitement increased, frantic telegrams were sent to know, for example, if the liquid air had been despatched, frequent visits to the railway-station were made in the hopes of finding some parcel had arrived, sometimes it was even necessary to motor to Peterborough to pick up material which otherwise would arrive too late. A program giving a short description of the experiment or exhibit had to pass through the printer's hands. At last everything would be ready; occasionally, but very seldom, an experiment had to be abandoned or another substituted at the last moment.

Presently Sanderson began to apply the lessons he had learned from grouping boys for scientific work to literature and history. Most of us can still recall the extraordinary dreariness of school literature teaching; the lesson that was a third-rate lecture, the note-taking, the rehearsal of trite opinions about books unread and authors unknown, the horrible annotated editions, the still more horrible textbooks of literature. Sanderson set himself to sweep all this away. A play, he held, was primarily to be played, and the way to know and understand it was to play it. The boys must be cast for parts and learn about the other characters in relation to the one they had taken. Questions of language and syntax, questions of interpretation, could be dealt with best in relation to the production. But most classes had far too many boys to be treated as a single theatrical company, so small groups of boys were cast for each part. There would be three or four Othellos, three or four Desdemonas or Iagos. They would act their parts simultaneously or successively. The thing

might or might not ripen into a chosen cast giving a costume performance in public. The important thing is that the boys were brought into the most active contact possible with the reality of the work they studied. The groups discussed stage "business" and gestures and the precise stress to lay on this or that phrase. The master stood like a producer in the auditorium of the Great Hall. Let any one compare the vitality of that sort of thing with the ordinary lessons from an annotated textbook.

The group system was extended with increasing effectiveness into more and more of the literary and historical work. Here the school library took the place of the laboratory and was indeed as necessary to the effective development of the group method. The official life of Sanderson gives a typical scheme of operations pursued in the case of a form studying the period 1783-1905. The subject was first divided up into parts, such as the state of affairs preceding the French Revolution; the French Revolution in relation to England; the industrial system and economic problems generally; and so on. The form divided up into groups and each group selected a part or a section of a part for its study. The objective of each group was the preparation of a report, illustrated by maps, schedules and so forth, upon the section it had studied. After a preliminary survey of the whole field under the direction of a master, each boy followed up the particular matter assigned to him by individual reading for a term, supplemented when necessary by consultation with the master. Then came the preparation of maps and other material, the assembling of illuminating quotations from the books studied, the drafting of the group's report, the discussion of the report. In some cases where the group was in disagreement there would be a minority report.

It might be thought that the departmentalizing of the subject among groups would mean that the knowledge would accumulate in pockets, but this was not the case. A boy who has been preparing maps of the Napoleonic military campaigns may find the liveliest interest in another who has been following the history of the same period from the point of view of sea power. There was indeed a very considerable amount of interchange and when it came to facing external examiners and testing the general knowledge attained, the Oundle boys were found to compare favorably with boys who had been drummed in troops through complete histories of the chosen period.

This group system of work had arisen naturally out of the conditions of the new laboratory teaching and it had been developed for the sake of its educational effectiveness, but as it grew it became more and more evident to Sanderson that its effects went far beyond mere intellectual attainment. It marked a profound change in the spirit of the school. It was not only that the spirit of

cooperation had come in. That had already been present on the cricket and football fields. But the boys were working to make something or to state something and not to gain something. It was the spirit of creation that now pervaded the school.

And he perceived too that the boys he would now be sending out into the world must needs carry that creative spirit with them and play a very different part from the ambitious star boys who went on from a training under the older methods. They would play an as yet incalculable part in redeeming the world from the wild orgy of competition that was now afflicting it. In one of his very characteristic sermons he gave his ripened conception of this side of his work. He had been speaking, perhaps with a certain idealization, of the old craftsmen's guilds. The school, he declared, was to be no longer an arena but a guild. For what was a guild?

A community of co-workers and no competition, that was its idea. It is all based on the system of apprenticeships and co-workers. The apprentices helped the masters in every way they could; even the masters were grouped together for mutual assistance and were called assistants. The company was a mystery or guild of craftsmen and dealers, and their aim was to produce good craftsmen and good dealers.

Today in these days of renaissance we return to the aim and methods of the guilds. Boys are to be apprentices and master-workers and co-workers. In a community this needs must be. We are called to a definite work, all who are privileged to attend here, staff and boys alike—the work of infusing life into the boys committed to our care. Nor can any one stand out of this and seek work elsewhere. Nemesis sets in for all who try to live for themselves alone. They may try to work—but their work is sterile. The community calls for the energies and activities of all. We are beginning to learn something of what this means. It does not mean an abandonment of the best methods of the past. But it does mean that we have to concern ourselves with the pressing needs and problems of today, and join in the work.

The working of these ideas is well seen already in the outdoor life of the school. We see it in the new work in the library, and we see it as clearly as in anything in the preparation for a *Conversazione*. No more valuable training can be given than this last, well worth all the many kinds of sacrifice it entails. From it, at any rate, the spirit of competition is, I think, altogether removed. Boys, we believe, set forth to do their work as well as they possibly can—but not to beat one another. . . . I dwell upon these things because we hope that all boys will become workers at last, with interest and zeal, in some part of the field of creation and inquiry, which is the true life of the world. It is from such workers, investigators, searchers, the soul of the nation is drawn. We will first of all transform the life of the school, then the boys, grown into men—and girls from their schools grown into women—whom their schools have enlisted into this service, will transform the life of the nation and of the whole world.

H. G. WELLS.

(To be continued)



# From the Oklahoma Front

THE great Ku Klux war in Oklahoma has come to at least a temporary lull. Both sides have abandoned the appeal to armed force which had made it seem likely that the election day last week would turn the state into a battlefield; and the scene of the fight has now been transferred to the courts. Governor Walton, smashing defeated by the voters on the question whether the legislature should be empowered to meet on its own call, to impeach him, has secured a temporary order preventing the state election board from certifying the returns, and will follow this with an attempt to have the courts declare the vote illegal.

But even if he wins on this point, he is reprieved only until December 6. When he sought to prevent the election of October 2, he announced a vote on the same question for the later date. It seems certain that on that day or any other, last week's verdict will be repeated. The state assembly will then meet and impeach him; the Senate will try him; and if even one-fifth of the charges against him should be proved, he will be dismissed from office and his political career will sputter ingloriously out.

Meanwhile, the state remains as it has been for weeks past, an armed camp. That bloodshed has been averted thus far seems more and more a miracle, the longer one studies the situation. Both sides in this quarrel which has split the state from top to bottom, as the border states were split during our Civil War, have literally thousands of armed men at their command. The hotel lobbies swarm with members of the Governor's Praetorian Guard of gunmen, of whom he boasts (probably with some exaggeration) that he has 22,000. In the secret bars where corn-liquor flows as freely as ever it did when Volstead was just somebody from Minnesota, it is the delight of these gentlemen to stir their drinks with the barrels of the six-shooters which by their own confession they use so happily and well.

In the confused and complex situation in Oklahoma a few important facts need to be made clear. They are:

1. Governor Walton is fighting the Ku Klux Klan, and it needs to be fought. It has attained greater control in his state than in any other except perhaps Texas. It includes in its ranks scores of state, county and municipal officials, and unquestionably has a majority of the present lower house of the legislature. It is in politics for all it is worth—and there are no limits to its ambitions.

2. On the other hand, it is impossible to believe that Governor Walton is sincere in his fight, or that it is anything else than a political weapon with which

to recuperate his shattered prestige at home and perhaps create for himself a national reputation. His hostility to the hooded gentry is both extremely sudden, and extremely recent; and was preceded by an attitude far from antagonistic. There is excellent evidence that he himself once took the first step toward membership in the Klan, his application being rejected. When an anti-Klan bill was introduced into the legislature, his adherents—then both numerous and powerful—gave it no support (it received, in fact, but three votes). Most of the brutal acts of Klan members which he has recently made public were committed from a year to two years ago, whereas the Governor's campaign is a tropical summer growth of the past few months.

3. The progressive farmer-labor group which put Walton in office has turned against him almost to a man, and is aiding the fight for his impeachment.

4. It must be admitted, however, that this is in its central impetus a Ku Klux fight. Without the strength of the Invisible Empire it probably could never have been won.

5. A majority of the plain people of the state are unquestionably against both Walton and the Klan. At the moment, they regard the Governor as the worse evil, and are aiding the Klan's effort to unseat him. But with Walton out of the way, I believe an anti-Klan movement will start among the common citizens. I believe such a movement has a good chance of electing a legislature which will pass an "unmasking" law and thereby destroy the Klan's greatest source of power.

To understand the complicated tangle of Oklahoma affairs, it is necessary to know something of the state itself. Socially, it is a curious mixture of the old South, the pioneer West, and hustling modern Rotary Club Babbittism. It has been a state only since 1907 and retains many of the crudities of territorial days. Its first settlers were tenant-farmers from the South, who rented land from the Indians. Their children, legally barred from the redmen's schools, found learning almost impossible, and this handicap is reflected in conditions even today. Only six states spend less per capita on their schools; none has a poorer average attendance.

While the farm population has lived from hand to mouth and for the past year or two has been virtually beggared, the discovery of oil in the state has brought enormous riches to another element in the community (including, by the way, many Indians who had been thrust aside upon the arid land which was erroneously thought to be worthless). The oil fields have duplicated many of the conditions of the gold rush days in the old West—particularly, open and flagrant gambling, drunkenness and prostitution. Highway robbery, which is affectionately known to Oklahomans as "hijacking," has also flourished.

It has been, in short, a society where the strong