



Charlotte Mason's House of Education,
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

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P.N.E.U. NOTES.

Edited by Miss F. NOËL ARMFIELD, Sec., 26, Victoria Street, S.W.
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To whom all Hon. Local Secs. are requested to send reports of all matters of interest connected with their branches, also 6 copies of any prospectuses or other papers they may print.

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NEW BRANCHES.

The Executive Committee has been approached with a view to starting Branches in the following places:—

BRADFORD.

CARDIFF.—Names may be sent to Mrs. Hamilton, Blackladies, Dynas Powis.

DUNFERMLINE.—Mrs. Beveridge, Pitreavie, Dunfermline, would be glad to hear from people interested.

NOTTINGHAM.

SURBITON.

SWANSEA.

Readers of the *Parents' Review* living in these districts, or having friends there, are asked to communicate with Miss Armfield, 26, Victoria Street, S.W.

BELGRAVIA.—The lectures given last month were five consecutive addresses by the Rev. S. Northcote, on "Religious Education." As the basis of this series the lecturer took the Gospel of St. Mark. On January 18th, he treated "The Messiah and the Kingdom of God." On January 25th, "The Attitude of our Lord to the Law." On February 1st, "The Paradoxes of our Lord." On February 8th, "Founding the Church." On February 15th, "The Miracles of our Lord." The attendance was ten at the first lecture, and rose to sixteen for the following ones. The suggestions, especially on the more difficult points of the Gospels, were admirable, lucid, and terse, lifting the teaching of religion into a wonderful spiritual atmosphere. After each address Mr. Northcote very kindly answered questions about individual difficulties, and recommended various books for study.

BRIGHTON.—The P.N.E.U. membership is now considerably over one hundred. In November last, Dr. Colman interested a large company, gathered under the hospitable roof of our ever kind President, Lady Louise Loder, on "Brain Development in Infancy and Childhood," the one drawback being that the lecturer stopped short too quickly and left many desiring to know more.—In January those specially interested in the development of artistic feeling in colour and form, and manipulation, were delighted with Miss Marion Thompson, of Ealing, who proved herself to be not merely a lover of art for its own sake, but a sympathetic and true teacher of little ones, as well as older children.—On Wednesday, February 8th, we met again, by kind invitation of our esteemed Vicar and Mrs. Hoskyns, at the Vicarage to hear Lady Battersea speak upon "Some Duties of Women." Every chair in the room

was occupied, and for an hour we listened with undiminished attention. The quiet hush that frequently passed over us as well as fervid and spontaneous applause during Lady Battersea's faithful and loving address, showed that she was followed by an earnest and responsive company.—Our next meeting takes up the ever seasonable and enticing subject of music, how it should be cultivated and acquired.

BRISTOL.—On Tuesday, Feb. 14th, at the Kensington School of Art, Berkeley Square, Mrs. Spencer Curwen lectured on her Pianoforte Method to a crowded audience, numbers being unable to gain admittance. The chair was taken by Mrs. Glazebrook. Mrs. Spencer Curwen calls her method a practical course of the elements of music. By the elements is meant the things that everybody ought to know about music; all about pitch and its notation; rhythm and its notation; all about scale formation and key relationship. Then there are other things about which we want to give right first principles, and sufficient facts to establish them—these are harmony, transposition and musical form. The well-taught pupil should know all these things by the age of fourteen. The great aim and object of pianoforte teaching is not necessarily pianoforte playing. Much time is wasted in this alone. The aim of pianoforte teaching is threefold—(1) to make intelligent readers; (2) to make intelligent listeners; and (3) to discover the possible performer. How are these things to be pursued? (1) Each musical fact is taught through the ear—the only way music can reach the mind; (2) notation is taught by using it from the beginning as a means of expressing what the ear hears; (3) theory is not treated as a thing separate or separable from practice; (4) the elements are separated, rhythm and pitch are taught separately and then combined; and (5) the method has this distinctive feature, that it deals with the pupil through the teacher. The lecture was illustrated by children aged from seven to twelve years of age, who did very clever work in dictation exercises in rhythm and pitch separately, and then in these combined, so as to write a real melody chosen from a book of songs by one of the audience.

BRONDESBURY AND WEST HAMPSTEAD.—The fourth meeting of the session was held on Tuesday, Jan. 24th, at Surrey House, Shootup Hill (by invitation of Mrs. George). In the absence of the President, the chair was taken by Dr. George. Miss Alice Woods, Principal of the Maria Grey Training College, and one of the Vice-Presidents of this Society, read a paper on "Hopes and Fears for the Education of the Future." There were 23 persons present, including some visitors. The paper was followed by conversation and the meeting closed with votes of thanks to Miss Woods, and to Dr. and Mrs. George.

CROYDON.—At a meeting on January 27th, of this branch, held at the High School (by kind permission of Miss Leahy), in the course of an interesting paper on "Some Educational Reformers," Miss Nesbitt traced the gradual broadening out of the educational idea, from the philosophy of Plato to the kindergarten of Froebel. Plato's parable of the men in the dark cavern who were only able to see shadows for substances, was the keynote of the paper. The true philosopher attains the heights where shadows become substances, but his usefulness to mankind depends upon his capacity for helping those who are still groping in the cavern of shadows. A high ideal is the true basis of all reform, though, as Miss Nesbitt pointed out in her references to the reformers of the anti-renaissance period, those earlier reformers were often more successful than the later ones, because they pursued a practical ideal and did not lose their way in the thorny search for a guiding philosophy. Charlemagne, King Alfred, John Sturm, Pestalozzi, Froebel,

and Rousseau were among the reformers Miss Nesbitt dealt with, and Pestalozzi was especially dwelt upon as the first reformer to realize the importance of parental training and the individual study of the child-mind.

GLASGOW.—On Thursday, February 2nd, at 15, Woodside Terrace (by kind permission of Mr. and Mrs. R. S. Allan), Professor Arthur Thomson, of Aberdeen, addressed the members on "The other side of heredity." Beginning by a reference to the old-world fables of the three Fates, or the three Norns, believed to govern human destinies irrevocably and irresistibly, the eloquent lecturer found their modern counterpart in the three sides of the biological prism—heredity, function and environment. Function is simply the action and interaction between the organism and its environment. The lecturer said heredity is the relation of continuity between successive generations and potency of nurture controls hereditary nature. The parent is as much the trustee as the producer of the child. Children approximate to the average, even if born of extraordinarily good or extraordinarily bad stock. Appropriate environment is necessary for the young life. Certain limits of nurture are in our own keeping. Each parent only contributes a quarter of the heritage, each grandparent an eighth and so on. Even where a taint is inherited, it may not find expression. The lecturer earnestly impressed on all that nurture cannot be begun too early. A new life always shows a new crystallisation of qualities. The child may be compared to Mowgli, emerging from the forest with a bundle of sticks on his back. It is only gradually that the shapeless bundle assumes a definite form, partly by external accident, but partly by adjustment, as the fixed character is developed. The balance of talents can be adjusted by nurture. The lecturer here referred to the danger of too soon fixing down the young life to some one career or object. A child is a unified mosaic of inherited qualities. Inheritance is the basis of the fundamental self, from which nurture may evolve a different self. Control of nurture may foster or repress hereditary tendencies. In conclusion, the lecturer compared the child's inheritance to the inflorescence of the wild forget-me-not, with its heterogeneous buds, many of which may never be developed at all. New buds should have a chance and not be rashly nipped.

REIGATE.—The annual meeting was held on Feb. 6th, at "Ivanhoe" (by kind permission of Mrs. Jas. Powell). The annual report stated that the year 1904 had been in every way a prosperous one for the branch. The number of members showed a steady increase, the meetings had been largely attended, and the objects of the Union had been advanced. The Rev. H. A. Dalton gave an address on "Discipline." The training of character he dwelt upon at some detail, and said it could not be acquired in an instant; it must be formed by careful process. The discipline of character was not only necessary for the young, but grown-up people had not only to administer and teach it, but to learn it themselves. There was a real need that this careful and irksome training should be insisted upon. He ventured to think that there were many parents who were inclined to shirk the necessity of discipline, as they had an idea that discipline meant severity and unkindness; that was, he believed, a danger of the times. Love was not self-indulgence but self-sacrifice, and the child would never learn to love unless he learnt to control himself, and he would never control himself unless he was controlled by his parents. They should make a stand against the growing tendency of want of respect and courtesy on the part of children to grown-up people. The rev. gentleman warned parents of the danger of favouritism. He knew it was very difficult to avoid that feeling of affection

which put a person in the position of being a favourite, but it was a very dangerous thing to adopt in the training of a child; it was utterly bad for the favoured child, and also for the child who was less favoured. They must have sympathy, and it should be remembered just as justice did not mean severity neither did sympathy mean mere sentiment. Proceeding to speak of punishment, he said at the best it was an admission of failure—it was an attempt to bridge over the gulf between the ideal and the actual, and they should do their utmost to reduce it to a minimum.

READING.—The last meeting of this branch was held (by kind invitation of Miss Bradley), at Broadway Buildings, Station Road, when Mr. J. H. Gettins, B.A., of University College, Reading, gave an address entitled "Education and Social Reform." Mr. W. M. Childs presided. Mr. Gettins said he was going to treat the question from an educational point of view only. His chief point was this—he believed the safe and continuing amelioration of the social state could only come through education; compared to it, other methods were fragmentary, unwise, wasteful, ineffective. If the stir in the educational world, the talk, the discussion, the writing, the building of schools, the provision of laboratories, the levying of rates, the expressions of party feeling, were any measure of national progress, then it would seem they were doing well, and might be well pleased with themselves, but if they passed from listening to the talk, and looking at the educational machinery to its products, the whole mass of individuals which made up the nation, they had less reason for complacent satisfaction. The duty of every man was to work with and for others in accomplishing an ideal—the highest ideal which a man's intelligence, fed on the wisdom and teaching of the past, could fashion for him. Mr. Gettins spoke of the attendant evils of modern industrialism and discussed the danger to the race of the physical deterioration of the population in large towns, and the ignorance and neglect of mothers, and proceeded to pass in review the attitude of the churches to sin and to dilate upon questions of heredity and environment.

RICHMOND AND KEW.—The last meeting of this branch was held at Ancaster House (by invitation of the President, Dr. Shuttleworth), who gave an address to the members there assembled on "Nervous Children." The main points dwelt upon by the lecturer were the characteristics most commonly displayed by such children, the predisposing causes of the weakness, and the best means to adopt in treating the sufferers. Among the predisposing influences the lecturer laid much stress on the rapid succession of modern scientific discoveries, such as motor travelling, wireless telegraphy, etc., all tending to make life rush where it had only walked, and though nerve weakness in children could not always be traced directly to these causes, still nerve strain was the characteristic of the age. It was very necessary for teachers to be able to detect neurotic tendencies in their pupils so that the children might be guarded from over-strain. Nervous irritability, if not cared for, might cause serious evils, such as St. Vitus's dance and other distressing maladies. In the case of inherited nerve weakness, it was better to separate the child from the parent from whom he inherited such weakness, and send him to a good boarding school. A wise teacher would study his pupil under every aspect, and let no detail, however apparently unimportant, escape him.

SIDCUP.—The Rev. P. H. Wicksteed gave a lecture on Tuesday evening, Jan. 31st, on "Aristotle." Dr. J. Crombie presided, and there were 30 present. The lecturer remarked that Aristotle combined to a greater extent than anyone on record the power of covering a wide field of observation, and of collecting facts over an enormous speculative area. But, nevertheless, he

did not seem to have advanced things as his precursors. They experimented more than he did, and he spoke of their experiments, and one regretted he did not make more of his own. Aristotle's writings were among the profoundest books of any age, and yet, said the lecturer, there was nothing more extraordinary than the fact that some of his pieces looked like rough notes of a lecture not written by the lecturer himself, but by a student of his not likely to get good results in the examination. Mr. Wicksteed gave an interesting account of the various translations of Aristotle, and of the vicissitudes through which they passed in descending through the various ages, and also gave a valuable commentary upon the writings, which was listened to with deep interest by all present.—Dr. Smythe Palmer gave a most interesting lecture on "Books and Reading," on Feb. 10th, at Westburton (by kind permission of Miss Pearse). He commenced by alluding to the conical hill in Babylon where, when excavated, a temple was discovered, probably the oldest temple in the world, containing thousands of "books" represented by cylinders of baked clay. Dr. Palmer spoke of man's highest manifestation being books and gave many interesting quotations:—"All that mankind has done or has been" (*Carlyle*), "As good kill a man as kill a book" (*Milton*), "The place to get knowledge, the true university, books" (*Shakespeare*), "Nothing pleases me so much as that my little girl likes books" (*Macaulay*), "A taste for books is the pleasure and glory of my life" (*Gibbon*). Sheridan wrote to Dean Swift, "I had rather have a single shelf than all my friends except yourself." Southey's idea of happiness was "A little nook, a little book." Dr. Smythe Palmer urged his hearers never to read a bad book, never to read a second-rate book, but to try to cultivate a taste for what is best—not the newest writers, except in travel or discovery. Always to have a book for odd moments. He believed everyone should study to know everything of one thing; something of everything.

WOODFORD.—On Jan. 31st, the Rev. J. A. Nairn, Head Master of Merchant Taylors' School, addressed a meeting of this branch at Loughton. His subject, "Mental and Moral Education in Extreme Youth," attracted a good audience. He limited his remarks to children between two and eight years old. He dwelt first on the development of powers of observation, especially of Nature as seen in the country. Incidentally he deprecated the luxury in many preparatory schools, which destroyed the inventive power of children. Secondly, he touched on "Home Influence" and the importance of justice in all dealings with children. Thirdly, from earliest years the child must learn that work costs effort and trouble, as there was a danger to turn work into play. He maintained that Latin was the best second language, or French taught orally. Botany should be taught early and form an introduction to physiology through which important facts can be taught to boys without their learning them from vulgar lips. A lively discussion followed the paper.

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LENT.

"A MAN OF SORROWS."

I.

"There is no beauty that we should desire Him."

Fairer than all the sons of men,
Lovely beyond high seraph's ken,
The beauty of the Lord our God upon Him,
O wherefore say'st thou we should not desire Him?

A sacrifice, with red wounds scarr'd;
Ah, pity He should be so marr'd!
But dear love tokens are these stripes upon Him,
And more than any grace do bind us to Him.

* * * * *

Fast bound, a living sacrifice,
With silent lips and patient eyes,
And piercèd hands, that grasp not any treasure,
And nailèd feet, that move not on His pleasure:—

Looking, our hearts do sink in fear;
Seen from afar, how fair! Drawn near,
The vision of the Lamb appals! Sore paineth
Us, this continual Dying that constraineth!