

Adv. 2-11-34

Adv. 3-11-34

now also that human tendencies can often be directly traced to environment. But it would sometimes seem that certain characteristics appear, quite strangely and unexpectedly, in advance of their times, destined, as it were, for future needs.

Then there is a further question, as to the nature of genius itself. How may it be properly defined? What is the actual difference between genius and first-rate ability in any direction? We have vague ideas of a difference, but it is hard to state them convincingly. There are all kinds of popular sayings about genius. Some say that it is "a capacity for taking infinite pains;" another suggests that it is "one part of inspiration and nine parts of perspiration," and so on. But such descriptions do not help much; and to explain the Shakespearian, Newton, Bach, or Beethoven are so immeasurably over and above the most gifted men in their own spheres, that it is almost impossible to compare them and millions simply dissolve in perspiration without getting very far along the road to immortal fame.

**Three Distinctive Marks**  
We must seek some clearer statement. So one might venture to predicate at least three distinctive marks in the man of genius. He must be a veritable "receptacle of light;" he must be comprehensive, as well as infallibly true and authoritative. First-rate ability may reflect light—like the radiant genius must shed light, like the sun.

Again, there are many talented neop. who may present isolated aspects of truth, but they do not comprehend it. Was it not Emerson who said that genius was like a "great river," which flows into the sea, and that the sea is into one majestic and all-embracing flood? To look over the whole field of events, to correlate all the facts and harmonize all the knowledge, is the work of genius alone. When Newton had done this in the world of physics, he pronounced the laws of gravitation, and laid the basis of the scientific voice of convincing truth, and men bowed to his authority. So with Shakespeare, and penetrating vision roamed over the theatre of human passions. With lofty and detached mind he watched and analysed into his own patients, and he flowed a seething multitude of impressions out of which he created those imperishable dramas, which embrace and reveal into the whole tragedy of the human existence. Again, the mighty Beethoven summed up and set the seal of finally upon the work of his predecessors, Haydn and Mozart, bringing to rich fruition their essays in the various branches of instrumental art, sonata, symphony, and chamber music. And it is just this inevitability that becomes an extension of the perception may not understand the why and the wherefore of it. We cannot fathom the operations of such transcendent minds, and we must respect and acknowledge their authority. They are the supreme shedders of light, and we receive the gifts as we feel the sun's rays which fill us with gladness and health.

**The Cause**  
Yet there remains the absorbing question of cause, which is the most mysterious of which go to the making of such abnormal capacity? The theory of reincarnation is sometimes advanced as an explanation, and there are also those who would suggest, especially in music, that pure inspiration, or spirit-possession, is the only credible hypothesis. How otherwise could a little child display such powers? There is no evidence of consciousness; his reactions are entirely instinctive. Only later, with the development of the mind, does he become really aware either of what he is doing, or how he does.

But, after all, what do we know about the mysterious process of the operation of the unconscious mind? Modern psychology is only just feeling its way into these hidden regions, which determine so much of human behavior; and this difficult and complex research is also deeply involved with the theories of the influence of glandular secretions upon our various characteristics and consequent tendencies. Let us take this or that form of self-expression.

**Heredity And the Radio**  
Perhaps we are on safer ground if we consider, hereditarily, and the indications that it is directly observable as a result of known factors. And there, in regard to music, there are certain favorable circumstances that may lead more and more to the development of instinctive ability. During the past few years, wireless broadcasting and the gramophone have spread wide and such a knowledge and acquaintance with music as never before existed, and that was once specialised in now common, and even where the children are not themselves so

now, the constant environment of music must exert an ever-increasing influence upon the coming race.

It is true that much of what is so widely diffused may not be of high value. Thousands of loud speakers are being built for every conceivable variety of sounds, good, bad and indifferent; but, while their strains are not being heard, the new reason is to stimulate the moral sense and make people aware of the great world of sound in all its significance and possible beauty. Visible loveliness may have always beheld and often rejoiced in; but audible loveliness, which is just as real, has never before appealed as it does now. Conservatively and unobtrusively, we have become a race of listeners, and our faculties of hearing must steadily grow with the exercise.

Here, then, at least may be one explanation for the present "eruption of musical genius."

### Mail 5-11-34 CENTENARY?

That much-discussed word reminds me that it is causing controversy in the most learned circles. I was told the other night the Chancellor of Adelaide University (Sir George Murray), the Vice-Chancellor (Sir William Mitchell), and Prof. Richardson were discussing the merits of the three pronunciations, "centenary," "cen-tenary," and "cen-ten-ary." Sir George finally had recourse to a dictionary, which gave only the first pronunciation, and took the stand that this was correct.

There is, however, strong support among the public for the second pronunciation, which also finds favor from a section of the University staff. And there are still many who prefer the humble and quite unorthodox "cen-ten-ary."

## The Advertiser

ADELAIDE, SATURDAY,  
NOVEMBER 3, 1934

### CULTURE FOR THE PEOPLE

No thoughtful man could fail to be impressed by the speeches delivered at the recent break-up of the Workers' Educational Association. All bore testimony to the value of the movement, and, as a consequence, to the importance of the figures submitted by the president as to its growth. As everyone knows, the W.E.A. aims at providing the means of higher education for persons of all classes and of both sexes engaged in the regular occupations of life. It is differentiated from the State system of education in being wholly free from the element of compulsion. Attendance being voluntary, and no penalty being enforced for truancy, it is gratifying to learn from Mr. Ham that upwards of 1,200 students, a sufficient number to keep forty classes going, are now avid of those opportunities of self-culture which, in a past not very remote, were monopolised by the leisured few. It is true that, as it needs no "stolthful man" to discover "there is a lion in the way." The founders of the movement had not in view its utilisation as a passport either to a profession or a vocation, still less to social distinction. The danger of the association being thus regarded, has made itself apparent to Professor Portus, and, like Sir William Mitchell, he is anxious to have the movement freed from any misunderstanding as to its aims.

These are cultural pure and simple, and designed to provide those they benefit with more guidance in the pursuit of the best that is known or thought in the world, than they are likely to receive from what they remember of their school lessons, supplemented by desultory and too often ill-directed reading. It is just for these people that the W.E.A. was designed. The circumstances have prevented their attendance at the University for higher and systematic education; and the University meets this

disability by bringing systematised knowledge within their reach. Without such guidance, many would be at a disadvantage when confronted with complicated questions, economic, political, or others. Though shrewd enough in their own spheres, and faithful to their vocations, they find themselves out of their bearings the moment they get beyond the field with which they are familiar; and the results are often as injurious to the community as to themselves. Unlike school children, they have their choice as to whether they attend, and one cannot but share Mr. Ham's regret at their neglect of economics, the classes devoted to this subject having fallen off greatly last year, in spite of the importance with which the world's concordance for some years past has invested this science. Surely enough, there are few subjects whose value is phased out of their way more frequently into current conversation, even among the least informed; and "capitalism" numbers among its severest critics those who could not answer a single question in an elementary text-book as to the functions of capital. As to international affairs, many thousands of people are utterly at sea as to the way in which it is carried on, so that no

saying is more familiar than that which assumes that money is sent out of a country to pay for imported commodities. As suggestively observed by Sir William Mitchell, the primary object of the W.E.A. is not so much to impart instruction as to include in that instruction a lay in knowledge lay in acquiring it, and not in its possession. Education is not only a safeguard against going astray; it provides weapons for defending sound positions which might otherwise be weakly held. A man may be right and feel that he is right and yet be unable, through not having the facts and argument, to defend his view. Education provides him with the means.

The old notion of university training as a close preserve for the "privileged classes" had at least this to be said for it, that it was concerned with the training of the class who governed. But the governing classes have ceased to be what they were, and the higher education is now wanted for another and more numerous and widely diffused set of minds. Since Robert Lowe declared "We must educate our masters," even the "middle class" has been called upon for the many of that culture which, as another authority has truly said, "gives reason the mastery over the irrational and incoherent." One cannot imagine an educated man throwing in his lot with movements which lead to what he does not understand, and "red ruin and the breaking up of laws."

A knowledge of even the textbooks of economics will inspire in the student no longing for wild-eyed revolution. Rather, he will be furnished with materials for solving satisfactorily, because scientifically, the social and industrial problems with which it is the business of every citizen, more or less, to concern himself. Culture, though concerned with these subjects, has, however, a much wider range, for it means the acquisition of habits of mind and thought which promote a just and general attitude towards controverted questions, intellectual, moral, and spiritual. A man who has taken the arts degree in a university is not necessarily the highest expression of culture; for successful memorising may serve only to inflate a student's egotism; but there is no question that he will be the better for having undergone the labor and discipline which the earning of his degree involved. And, if he knows what is good for him he will devote his post-graduate leisure to adding to his stock of knowledge and exercising his powers of reflection in the manner in which he has been taught. The true function of knowledge, as Sir William Mitchell well says, is to aid the mind in ordering the problems with which it is confronted. It is the ally of Reason, the supreme faculty, as Freud calls it, of the human mind. Reason he compares to the "still small voice" of conscience; and its principal function he describes as keeping the feelings in balance within bounds. Therefore, these factors, as Dr. J. E. Turner reminds us in last month's "Contemporary Review," there is no peace. One must subdue the other—a truth which

as he shows, is recognised in such familiar injunctions as "Be reasonable." "Take a reasonable view." "Think the matter over," addressed to impetuous and impulsive people. By knowledge, Reason is strengthened in its task; and together they produce that "sweetness and right" in which Matthew Arnold discovered the finest flower of human existence. Particularly emphatic was Professor Portus in distinguishing between technical instruction and that general culture which it is the business of the W.E.A. to promote. The former helps the individual; but it is on the latter that reliance must be placed for the spread of true conceptions of life, and a correct understanding of the difficult problems of society. Considering that in Australia it is the collective voice that rules, and that the alternative to this rule is a dictatorship in one or other of its forms, the interest every one has in raising the general level of culture in the Commonwealth must increasingly be obvious.

Adv. 6-11-34

**FIFTY YEARS AGO**  
From "The Advertiser,"  
November 6, 1884  
AT a meeting of the Adelaide University Shakespeare Club, with Professor Boulker in the chair, five papers on "Romeo and Juliet" were read. Two of them by ladies, Miss Cook and Mrs. Kelsey, were read by the authors. Others taking part were Dean Russell and Messrs. Short and Wharton.

Adv. 7-11-34

Professor G. Buckmaster, who has come from London to conduct examinations in Melbourne for the Royal College of Surgeons, reached Fremantle yesterday by the Strathairn, says a Perth message. Fellowship of the college, he said, represented the high watermark in surgery throughout the world, and he emphasised the importance and desirability of spreading throughout the Dominion. The standard would be the same as in England, he added.

Adv. 8-11-34

Professor Mackellar Stewart, Professor of Philosophy at the Adelaide University, left by the express for Melbourne yesterday on business. He will return tomorrow morning.