

started with 10 professors in the manner I have indicated, would at once have a much higher standing than the same university with 12 professors, of whom none, so far as can be seen, would have the reputation that six would have in the other case.

"It is quite true that to start such residential facilities, once would require a good deal of thought and arrangement, and that a body of guarantors would have to be found in each case. But these are conditions not impossible nor even very difficult to fulfil."

Advertiser, July 2/13

**CONCERT AT THE CONSERVATORIUM.**

The concert provided for the entertainment of the teachers, in accordance with the usual custom, at the Elder Hall on Wednesday evening, by Professor J. M. Ennis, Mus. Doc., and the students at the Conservatorium, was a striking proof of the high artistic standard maintained at this musical centre. There was a large attendance, and the concert was greatly enjoyed. It was particularly welcome, of course, to the country teachers, many of whom have comparatively few opportunities of hearing good music.

Professor Ennis, as director of the Conservatorium, welcomed the members of the union, and said he was sure they regretted the cause of the absence of the vice-chancellor (Dr. Barlow), who for several years had extended them a hearty welcome on these occasions. Nothing outside their official duties gave greater pleasure to him (Professor Ennis) and to the students than to the provision of this annual concert to the teachers. It was a pleasant relaxation from their more strenuous work.

The programme was in all respects an admirable one. It opened with a pianoforte solo by Miss Dorothy Oldham (Elder scholar), who was followed by Miss Eva Close, who contributed two songs, "Matinata" (Tosti) and "Songs my mother taught me" (Dvorak). Mr. J. Fischer (Elder scholar) sang "She came to the village church" (from Somervell's beautiful song cycle "Maud"), and "The women of England" (Ed. German). Miss Erica Chaplin (Elder scholar) received a well-merited encore for an excellent violin solo—1st movement for violin concerto in G, No. 7 (De Beriot). Miss Olive Bassett sang "Caro Mio Ben" (Giordani) and "Irish folk song" (Foot), and Miss Gladys Prosser followed with "The slave song" (Teresa del Riego). Miss Lalla d'Arcy Irvine contributed an enjoyable pianoforte solo, "Ballade, op. 20" (Reincke). Mr. Leslie Martin was obliged to grant an encore following his singing of "The dream of my heart" (Bevan). He was followed by Miss Paula Mewkill (Elder scholar), who played the violin solo, adagio from concerto in G minor (Max Bruch). Mrs. Hugh Corbin contributed an enjoyable vocal item, "My dear soul" (Sanderson), and following his tasteful singing of "Si fra i ceppi" (Rinaldo-Handel), Mr. Frederick Brooker was twice recalled. The concert concluded with two fine organ selections by Professor Ennis—"Improvisation" and introduction and allegro from "Suite Gothique" (Boellmann). The vocal items were accompanied by Mr. Frederick Bevan, Mr. Winslow Hall, and Madame Delamar Hall, and the violin selections by Miss Dorothy McBride.

**EDUCATION AND THE CHURCHES.**

From the Rev. G. H. Jose:—"Professor Jethro Brown is a master in his own line of thought, and I am not concerned to dispute his dictum that the value of the Christian Church as an ally in the training of children is on the wane, though it scarcely seems fair to refuse her offer of unpaid assistance in the schools because it is said to be valueless, while denying her an appeal to the parents on that point which has been decided in her favour in other States. But what I wish respectfully to protest against is the negative and destructive tendency of the learned professor's public remarks. I do not suppose that he intended them to be so, and a disclaimer would be welcomed by many. But that is the impression which they leave. We are, I suppose, all agreed that the moral education of the pupil and the discipline of his will are all-important, and that the Christian church has in the past supplied the curb of principle and the sustaining power of a moral and spiritual ideal. This is now said to be ineffective, and may be disregarded. But what are we offered in the place of the Christian religion? For it is easier to pull down than to build up, and suicidal to consign religious faith to the dustheap until you have something better with which to replace it. We are merely told that the problem throws increased responsibility on the teacher, and that it demands his serious thought. The Bible is dismissed because of the alleged inexactitude of Genesis and the impoliteness of mentioning hell. But is even Genesis so universally regarded by 'educated men' as inexact without qualification? Is it, for instance, inexact in its teaching of religion through the lives of men who had religion, who felt their need, and found God's response to that need? As to hell, is such a thing as a hell in this life so unknown, that the possibility of some kind of a hell of remorse in the life beyond the grave should be generally denied? If the word is now so innocuous, why the impoliteness of using it? And as to Jesus Christ being for 'most men' merely a philosopher or saint or nonentity, why then is the world flooded with literature about Him, and how could Lord Acton give his deliberate judgment, "The action of Christ who is risen upon mankind who He redeemed fails not, but increases?" The fact seems to be that an epigrammatic style of expression is a gift to an orator, and readily awakens laughter and applause, but it has its limitations. A lightning sketch has its merits, but sometimes results in a caricature. Personally I do not believe that agnosticism has really driven faith away. It is significant that over 95 per cent. of the population of the Commonwealth at the recent census avowed themselves Christians, although they were given various alternatives such as 'indefinite' and 'object to state.' Even in the mind of a professed agnostic there is often as much doubt about the blackness of the chessboard as there formerly was about its whiteness, and, as Browning puts it, a sunset touch, or an eagle's feather picked up on a moor, has more than once been quite enough to open heaven once more, and to reveal, in place of an impersonal and unknowable God, a living and loving Father of all."

From Archdeacon Clappett:—"One cannot but read with pain certain portions of Professor Brown's address at the Teachers' Conference on Monday last. I allude especially to those parts of it which deal with religion. It seems to me the professor has been guilty of a breach of privilege, and, to have laboured under the impression—which is not well founded—that his audience was composed of men and women who had given up the very central fact of their Christian religion, viz., the divinity of Christ. The professor's own faith seems slightly mixed. He seems obsessed with the idea of 'hell,' as though interpretations of it belonged to the essence of things, and his confession of thought about Christian faith is due apparently to the faulty teaching which he, as a lad, received. Well, thank God, we have not all been brought up in the 'hell' doctrine, for some of us remember early lessons, given to impress upon us that 'as a man sows so shall he reap.' Nor were we all worried about the cosmogony of Genesis, as he apparently was, but some of us were told to remember the underlying purpose of that compilation—the revealing of God Jehovah, the Power behind the Being at work. He dismisses the fact of the divinity of Christ with as great ease as he does the ancient theory of 'hell,' and goes so far as to say, evidently with some satisfaction, that 'most men thought of Christ not at all.' 'Heaven forbid,' says the professor in another place, that 'the teacher should expound religion.' Has any one suggested he should? If not, why grow indignant about imaginary bogies, self-created? Many of the teachers could, I have no doubt, 'expound religion' remarkably well—even better, I think, than expound politics, which the professor

says they should do; but it is not anywhere seriously urged they should be asked to do so. Professor Brown also speaks of the 'waning efficacy of religious belief.' To what sort of religious belief is he alluding? Does he mean that which pinned its faith to 'exactitude' in Genesis and its ancient cosmogony, and to lurid ideas of 'hell'? If so, there is no need for tears. If, however, he alludes to a more rational and chastened faith, which draws its life from Christ and the New Testament writings, he would need to furnish proof of his bare assertion. One acknowledges there is a solid opposition to the Christian faith, but it should be remembered that this opposition is not always because of intellectual difficulties, but because a philosophy of life, including pleasure, aggrandizement, and indulgence, has been adopted. This philosophy grows restive under the discipline and guidance of religion, and often finds refuge under the cover of scepticism—a word supposed to live in an intellectual atmosphere. The professor might have been expected to have born in mind that the question of religion was very sacred to many—surely, I may say, to the big majority—of his audience, and I think better taste and judgment should have suggested the avoidance of a superficial review of an admittedly profound subject. There is too great a tendency on the part of some who speak in public to utter phrases calculated to evoke scorn upon religious belief. Speaking as a Christian, I may say we do not mind good downright opposition in its proper place, but I do wish to say that the annual congress of teachers, in Christian land, does not appear to me to be an appropriate time for dealing at all with religious belief. Great is the responsibility of addressing so selected a body of men and women. In their hands are placed the moulding influences for so many thousands of our boys and girls, and it were wise not to weaken, by word or by suggestion, any conviction a teacher holds, which can help and uplift the child, and direct him towards admittedly the highest standard—the Christian. How idle to talk, as the professor seems to have done, of 'hell' fire being 'a motive of good conduct.' I wonder if the professor goes to church or chapel, and hears this preached. Again, how idle to say 'that if they took away this belief altogether or weakened its in-

tensity, they would depreciate the value of the church as an ally to the teacher. Really, professor, you are into just to the most ordinary conception of the church. The prevailing note of the gospel is not fear. Certainly the church holds there is a fearful responsibility attached to wrong-doing. But, the thought of wounding a loving and self-sacrificing Friend, is to a commonplace, average Christian, a far greater deterrent to wrong-doing than the dread of 'hell' torment could ever be. I have read the professor's address carefully, and I hope in my criticisms I have not done the speaker any injustice. If I have, it has been done unwittingly. I have endeavoured to be frank and fair, and to make it quite plain, that I regret much that he said, and also, that he elected to do so at a conference of State school teachers. Much more to my taste were the following inspiring words of Mr. Angus Parsons, M.P.—'Teachers, preserve the individuality that is in each child; it is a gift from God. Teach the child to worship the Creator of the universe, and in proportion as parents fail, it is for you to restore religion, and to inspire the coming race with divine ideals.'