

# A VITAL NEED.

## PROFESSOR DAVIES ON THE PURPOSE OF ART.

The inaugural social of the year, at which a large number of students and members of the staff were present, was held at Elder Conservatorium on Tuesday evening. The director (Professor Harold Davies), speaking on "Art as a vital need," said they must ask themselves, insisting on a straight answer, why they were following music. Was it merely to gain an accomplishment, or because someone else was doing it, or because they really believed it to be worth while? The purpose of his address that evening was to help to find that firm belief which was at the root of all successful effort—the conviction which alone could give them purpose in their striving. When people talked of the necessities of life, they did not, as a rule, include art in that category, but there was an old Chinese proverb which said, "If you have two loaves, sell one and buy a lily." A recent publication, "The Necessity of Art," dealt with the question convincingly. It was written by a group of earnest, clear-sighted men, of whom one—Arthur Clutton-Brock—had since died. His contribution was "Art and the Escape from Banality." It contained many striking truths, and showed a deep penetration into the problems that beset modern civilisation. He wanted to give a full description of this essay, and, in doing so, would quote the author's own words as much as possible. A sense of restlessness and futility to-day seemed to pervade the whole of society. Banality, the writer said, meant sameness, where it ought not to be, that was, in things of the mind. A more familiar expression was common-places, dull uniformity. The highest virtue of human activities, whether moral, intellectual, or aesthetic, lay in variety. To be like others, or to do as others did, was the refuge of the timid. The less idealism there was the less art and love of beauty, the more artificial did life become, the more fevered, the more fictitious its sense of values. But the more men drank or gambled, or gave themselves up to brute instincts, the more hopelessly alike they became. Banality remained, and the longing to escape from it. In the continuous and bitter struggle for existence, in the renewed race for wealth and trade supremacy, they had got into the habit of suppressing—even denying—their strongest and most permanent desire—the desire for self-expression, through the medium of creative art. In the middle ages men did express themselves, however wildly, in the building of great edifices, in music, dancing, painting, and drama. To-day they had made a life they did not wish to live, conceived a universe they did not believe in, with the result of dullness, boredom, and a persistent longing to escape by violence of feeling, thought, and action. It had all happened before. The Greco-Roman world, under the Empire, grew weary of itself, the life it was living, the order it believed in. Because it could not endure its own dullness, there came a century of purposeless violence, which destroyed that strength from within. So did history repeat itself with unflinching regularity.

### Art and Pleasure.

The remedy, Clutton-Brock stated, lay in a certain set of beliefs, the first of which was that "reality is not something into which we are born, but something we are bound to achieve; and only as we achieve reality can we achieve ourselves. Reality, for each one of us, is not in the past and our origins, but in the future and our aims. If we would know what we are we must try and discover what we would be. The past is a matter of knowledge, the future of effort. We must each one of us believe in effort as a fact more important, more real, than even knowledge, because it is concerned with the process of differentiation, whereas knowledge is often concerned with the fact of sameness." But slowly and surely, in the growth of materialism, in the wild pursuit of wealth, the view had grown that art was a luxury, that other things were necessary, but not art. Self preservation was a first duty, self-realisation was of little importance, and their starved and thwarted spirits, in which the supreme desire for self-expression had been stifled, look revenge by driving them to collective rages. Let them think for a moment of the energy and the money they spent on games, and on watching them, on horse racing, prize fighting, and such poor substitutes for art as the cinema, with its endless melodramas and sex excitement. Often the mere pursuit of pleasure or its cost was taken for pleasure itself. People flocked to hear a prima donna sing because she was paid a thousand pounds for one performance. They expected, therefore, to enjoy her singing that much the more, when really they were only enjoying their own expectations and the general excitement. As a people they had to a great extent lost the standards which formerly existed, and their recovery could only be effected by a conscious effort. To this end he was convinced they must be ready to make sacrifices for art—even sacrifices of money. It was not the support of the

enthusiasm of the individual, but that of the whole community, which was necessary to maintain architecture, drama, music, painting, sculpture. A doctrine of sordid materialism had been, and still was, their chief curse. Both art and play were vital to even the poorest and humblest. After all, what was more universally appreciated than singing, dancing, and music streaming down the street? They might just as well speak of religion as an "extra," because the vulgar materialist regarded it, as he did art, simply as a matter of patronage, and a means of vulgar ostentation. The ultimate values were only three—truth, beauty, and goodness—a trinity behind which lay the great unity which each might name for himself. (Applause.)

### Association to be Formed.

At the conclusion of the address various matters of importance connected with the work of the coming year were discussed, and it was decided to form an Elder Conservatorium Association of past and present students for the purpose of furthering the interests of music in South Australia. The opinion was expressed that such an association would soon become numerically strong, and would prove a powerful influence for good in musical circles. Former students were strongly advised to join. Allusion was made by the Director to the formation of the opera school, under the direction of Mr. Clive Carey. Work had already begun, and much enthusiasm was being shown by the students taking part.



Sir Douglas Mawson

Australian explorer, who has conferred with the executive committee of the Australian National Research Council regarding the ownership of Adelie Land.

## ACTING CHIEF JUSTICE

Commission Presented Today

## CONGRATULATORY SPEECH

The Civil Court was crowded with members of the legal profession and visitors this morning, when Mr. Justice Poole (acting Chief Justice), and Mr. Acting Justice Richards presented their commissions.

After Major W. L. Stuart (Master of the Supreme Court) had read the commissions, congratulations were offered.

"I desire on my own behalf and that of the profession to offer my felicitations and best wishes upon the appointment of Mr. Justice Poole as Acting Chief Justice, and to Dr. Richards as acting judge of the Supreme Court," said Sir Josiah Symon, K.C. "The profession in South Australia, as elsewhere, has little or nothing to do with appointments to the judiciary but it is by no means of small value that the choice of the Executive Council should meet with the approbation of the profession. In this case that is emphatically so."

### OLD PUPILS

"I take especial pride in congratulating the Acting Chief Justice and Dr. Richards. They were both pupils of mine, and later helpmates in years gone by, and I am bound to say they gave me loyal, able, and ungrudging service."

Sir Josiah said his own success was partly due to the gentlemen named. In return for their service he thought he inculcated the principle in them that the law was a just mistress, and that nothing could be achieved in the profession except by hard work. Now, he felt that to a certain extent the harvest had come.

"It has been said," continued Sir Josiah, "that the greatest product of the British race and civilisation is the individual Englishman. If that is so I think I may say without any possibility of contradiction that the highest type is the British judge. There is certainly no more august office."

### FAIR-MINDED JUDGE

"The Acting Chief Justice has already shown in a remarkable manner that he possesses a judicial mind and temperament, and that he is actuated by single-mindedness, impartiality, and invariable fairness, qualities which are no less important than intellectual strength in judicial qualification."

Forty-four years ago this month I had the opportunity of congratulating Mr. Andrews, the then Crown Solicitor, on his elevation to the Bench, and since then there has been no appointment of Crown Solicitor to the judiciary until Dr. Richards took his seat today."

They felt satisfied, concluded Sir Josiah, that the dignity of the court would be maintained, and that the gentlemen they were congratulating that morning would without fear or favor deal justly and equitably with all.

### MUTUAL GOOD FEELING

The Acting Chief Justice, replying, said he could not adequately express his thanks to Sir Josiah and the profession. During the last five years, which had been the busiest of his life, he had reason to be thankful for the good feeling between the Bench and the Bar. The presence of so many members of the profession that day was further proof of the fact.

Sir Josiah Symon had spoken of the days when he (the speaker) was associated with him. It was, then, that the lesson of hard work was inculcated, not so much by precept as by example.

"Regarding the appointment upon which you have congratulated me, I do not flatter myself that it is due to anything else than seniority in office," concluded the Acting Chief Justice. "What you have said inspires me with the hope that when the time comes to lay aside my duties it may be found that I have not been seriously deficient in those qualities which the efficient performance of the duties demand."

Mr. Acting Justice Richards thanked Sir Josiah for his kindly references, and said he did not imagine that when he left the court 17 years ago, after working with the late Chief Justice as his associate for seven years, that he would come back on the Bench. He could not pretend to bring to the Bench the glamor of conspicuous forensic achievement, nor unusual legal acumen or erudition. If, however, industry and perseverance and a desire to promote the public weal were helpful in the office, he trusted he would be able to make some contribution to that end.

## Conservatorium Teacher

Mrs. Reginald Quesnel is best known as a teacher of singing at the Conservatorium. A former student of Miss Gull Hack, A.R.C.M., she went to London and the Continent and finished her vocal studies with the celebrated Mme. Marchesi. On her return to Adelaide she formed a teaching connection, which later she relinquished and removed to Sydney, where she was well known in the musical profession. A vacancy oc-



Mrs. Reginald Quesnel

curing on the staff of the Conservatorium here, she accepted the invitation to fill it, and has been attached to that institution for some years.

Her bright and enthusiastic nature has always been an inspiration to the many singers who passed through her hands, and their success has been fully shared with her. Mr. Laurence Power, the young tenor who lately won "The Sun" prize at the Ballarat competitions, and whose voice has been claimed to be one of exceptional merit, owes much to Mrs. Quesnel, who has been his teacher and friend. Miss Linda Wald and Miss Selma Volt, who have also made their mark in musical circles, were also tutored by her.

Mrs. Quesnel is an enthusiastic member of the Alliance Francaise, and through her students makes valuable contributions to the programmes of the fortnightly meetings of the club. By marriage she is connected with the Australian pianist-composer Percy Grainger, of whom she has many happy remembrances in connection with his recent visit to Adelaide. Mrs. Aldridge, of Kingsmead, is her sister.

On a recent vacation in Melbourne Mrs. Quesnel met some of the musical critics of Victoria, and discussed the various aspects of musical life in Australia and the possibilities of success for young singers who are discovered through the medium of musical competitions. The unanimous opinion seems to be that Mr. Power will go far.

Mr. E. G. Biaggini, B.A., who arrive in Adelaide from Brisbane yesterday, has been appointed by the Workers' Educational Association as full-time organisator tutor at Renmark. This appointment marks a new policy of the part of the W.E.A., as last year only a part-time tutor (Mr. W. R. Crocker) was appointed. Mr. Biaggini, with Mr. Crocker, will visit Renmark next Monday to confer with the circles founded by Mr. Crocker last year, and to make arrangements for monthly lectures at Berri, Glossop, Barmera, and Monash, should a sufficient number of students desire to enrol. Last year the hotel committee at Renmark made the work possible by granting £250 towards the necessary expenses, and it is hoped that the conditions will enable the W.E.A. to make the appointment at Renmark a permanent one. The association will arrange for a full-time tutor to work at Berri next year, if there is a sufficient demand for his services. Mr. Biaggini was born in England, and after a distinguished school career worked at the London School of Economics and gained first-hand experience of modern finance on the London Stock Exchange. On coming to Australia, he taught at various Grammar Schools in New South Wales and in Queensland, where he also lectured for the W.E.A.

Dr. Robert V. Storer, late of St. Bartholomews Hospital, London, is medical officer of the Moreton Bay, which will arrive at the Outer Harbor tonight. He is



Dr. Robert V. Storer

formerly of Adelaide, now medical officer on the Moreton Bay, which arrives tonight.

a son of Mr. T. G. Storer, of Glenelg, and for the past two years has been in London and the English provinces, and was also on medical duty in Portugal, East Africa and India. He also spent some time on the Continent, where obtained first hand knowledge of Vienna and other large hospitals.