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507TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING.

MONDAY, APRIL 18TH, 1910.

PROFESSOR E. HULL, F.R.S. (VICE-PRESIDENT), IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the 505th Ordinary General Meeting were read and confirmed.

The following lecture was then delivered by the author :—

*PLATO'S THEORY OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN
RELATION TO THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE
OF HUMAN NATURE.* By the Rev. H. J. R.
MARSTON, M.A.

THE acknowledged greatness of Plato as a writer and a thinker, and his perennial influence upon thought, especially in connection with education, justify me in approaching what is, perhaps, the most interesting and thorny of problems, through the great Greek thinker. Moreover, there are in his opinions, especially as expressed in the Republic and the Laws, certain phases on which he insists, which have visible affinities with opinions of leading educationalists in the present day.

This is specially true of the emphasis which Plato lays upon the State. For weal or for woe during the last generation and a half in England, in France, in Germany and in America it has passed into an axiom, or at least, an assumption, that the State has to have the first and the last word in education.

This subject has divided mankind always, and there are incidental advantages in passing from the heat and din of current controversy to the calm and the cool of the academic grove, and in trying to gather first principles from one whose voice has long been mute, although his spirit still rules ours from his immortal urn.

I will trouble my audience, for the sake of clearness, and of what will come after, by indicating how this subject arises in the *Politeia*. That wonderful dialogue begins by describing a gathering, friendly and domestic, of Athenians. They are discussing the nature of justice. And Socrates, who is amongst them, suggests that they should study justice on a large scale—in large letters, to use a favourite Platonic image: that they should not seek for it in the individual man, but as expressed and embodied in the State. They agree. They then proceed to discuss what the State is, how it originates, how it works itself out. They arrive at the conclusion that the principal thing in a State is the ruling class.

The question then naturally arises—How is this ruling class to be educated? They then proceed to discuss the nature of the education of the guardians. Thus there are three great subjects which alternate and interweave themselves throughout the whole of the *Politeia*. The first is the nature and office of the State. The second is the essence and the issues of justice. The third is the scope and the method of education. Thus it is that education, though only the third of the subjects engaging the mind of Plato, becomes a permanent and striking matter in the course of his meditations.

In the next place let me review what is in general terms the ground and scale of Platonic education. It begins with morals. It then proceeds to music. Music, however, we must understand not in the limited and technical sense, but *mousike*, that is to say, the whole art of the muses. It involves elocution and general culture, *λέξις*, a mode of diction and demeanour proper to the guardians. From music he passes on to gymnastic, which is to have the same effect upon the body as *Μουσική* has upon the soul. Gymnastic is to be followed, so it appears, by arithmetic; arithmetic does not mean that painful, mechanical form of study from which I have a hereditary and an instinctive aversion. (Laughter.) But it means the whole of the great science of number and of measurement, for which I have a profound but distant admiration.

Following arithmetic comes dialectic, which covers a great deal of what we should call moral and mental philosophy. Finally, the close and climax of the Platonic graduation of knowledge, of the scheme of education, is philosophy itself. Philosophy meant to Plato the power acquired by the highest intellects of contemplating pure truth, a power which, unhappily, he has at last to confess, is only attainable by the rarest and most gifted of the intellects of mankind.

I shall have to criticize at some length and with some asperity a great deal that is contained in Plato's theory of education. I must begin by saying that the whole scheme at once attracts and arrests us by certain admirable and striking features. (Hear, hear.) In the first place there is displayed throughout the whole of the *Politeia* immense, I might almost call it a preter-natural, ardour for knowledge. In the second place it exhibits a highly admirable belief in the value and importance of educating the faculties of both mind and body; and in the third place it exhibits a breadth of view and speculative freedom and grandeur which it may be said is very far remote indeed from, and apparently but slenderly understood by many of the most clamorous, and by many of the most obtrusive, advocates of education in the present day. (Hear, hear.)

This is the scheme of education which one gathers from the *Politeia*. I would not have you suppose that it is categorically set forth as in the Code proceeding from Whitehall. It is mainly apparent in these parts: in the third book, in part of the fifth book, in part of the sixth book, and in the tenth book, where it divides with justice the honour of bringing the dialogue to a magnificent climax.

This system of education which Plato here unfolds rests upon one single thought, the exclusive supremacy of the State in education. Education by the State and for the State is the distinguishing conception of Plato's theory. Nothing may be allowed to interfere with that conception. That is the root, and it is the centre, and it is the close, of all Plato's cogitations.

It therefore now becomes my duty to describe Plato's ideal state. I will begin by describing it succinctly. Plato's ideal state is an aristocracy. That aristocracy rests upon a divinely-made distinction of classes. That distinction of classes is rigorously defended by a division of labour. It is an axiom with Plato—one man, one job. This is again and again insisted upon. A cobbler must cobble shoes *in æternum*. A shepherd must do nothing but tend sheep. A soldier must always be soldiering, and a guardian must always, from morn till night, and again from night till morn, be occupied in protecting the State.

This view of the State necessarily involves that the State should govern education. Accordingly, the whole question of education for Plato is ruled by one consideration. Is this, or that, a good thing for the State or not? Does this, or that, tend to make a good citizen, or a better citizen than something

else? If so, it shall be *pro tanto* incorporated in the scheme of education. If not, it shall be peremptorily ruled out. That must be carefully remembered as we are discussing Plato's theory of education and what follows from it.

There is another important, a painful element which it is impossible to pass over in describing Plato's ideal State. It became necessary for Plato in constructing his ideal State to enquire, how shall this State be preserved? It can only be preserved, said Plato, by the perfection of its guardians. What is it which the guardians of a State are most likely to be corrupted by? It is, said he, "by discord." All states ultimately come to ruin through discord. Our State, therefore, at least in its guardian class, must be wholly immune from discord. But what are the things which cause discord? "Private property, personal ownership, 'Mine and thine.'" These terms, therefore, must be banished from our guardians. They must never know the sound or the meaning of "Mine and thine." They must, in short, be absolutely communistic. With remorseless logic, he carries this out into every detail of life; he sweeps away family obligations. To this he sacrifices the purity, and the naturalness, of woman. Under this head he sanctions sins from which modern legislatures would recoil; this is the sole test of what things are fit and not fit to be enjoyed and practised by the guardians of the State. It is melancholy, that we have to contemplate in the man whom Dr. Jowett has called "the father of idealism" and the greatest metaphysical writer of the world, such a lapse from the high standard of morality which has been introduced by the Gospel.

But two things are to be borne in mind. First, that Plato is only here arguing upon ideal conditions; and secondly, that he was not acquainted with the sacred morality of the Old Testament, still less with the more lofty and sacred morality of the New. Those things must be said in mitigation of any sentence which we pronounce upon Plato's doctrine of communism.

But, those things being said, do not prevent me from saying this, viz., that the *Politeia* of Plato furnishes the most illustrious proof in the world, that the theory of a proprietary state is logically inseparable from a communistic view which endangers private property, personal liberty, sexual purity, and intellectual originality.

Such, then, is Plato's State; and I now pass to enquire, what is the influence of such a State upon education, even from

Plato's point of view? I answer, that it has two distinctly disadvantageous consequences.

First, although it would secure to the guardians a thorough education, it would make that education restricted in a marked degree. The guardians may know and practise only such things as by knowing and practising would make them better citizens.

Now that is good from the point of view of Napoleon. It is odious from the point of view of Dr. Arnold. On the other hand, while this Platonic State would give to the guardians a thorough, though restricted, education, it appears to leave the lower classes wholly uneducated, or it passes them over.

In illustration of this statement I read the following extract from the *Politeia*, "All you who live in the city are brothers,* but God in fashioning you mingled ingredients of gold in the composition of those who were capable of ruling the State. On that account they are to be the most highly honoured. Those who are capable of becoming auxiliaries to the guardians He composed with silver; while husbandmen and the working class in general He mingled with elements of iron and of bronze."

Popular education could never flourish, could perhaps scarcely exist, under such a theory of Society as that.

Passing now from the effect of Platonic education upon the upper class and the mass of the community, I turn to consider wherein a Christian system of education differs from that expounded by Plato.

In order to meet that consideration I must trouble the Society to allow me to examine the Christian doctrine of human nature. I find that the word *φύσις*, or nature, occurs in the Greek Testament at least fourteen times. It occurs in the writings of St. James, St. Peter, and St. Paul.

St. James uses it twice; † St. Peter uses it once; ‡ St. Paul uses it eleven times § St. Paul uses it in the earliest of his Epistles—that to the Galatians; and in the Ephesians, one of his latest Epistles. It is distributed through the New Testament in Gentile and Jewish scripture. This word and the notion which it expresses runs through the teaching of the Apostolic Age.

St. Peter uses it in connection with God. St. James uses it

* Book iii.

† iii, 7.

‡ ii, 1, 4.

§ Galatians ii, 15; iv, 8. I Corinthians xi, 14. Romans i, 26; ii, 14; xi, 21, 24. Ephesians ii, 3.

in connection with man—(though it is unhappily mistranslated as “Mankind” in the third chapter of his Epistle). St. Paul uses it to describe nature neither in connection with God nor with man, but as it is in itself if you examine the uses by St. Paul you will find them valuable and instructive.

The Apostle appears to regard *φύσις* as a *Monitor*,* where he speaks of the Gentiles doing by nature the things which are contained in the law; as a *Teacher*,† where he says that nature teaches the propriety of a woman wearing long hair, as a *Witness*‡ against idolatry; as a Registrar§ of decrees of God distinguishing Jew from Gentile; as a Recorder of God’s displeasure with our sinful condition.||

A new conception of human nature, and with it of human education, gradually possessed the minds of the best Christian teachers. It flowed inevitably from such a view of nature, that nature seen in man should be regarded as dignified and splendid,—a something whereby man comes into living fellowship with God both as his Creator and his Redeemer. When once human nature, albeit fallen, was realized as something redeemable, if not redeemed, thenceforth the contracted notion of State humanity, and consequently of State Education, began to wane.

On comparing Plato’s view of human nature with that prevailing in the New Testament, we perceive that the two views have features in common. Both are cast in gloomy colours. There are passages in Plato more trenchantly interpretative than the severest indictment framed by St. Paul.¶ The philosopher and the apostle are alike remote from the sickening self-complacency of Rousseau and his imitators. There are in Plato no rosy-tinted illusions about the inherent goodness of human nature, as it actually is.

But the Christian doctrine of human nature is, when compared with Plato’s, felt to be tenderer, more liberal, more profound. To Plato, indeed, human nature** meant little more than Greek human nature. The Apostolic writers treat of man as man. “There is no difference.” “What God hath cleansed that call not thou common.” Such is the language of the New Testament about human nature.

This language flowed from the knowledge that man, however

* Romans.

† 1 Corinthians.

‡ Galatians.

§ Galatians and Romans.

|| Ephesians.

¶ *Politeia*, Book vii, Jowett’s translation, p. 214; Book ix, Jowett’s translation, p. 280.

** See Luthardt, *Moral Truths of Christianity*, pp. 238, 239.

deeply fallen in fact, was originally good,* was capable of renewal, might become a partner in the Divine nature.

And from this doctrine was derived an ideal of education fruitful and indestructible, because co-aeval with man's best self. This ideal displaced that elder one of State humanity and State education.

Now it is upon this conception of human nature that Christian education took its stand. Upon this conception it has ever remained.

What seems to me to be in danger is a reverting from the Christian view of education resting upon the Christian doctrine of human nature to a lower view of education resting upon Plato's ideal of human nature.

I now come to discuss for a few moments a definition of education,† and then to ask a question. I venture to define education thus:—It is a process of developing the faculties both of mind and body by a method of collective tuition adapted to the individual scholar and subordinated to the highest end of human nature.

I have no doubt that the sting of the definition lies in its tail, as in the case of the scorpions of the Apocalypse. What is the highest end of human nature? It is here that the conflict between the two ideals takes its rise. "The highest end of human nature," said Plato, "is to be a guardian of the state. The mass of mankind can never fulfil that end, for they can never be guardians of the State.

Christianity replies, "The highest end of human nature is to glorify God." In order to glorify God a man must become what God designed him to be. He cannot be twisted and tortured into any relations whatever, which are going to supersede his essential freedom. Two things follow from my definition of education. First there must be in every well ordered scheme of education resting upon Christian principles a liberty to specialize. We cannot be dragooned into something to please either the Conservative or Liberal Party. Education must be free. Schools must have their sovereignty. We must respect the individuality of the scholars. We must reverence the highest that is in human nature. This raises the great question, which I hope the Society will take up and discuss

* Compare Bishop Butler's preface to the *Sermons on Human Nature and Tertullian*, translated by Gwatkin, *Selections from Early Christian Writers*, p. 113.

† *Moral Truths of Christianity*, p. 234.

with its usual animation—what is the function of the State in education? I cannot stop to elaborate, but I will close with two suggestions. The view of education founded upon human nature as disclosed in the New Testament requires first, that the State must be the delegate of the parent, and secondly, that the State must consent to be the partner of the Church. (Applause.)

Additional Note.—The English word “natural” which is read in 1 Cor. ii and xv, is an unfortunate and misleading translation. It represents the Greek word “psuchikos”=“psychic,” or “sensuous.” It is wholly different from the Greek word “plusikos,” translated “natural” in Romans, and 2 Peter.

No text has done more harm to English Christianity than this—“the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.” The words sound as if nature were essentially irreligious. A careful study of the language of the New Testament leads to a very different conclusion.

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN.—Ladies and gentlemen, you have listened to a most eloquent and clear lecture on the part of the gifted speaker the Rev. Mr. Marston, which I am sure has been a great pleasure and gratification to us all to listen to. I am happy to say that there are in the room gentlemen capable of taking up this subject and dealing with it as it deserves, and I now only have to say that the question is open for discussion. Perhaps any lady or gentleman—because ladies are not excluded—who wishes to speak on this subject would kindly send up their names in case the unhappy Chairman does not recognize them at once.

The Rev. J. J. COXHEAD.—Much as I appreciate—in fact no one in the room can more fully appreciate—the interesting address to which we have listened, I do not feel quite certain whether the leading idea of the Republic has been altogether grasped and elucidated by the speaker. The object, as I conceive it, of the Republic is to find out what justice really is—a term which would be expressed in the New Testament by the word “Righteousness.” In order to discover what justice really is Plato desires to see it written as the speaker reminded us, in large letters, that is to say, in the State. As a matter of fact, the State does consist of various

classes, and to each of these classes a certain education is by common consent given, and ought to be given. And it is a grave question whether in departing from that principle we have not, to a certain extent, made a great mistake; because in endeavouring to give as much culture as possible to those whom we regard as the lower classes, we aim at giving them precisely the same education that we give to those of the upper classes; and as the result of that system it is a grave question whether we do turn out the kind of citizens and the kind of persons who are most useful to the State and most happy in themselves. (Hear, hear.)

Now Plato, as I have said, in the desire to discover what justice or righteousness is, wishes to see it illustrated on a large scale, and in that large scale he seeks to include an education even as regards the lower classes, because he would consider that they had their education in doing their work well. Even in the class of cobblers, of whom he speaks in rather contemptuous terms, he makes distinctions. There are good cobblers and bad cobblers; and he assumes that in their cobbling they will receive that education which will render them happy in themselves, and useful to the community to which they belong. Is he doing altogether wrong in that? Is it better that we should have good cobblers who can cobble well, than that we should have bad cobblers who understand Plato? (Laughter.) I think we shall all agree that we would rather have the good cobblers who did not understand Plato (Hear, hear) and have never heard of him.

But I think that if we catch the spirit of the Republic as it ought to be kept, Plato's object is to show that there is in human nature a certain division of faculty and a certain division of powers each of which must be subordinated to the highest of all the powers, namely, reason

The question is whether in the exercise of reason we ought to have husband or wife or child, or whether there should be any of those distinctions in the inner nature which will induce us to act contrary to what we conceive to be the principles of pure reason.

Now the Ancients always believed that the father acting as judge, acted righteously, and acted as he should act, when he would bring himself, though no doubt after a great conflict with the other part of his nature, to give the sentence which justice requires. And if we look into the New Testament we find that there are

indications of something of the same kind to be found even there ; because there, there is neither Gentile nor Jew ; there is neither male nor female, but all are one ; and Supreme Reason, the highest reason of our nature, should teach us to trample under foot even the natural desires of man for the sake of the Kingdom of the Lord.

Colonel ALVES.—Mr. Chairman, unfortunately I was not able to be here at the beginning of the lecture, so I do not know if Mr. Marston gave a definition of the word “Education.” Well, education is not book-learning. Book-learning may be necessary, or at any rate, very useful for education, but I have heard of great warriors and great statesmen and kings who ruled ably and wisely, who could not read or write, and who made their mark. We have an illustration of that in pricking the roll where the king or queen takes a bodkin and puts a prick against the name of one or two who have been read out, and who are those elected for sheriff. It dates from the time when great kings and other people could not read or write. But they were not uneducated men ; they could set the battle in array, and they could make wise laws and show themselves men. Book-learning is useful because it helps a man to do without his fellows ; but I have found myself that what I have learned through contact with my fellows is of more use to me than what I read from printed matter in books. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Coxhead alluded to cobblers, and I remember a little boot-maker more than a score of years ago who could hardly read or write. He was a sharp, intelligent man. He could make a pair of boots from start to finish, and he could make the last on which those boots were made, but he could hardly read or write, and his complaint against the men who worked under him was this : that they took no interest except in doing some little bit of a pair of boots. They had no pride in doing their work ; all they wanted was to receive their pay. I have no doubt they could read and write. We know journeymen bootmakers and journeymen tailors are great politicians. One of their number is paid by them to read the newspaper for an hour, and they discuss politics over their work ; but I am not aware that they are highly educated men or great statesmen.

Now we have to go to the Bible. Do we not find in the book of Daniel mention of the element of gold, silver, or copper ?

The CHAIRMAN.—It does not apply to those degrees.

Colonel ALVES.—It applies to Governments and forms of government, and the people carrying on the Government, showing that there are differences of quality ; and in the New Testament we read of a man having five talents, a man having two talents, and a man having one talent. There are great differences, and there is no doubt if you take your walks abroad into various neighbourhoods, you will see in the heads of the men and the heads of the children vast differences between class and class ; that some have higher qualities, and are capable of being educated to a higher pitch than others. And after all, education only means leading out, developing the faculties that a man already has, and not trying to make him into something that he cannot be. We are born, I am told, each one with a certain number of brain cells, and that number cannot be added to all the days of your life, though you live to the age of Methuselah.

So I think we find that there are those differences of classes, and as most men have to live competitively, those of the highest power rise up either to be kings or noblemen, or gentlemen of a humbler rank, or lower middle-class, each class a social stratum. Yet even in one class there are vast differences, because an artisan is far higher than the bricklayer's labourer ; his intelligence is greater, he is a better man. He has either developed his faculties or his forefathers have developed their faculties ; and the result has been that they have had better offspring, so we cannot put mankind on an equality. The old Feudal System had this in it at any rate ; men rose to knighthood from the very humblest ranks of life, but if a man rose into the higher class he had to leave the lower class behind him. If a man has to go from the iron to the bronze class, he leaves the iron behind him ; if he goes from the bronze to the silver he leaves the bronze behind him, and so on. There is no mixing up classes. I will not say that Feudalism was right, but it had the elements of rightness in it, and it is because the upper classes do not treat the lower classes with consideration that there has been the assumption that the upper classes are not fit to be rulers because they are not just, and that therefore the lower classes will be fit to rule. But they will not be any more just than the others, and we know the final result of bringing up the lowest class into power will be that eventually they will receive Antichrist. That is the teaching of the Bible, so we cannot put men on an

equality. The object of all our education and book-learning is to develop the best and highest faculties of a man for the work for which he is best fitted, and nine-tenths of the population must work chiefly with their hands.

Rev. J. J. COXHEAD.—May I say a word more ?

The CHAIRMAN.—Certainly.

Rev. J. J. COXHEAD.—I do not think Plato for one moment ever contemplated as a fact the composition, the construction of any State exactly on the lines of a Republic, and I think that Mr. Marston clearly said that: that his idea is ideal and not actually practical.

Dr. TRENCH.—A very interesting question arises in connection with all we have heard. I do not know whether it comes within the compass of the subject matter of the lecture we have, with great interest, listened to, to consider in a more practical aspect, and from the Christian standpoint, what ought to be the aim of the State as an instructor in education.

The CHAIRMAN.—Oh yes, sir, quite.

Dr. TRENCH.—We stand on a common ground here in believing that the State should give education to the members of the community. What form should such education take? The Christian Faith, we know, recognizes the variety of social position which as a community we represent. All do not stand on one dead level: the mental and physical endowments of each individual obviously vary. It seems an outrage on the liberty of the subject that, in the name of the brotherhood of man, communities of men should ever attempt to interfere with the liberty of the individual. (Hear, hear.)

As education needs to be provided for the general community at the public expense, it seems fitting that the aim should be to give knowledge of an essentially simple and useful kind—the groundwork for the future development of each boy and girl.

It seems right that knowledge of the three R.'s should therefore form the main substance of such an education. In addition, that the girls should be practically instructed in simple laws of hygiene, in cooking and in sewing; that provision should be made for gymnastic open air exercise for boys and girls. Further, as I think, special attention should be given to inculcating on all the duty of patriotism, and the nobility of showing respect for

authority, whether in the family or the State. Military drill for every boy in the land would be an excellent means for imparting the sense of discipline.

All tuition should be distinctly grounded on the broad basis of the principles of the Christian Faith which, as a people, we hold in common, for on this basis alone is it possible to build securely and with well-founded hope. All experience teaches that, and the wisdom of our wisest men tells us it is so.

With such groundwork for the development of the moral and the mental faculties, it seems to me that the State would essentially fulfil its duty as regards Primary Education.

We look further for provision for Secondary Education, as is already embodied in legislation and practice, whereby a broad and more liberal education is provided for the relatively few who in the Primary Schools have shown marked ability or zeal in their studies, together with opportunity for gaining scholarships or other rewards, and provision for such is rightly borne at the public expense. I think the State should make provision for the establishment of Continuation Schools for instruction in the evenings, making it obligatory that, at these schools, every boy, on leaving the Primary Schools, should learn a trade, that thus mind and body, through study of a handicraft, should be together exercised. (Hear, hear.) Such special education would prove of immense benefit in more directions than in the manifest economic one.

Mr. OKE.—Mr. Chairman, we have had a very interesting summary of Plato's views on Education contained in those ten Books of the Republic of Plato which are such masterpieces in their way. It is very interesting to those who can read them in the original. I struggled through them a great many years ago, I am sorry to say now, and therefore I do not remember entirely what was contained in them, but if my memory serves me, the Guardians were to be hereditary, were they not? If a man was born a Guardian his son was a Guardian?

Rev. H. J. R. MARSTON.—Not if his son proved unworthy. If his son proved unworthy he was to be degraded to the class of cobblers over which Mr. Coxhead has made so merry.

Mr. OKE.—It did not follow that gold was mixed up with the composition?

Rev. H. J. R. MARSTON.—It was not hereditary gold.

Mr. OKE.—It was not hereditary gold—that is all-important, and I think that is a point to be brought out: that gold that is contained in people is only discovered through giving a modicum of Education to all. That is the position to-day; our State ensures that a certain amount of Education shall be given, as far as the Law is carried out, to all; and by not placing the standard too low, by not confining it simply to the three R's, it is possible that you may bring out talents in those who have been living almost in the gutter and find them at the Universities years hence. I can name at Oxford and Cambridge men whose origin was so humble that perhaps through the fault of their education they despised their relatives. It was only recently that I was in the other end, in the slummy part of London, looking to see where one of our Senior Wranglers came from; and when we think of such capabilities only needing the chance of development, what may not education do for us in the future?

I do not think we need limit ourselves to the three R's. Give the peoplesomething for which they may strive (Hear, hear), and remember that in the New Testament we are told that all are to strive to do their best in their different spheres. If then by Scholarships, and if by helps in various ways anyone is able to rise in the so-called social scale, surely it is best for us. But education must be directed in such a way that to the highest intellectual attainments there is added the element of religion. Only here the difficulty, as it seems to me, is to ensure that a right definition of the Church is given.

If you speak of the partnership between the Church and the State one would like to take it in that widest sense of a Church that is almost above the Creeds, of a Church that is based on the Bible, and if you do that, you may be sure that your education, although it may be somewhat ambitious in the end, will be for the benefit of all those who form part of the community.

Rev. J. TUCKWELL.—I should like at this stage, especially after the very excellent remarks we have just heard, to add a word or two if I may. I think we have had before us this evening two rather different subjects. We have had the ideal, and we have been discussing the practical. Now I suppose an ideal State would not be Plato's Republic. It would be more after the nature of the State which has just been hinted at by the previous speaker, where every man had a fair chance; where there would be nothing to repress individual attainment, where the gold would come to the surface, and

a man would find his rank according to his worth and according to his abilities. That would be an ideal state ; but it appears to me that at present it is impossible for us to realize it. We may aim at it, and I think we should aim at it most decidedly. It is far better to have high ideals—even though we may fall somewhat short of them—than to be otherwise. Then we have had also the idea of the Church. Well, it is exceedingly difficult in these times to put into universal practice and to adapt universally any man's ideal of the Church or idea of the Church. Probably my idea of the Church would be different, indeed, from that of the gentleman who has addressed us this afternoon. I do not know. Possibly so. But there is where your difficulty comes in. When you are going to associate the State with the Church, what are you going to regard as the Church teaching which is to be given to these children who are to come under the education of the Church ? That is where our controversy lies at the present time. I suppose that the great majority of sober-minded people would be fairly well satisfied at all events with the Bible ; but there are some who are not content with that, and they would have a catechism of some kind. I should join issue with them at once. I desire most decidedly that every child in the State should have a religious education, but there comes the difficulty to define what religious education is. If you are going to associate any particular Creed that has been drawn up for any particular section of the Christian Church, that is not broad enough for the State to apply, it appears to me. So that you require to define your idea of what the Church is.

Then again, Mr. Chairman, I think it should be remembered, too, that the church of the New Testament is no mere external organization. (Hear, hear.) There are men who are Christian men, and who are members of the redeemed Church of Christ, who do not belong to any of our organized Churches. Consequently when you are associating the Church with the State, you cannot associate merely one particular organization. You want, therefore, a much more spiritual conception of the Church. When you take the New Testament conception of the Church, it is the redeemed, the regenerated, the true followers of the Lord Jesus Christ—no others, whatever their profession may be. The virgins in the parable were all, to external appearances, virgins, but there were those who had no oil in their lamps.

Then when you take the New Testament idea of the Church, how are you going to get the State to adopt that idea, and to act on that idea? If you had a Church and a State that were conterminous and coincident, then you might do it, but at the present time you have not. You have a State which consists of a majority of people that are not really in the Church of the New Testament at all. Consequently there arises your difficulty. You have tutors, teachers of various ranks in all our schools that are not in the Church of the New Testament. They may be registered as Christians because they are not Mohammedans or belonging to some other heathen body. But they are not members of the Church of Christ of the New Testament. They are not regenerated. The consequence is, you cannot at the present time carry out your ideals either in the Church or the State. What you have therefore to do is to aim at something that is practical. The State must always be below the Church until the millennium comes, or until the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. At present you cannot bring the State up to the level of the Church. The consequence is the Church has to a large extent—and I am speaking of the Church of the New Testament, not any organic body—to pursue its course alone, and sometimes in antagonism indeed to the State, or rather, the State is in antagonism to the Church. Our educational system then, it seems to me, must be brought down to a practical level, and what is that practical level? Well, to endeavour to make men good citizens in the ordinary and common and lower sense of the term, and leave the Church to permeate the State, as the leaven did the mass of the meal which the woman inserted into it in the parable.

If therefore, we aim at making men good citizens, instructing them in their childhood sufficiently for every child to have an opportunity to rise and to exercise whatever special faculty he may have, it seems to me that at the present time is the most that we can aim at. The State! Why, the State is not yet in its legislation up to the level of the Ten Commandments. If you look into our Statute Book you will see that there are acts and deeds permitted by our statutory law that would be condemned by the Decalogue; and if the Statute Book is not up to the level of the Ten Commandments, how can you bring the legislation of the State up to the level of the regenerated Christian Church? So that we are at

present at all events obliged to be content with something less than the millennium, and pray that the millennium may soon come. (Applause.)

The SECRETARY.—This is a subject that is of the greatest interest to us all, especially when we consider the extraordinary confusion that now reigns on the subject of education. It is one of the most difficult problems with which we have to deal in this country. I have been in touch with education, both State and voluntary, for some time, and that must be my excuse for adding to the cloud of words in which our subject is getting so involved. There are some who consider that we should bring national education down to the lowest level, that is to say, to give the minimum to everybody, and not try and get beyond that minimum without which no manhood can thrive at all. Then there are those who go far beyond, and wish to give to all that advanced education which, at present, is only within the reach of the few. Between these there are all sorts of other ideals, and we all pursue our ideals in different ways. (Hear, hear.) We have elementary education, which embraces every child in the whole country from the highest to the lowest, for none can escape education. Then we have those various schemes for supplying the defects in our elementary education. Some are worked by the State, and some are worked by voluntary organizations. We have secondary schools and evening classes for those who have availed themselves of the primary education, and, therefore, are fit to go on to something better. But there are things really more interesting than that. There are growing up all sorts of organizations which the State is now beginning to assist, attempting to give education to those of the masses whose primary education has been a failure, and who must now attempt to make up for its blunders. Well, the fact that that should be necessary points to something very wrong at the beginning (hear, hear); so that we have to re-consider our whole primary education. And it is a very large question indeed, for, I suppose, after some experience in having examined the educational systems of Germany, Austria, and France, that our elementary education is probably the best that is given anywhere by the State, although our secondary education is probably the worst organized. And yet, with our splendid system of elementary education, there are all these gaps that require to be filled up;

and you may say there is a large part of the work which requires to be absolutely undone. The fact that there are these gaps, and so much that requires to be undone, has a great deal to do with the confusion that exists as to the position of the State as a moral and a religious teacher.

There is undoubtedly this terrible confusion, and yet, as Mr. Tuckwell has pointed out to us, the whole question is one with which we are not fit to deal at the present time, because of the position of the State, which is so far behind our religious organizations and our religious and moral ideals. It takes an immense time for the State to develop a moral sense. We have got to work at the practical side of the problem. One thing that must be insisted on with regard to elementary education is that it is no good having it all worked out on one pattern. Whatever else happens, we must have differences in different places. There must be acknowledged differences of capacity, and differences of circumstances and economic needs.

Rev. H. J. R. MARSTON.—Liberty to specialize.

The SECRETARY.—There must be, as Mr. Marston has just said to me, liberty to specialize, and also there must be that equality of opportunity which is demanded so loudly by people who do not all really know what it means. (Hear, hear.) I believe that we are giving an equality of opportunity, only those who get the opportunities will not recognize them.

If you would go round the corner, into Adam Street, you would find there the office of the "Workers' Educational Association." That Association is represented now on most University Boards in this country. There are more than a thousand trade unions belonging to it. It is a great and a national organization of working people to educate themselves; to do for themselves what the State has not been able to do for them, and what, so far as I can see, the State never will be able to do. It is an organization of those people to teach themselves, not how to work—they can be taught that by the State—but to educate themselves into being citizens. And how the State can really do that is quite beyond my comprehension. Unless the people are going to take that upon themselves, and the State is going to help them without restricting, I do not see how it can be done. If the State sets out in the beginning to make citizens, it is only too likely to attempt to make them of one

pattern. It will try to make them according to the pattern approved and sealed by the Government of any particular time, according to the ideals of the moment. But if the State will content itself with encouraging people to educate themselves into being citizens, and let them lay down the lines, that will be a very great work, and that is what we are trying to do all over the country by the co-operation of the Universities and representatives of the people and the people's organizations all over the country. Those who are doing this, you may say, are the successes of our present system of education. Some of them, of course, are, but more are failures, and they are all making themselves into citizens through a system of education which has little to do with technical education or the three R's. It is an education in the civic humanities, and attempts to make the cobbler not only a cobbler, but a man who can use his privileges as a citizen because he realizes what the State is, and what it means to him. And that, after all, is most important from the highest moral point of view. Every one has, as an individual citizen, an equal power in these days; but that is no good in itself: on the contrary, it is more likely to be a grave ill, unless the citizens know how to use their power, and it is a part of the duty of that great Church which stands outside all creeds to look to the question of the citizen's duties, and to assist in that part of education, just as much as in the teaching of religion as religion. In fact, it seems to me to be almost more important, although even more difficult to effect.

I mention the Workers' Educational Society because it does seem to me to point out in a degree how we are going to get at this question. It is not going to be solved through the State or through the Church. It is going to be solved through the people, but the Church and the State will both be needed to work with them and help them as far as possible, not lowering their own standard, nor yet attempting to force on the people struggling upwards an iron rule, but always holding the highest ideal before those who are striving after the best that they know.

The CHAIRMAN.—I think we must now close this interesting discussion by calling on Mr. Marston to reply as far as he sees it necessary.

I will just reply to one point upon which Mr. Tuckwell has laid emphasis—the difficulty of deciding about the religious education

of the child. I hold very strongly that it is the parent who is responsible for the education, religious, moral and social, of the child. Therefore, in whatever position they may be, the parent, the father or the mother, or both, have the right of demanding that their children shall be instructed in the form of Christianity which they themselves consider best for them. If a system could be inaugurated by which that principle could be carried out throughout our vast community, it would solve a problem which is now dividing class against class, party against party, and I am afraid is likely to do so for a long time to come; but I hold that if we maintain this principle, that the parent is the proper guardian, then he has the right to prescribe the form of Christianity, or even the form of religion other than Christianity, for we cannot neglect other religions, and the child ought to be brought up as far as it is possible in that form which the parent prescribes.

I shall now ask Mr. Marston to reply.

REV. H. J. R. MARSTON.—Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, I thank all those who have taken part in this discussion, and particularly each one for the marked clemency with which they have dealt with my address.

I am happy to feel that as I designed, though I hardly ventured to expect quite so practical an application, that my lecture has stirred the feeling and the thought of the Society to discuss the greater problem of education.

I should like to say one or two things in reply.

First of all, I venture to say to my friend Mr. Coxhead that I do not think that he has proved that I failed to grasp the essential principle of the *Politeia*. I know, of course, that the object of that book is to ascertain what justice is, and I said so. I think I also said that education was the third of three of the principal topics, and I still retain that opinion, *pace* Mr. Coxhead.

As to the nature of education, and Plato's teaching upon it, I ought to add this, that Plato does say that the son of one who has the gold admixture may prove to be silver, or even iron. In that case, he must be degraded to the silver or the iron. Conversely, one whose parents are of the iron class may be born with gold or silver admixture. He then must be raised to the silver, or the gold class. So that although there is a very rigid division of classes ideally considered, he does make room for the transposition

of one to the other. In other words, he allows for the great principle which Mr. Oke dwelt upon, that where there is talent, talent must have the scope to assert itself, to realize itself, and to rise as high as the talent will go. (Hear, hear.) In point of fact, there is no country in the world where that has been longer or more liberally recognized than in England. England, with all thine educational faults, I love thee still! (Hear, hear.)

To go to another subject. In my closing sentence I said that according to the Christian doctrine of human nature it is impossible for any educator with eighteen centuries of Christian history and Christian consciences behind him, to allow that anything is really education which violates the highest qualities of human nature. We cannot tear up our New Testament; we cannot falsify centuries of Christian practice to please anybody. What I said was that however you interpret that thorny word "Church," according to my thesis the Church in some sense or other must have not only a say, but *the* say, the first and the last say in the matter of education. If the Secretary who made that interesting and inspiring speech cannot tell us better than this, that the State is so behind the times, and the Church is so divided that we cannot give an adequately Christian Education in Christian England, all I can say is, God help us, and God help those that come after. (Applause.)

A vote of thanks to the lecturer, proposed by Mr. BISHOP and seconded by Dr. HEYWOOD SMITH, was carried by acclamation.

The CHAIRMAN having given notice of the alteration in the date of the Annual General Meeting from May 2nd to May 9th, and having announced that the President, Lord Halsbury, would take the Chair, the proceedings terminated.