

25 NOV 1928

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ART IN EDUCATION.

THE CREATIVE IMPULSE.

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FACULTY OF ARTS DINNER.

The quinquennial anniversary dinner of the Faculty of Arts was held at Princes Restaurant Piccadilly, last night, the president, Viscount Burnham, being in the chair. The Faculty, whose new galleries in Upper John-street, Golden Square, were opened last week, seeks to create a larger measure of public interest in the creative arts.

Lord EUSTACE PERCY (President of the Board of Education), proposing the toast of "The Faculty of Arts," said it was their function above all, to create and represent and make good the professional opinion on behalf of the arts as a whole. The creation of a really authoritative means of expressing the point of view of the arts and the influence of the arts was one of the most necessary things in this country at the present moment. He did not think that any nation had ever needed their influence more than did this country. He thought he should be expressing something near their united and Christianised view if he said that the most important thing in education at the moment was to emphasise the creative impulse as distinct from the merely theorising impulse. Theory was not the most important side of economics they had to teach in the schools. What was far more important was to teach people to produce goods, and not to teach them to theorise about the production of goods by other people. (Hear, hear.) The most important thing at the moment was to restore the feeling that production in itself was economics. He was surprised how little that was realised by some commentators on our educational system. There was no reason to be despondent about the position of art and education in this country at the moment. Much remained to be done, but no one could look round without seeing many instances of the strong advance of art in the intimate and domestic life of this nation, which was, after all, far more important than any public or Governmental patronage of art. That feeling for artistic production in the domestic life could be seen in the new housing estates and in the new schools. With the support and guidance of the Faculty he believed that the future of education and the arts in this country would be brighter than it had been for many years. (Cheers.)

The PRESIDENT acknowledged the toast.

Dean INGE, proposing the toast of "The Arts," said he had to confess there was one very beautiful art with which he was absolutely incompetent to deal—music. He had to listen to a great deal of good music every day, and he confessed that his savage breast was proof against the enchantment. (Laughter.) With regard to architecture, he had in the last three years visited two countries—America and Sweden, in which he ventured to think architecture was having a real and very interesting renaissance. (Hear, hear.) From the new sky-scraper to the new Greek temple in America he could not help feeling that the buildings showed very remarkable evidence of originality, taste, and beauty.

"THE CULT OF UGLINESS."

Sir FRANK DICKSEE, President of the Royal Academy, responding, said there was a tendency none too soon, to treat the arts with more seriousness than hitherto in this country.

still needed a definite art education amongst adults. If they had a better art education amongst the community there would not have been some of the terrible lapses they had seen of late in the world of art. There would have been an outcry against that development and the cult of ugliness which was very much to the fore at present. (Hear, hear.) Perhaps it was necessary that there should be a period of uncertainty following the war, when standards had to be revised and fresh traditions formed. While that was going on they could not expect that tranquil spirit in which the most beautiful work of art had been created and achieved. Therefore in every case he advised the exercise of a little patience.

His Excellency the GREEK MINISTER, responding to the toast of "The Visitors," proposed by Viscount LEVERHULME, said the Prime Minister in a delightful speech the other day on archaeological excavations and discoveries in Sparta by the British school at Athens, expressed some surprise that people living in Athens had to go elsewhere to make discoveries. He thought it should be recognised that everyone who was striving to achieve something in an artistic and idealistic way had in the figurative sense come from Athens. In that sense the Prime Minister himself was an Athenian, and all who by their efforts strove to promote art and beauty were Athenians. (Cheers.)

Professor PATRICK ABERCROMBIE also responded.

Sir ROBERT WITT, submitting the toast of "The Council and Officers," referred to the difficulty of pleasing all sections of the public in matters of art. In the case of the Tate Gallery the number of letters he received from the art-loving public was extraordinary. On the one hand they had the individual who waxed irate at what he described as the "horrible modern atrocities upon the walls"—(laughter)—and almost by the next post was received another letter in which the writer expressed horror at the "old things you still leave on the walls. Can you not possibly bring in some fresh ideas instead of these mouldy old things?" (Laughter.) Between those two extremes it was very difficult, and the principle on which they worked at the Tate Gallery was to be rather generous in the way of allowing things to come in. He thought that was the right way, for they sifted things in the kindest and best way. If they allowed things to come in in a liberal way, and the future did not justify it, those works would quietly disappear, but the Gallery would, at such events, be spared the reproach of not being wide and liberal enough to take the things when they had the chance. (Hear, hear.)

Mrs. KINGSLEY TARPEY, responding, said she thought the time had come when the work they were doing for the nation ought to be recognised outside the Faculty itself. They were increasing conscious of the position they occupied in the life of the country; they were a most useful body to all artists; they did not compete with an established society, but co-operated with them and were ever ready to join hands with any other society, and give whatever help they could. In that way the artists of the country could attain a strength such as they had never reached before. (Hear, hear.)

The health of the Chairman was pledged on the call of Sir JOHN COCKBURN.

During the evening the company were entertained to a musical programme by Miss Magdalen Girdlestone, Miss Daisy Marsland, and Miss Miriam Anglin.

Amongst those present were :

The Portuguese Ambassador, the Greek, Polish, Rumanian, Swedish, and Swiss Ministers, the Acting Minister for Egypt, Mr. J. D. Bridge (principal of Trinity College), Sir Israel and Lady Gollancz, Sir William Goscombe, Mr. Richard Jack, R.A., Mr. Philip de Lazlo, Madame Maria Levinskaya, Sir Thomas Lipton, Dr. John McEwen (principal of the Royal Academy of Music), Mr. Alfred Munnings, R.A., Mr. Julius Olsson, R.A., Baroness de Smits da Palmeira, Mr. Geoffrey Whitworth (secretary of the British Drama League), Miss Lilian Baylis, Sir Herbert Brittain, M.P., the Mayor of Marylebone, and the Mayor and Mayoress of Brighton.