

## TRUTH, GOOD, AND BEAUTY

(By Professor Coleman Phillipson.)

There appears to be in some quarters a strange misconception concerning the significance of the Beautiful, and especially its place in human life. This is an enormous subject, and in the very small space at my disposal I can indicate only a few points.

The usual threefold division of mental activity—knowing, will, and feeling—corresponds roughly to the division of science, ethics (morality in the widest sense), and aesthetics. The object of science is the discovery of truth; of ethics, to realise a good will or good conduct; of aesthetics to realise the beautiful—the great values of life. Each being, in pursuit of reality, in its own particular sphere, and the ultimate reality being necessarily one, there is an inevitable alliance between the three. They are the great desiderata conditioned by, and fostering, vital impulse; they come from life, minister to life, and are merged into life. But for such relationship they would be unintelligible. The potency of each is due to their constant interplay and mutual reinforcement.

### Art and the Good

Moral sensibility and appreciation cannot be divorced from aesthetic sensibility and appreciation. The creations of art are subject to moral judgment; for they purport to communicate worthy or desirable emotions, that is, a fitting or good state of mind. Are we in contemplating a work of art to surrender ourselves entirely to the magic of the artist, as the trees, rocks, and beasts did to the music of Orpheus? Are we to become slaves, deprived of will, judgment, and personality, in the presence of music, sculpture, architecture, painting, and poetry? Art is meant for a human, living world, and must justify its existence there by contributing to the total good of the community. And the nature of the total good cannot be determined by reference to aesthetic considerations alone. That is to say, though art is not directly concerned with morality, yet the aesthetic state of mind art engenders must not be incompatible with ethical principle. If there were such incompatibility, the basic unity indispensable to rational and responsible personality would be destroyed.

### Truth and Beauty

Truth implies the recognition of harmony in Nature. The harmony in our aesthetic sphere, in our moral sphere, and in our physical sphere, together with the harmonious relationship of the three, is a counterpart of the cosmic harmony. Keats' famous line, "Beauty is truth, truth beauty," is therefore clearly explainable. It reminds us of the old scholastic phrase, "Beauty is the splendor of truth;" and we may also recall the words of Emerson, "Beauty is the mark that God sets upon virtue."

Now as the beautiful, the good, and the true are, despite their distinctiveness, intimately connected—"three sisters . . . that cannot be sundered without tears" (as Tennyson says), why have views as to the beautiful been much more divergent than views as to the true and the good. Taste varies enormously; one person prefers this, another person prefers that. "De gustibus non est disputandum." But in the realm of morality (in the widest sense) there is far less difference of opinion; there are certain principles of conduct recognised by all civilised peoples, and some are considered so essential that they are enforced by law. Again, in the sphere of science there is still less divergence of view: a scientific textbook will command assent everywhere.

Probably the reason for this is that in human evolution, in the struggle for existence, it is found most important to ascertain the truth, to gain a

knowledge of the manifestations of Nature, so that man's adjustments and provision for the future are facilitated. And with the establishment of social life, and politically organised communities, it is found important to ascertain what is fitting, good, for each individual's conduct.

### Artist and Moralist

Therefore, having achieved great intellectual and moral conquests mankind must enquire more closely into the nature and significance of the beautiful, and ascertain and recognise valid principles, which will govern artistic work, discourage capricious eccentricity, make it impossible for the extravagant aberrations of a clique to pass as expressions of the beautiful, and above all emphasise the vital relationship that exists between the beautiful, the true, and the good.

I do not, of course, suggest that a work of art is to be created expressly as a moralising or didactic agency. But if it is a true work of art its aesthetic effect will not be inconsistent with the exigencies of moral life and a moral ideal. Moral purpose does not necessarily make art beautiful; a work may be moral in purpose, but poor aesthetically. Still, fineness and nobility of idea will enhance the aesthetic emotion intended to be communicated, will impart greater profundity, permanence, and universality to the work of art, and so will give deeper joy to the beholder or listener or reader, and will evoke a more sympathetic response in him.

### Menace to Art

The world's great artistic creations possess this quality: for example, Michelangelo's "Thinker," Shakespeare's "King Lear," Wagner's "Parsifal," Millet's "Angelus," and thousands of others. Aesthetic interests and ethical interests can be served at the same time without any disloyalty on the part of the artist toward his noble vocation. Every great writer on art, every philosopher who has endeavored to probe below the surface of things, and every thoughtful and clear-sighted observer who has contemplated the multitudinous activities of human life have discerned and emphasised the moral and spiritual significance of true art. If art be ever cultivated for its own sake alone, if the true and the good be ever divorced from the beautiful, art will certainly degenerate and meet with its inevitable fate—self-destruction.

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## KING'S COUNSEL

### Fourteen Months Abroad

### BRITISH ROADS IMPRESS

After an absence of 14 months, Mr. E. E. Cleland, K.C., returned to Adelaide by the Orvieto this morning. Most of the time he was in London attending to business matters and court work. "How do our courts compare with those in London?" he was asked. But he smiled and did not want to make a comparison.



Mr. E. E. Cleland, K.C.

who returned to Adelaide today after an absence of 14 months.

Mr. Cleland was interested in the Kingston appeal case, which was taken to the Privy Council. "It may be of interest to South Australia to know that the original judgment by Mr. Justice Parsons was adhered to after being partially reversed in the High Court," he said.

### ON THE BATTLEFIELDS.

Mr. Cleland visited Scotland, France, and Belgium. "I visited friends in Rheims, which is still more or less in ruins," he said. "Of 16,000 homes, 12,000 were destroyed during the war, but the work of restoration is being performed rapidly." Mr. Cleland passed over a number of battlefields, but said the traces of warfare were gradually growing less.

### GOOD ROADS.

He made a fortnight's tour of the highland of Scotland, covering more than 700 miles. Their roads put ours to shame, he continued. "Over the whole of that distance I did not notice a hole the size of an ordinary dinner plate. They were all tar-dressed roads, and I was particularly impressed with the method of repairing them. Gangs of men with steam rollers were constantly on the look-out for defects. They carry sand and tar with them drawn by little trucks."

### BETTER PUBLIC UTILITIES.

"Railway fares are also much more reasonable in the United Kingdom," he added. "And speaking generally the postal and telegraph arrangements are infinitely better than in Australia. Telegrams are delivered more promptly and even large parcels are delivered at your door through the post."

Despite the advantages that the old world has over the new, Mr. Cleland seemed glad to be home again.

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## Busy Scenes at Elder Hall

### LIST OF VISITORS

Elder Hall presented a busy scene this morning. It has been transformed into an information bureau on all matters pertaining to the congress.

Throughout the morning many members of the association signed the register, collected their badges, invitations, and programmes.

Arrangements were made for short excursions during the week.

Mr. E. C. Andrews, B.A. (permanent honorary general secretary), Mr. L. K. Ward (local honorary secretary), and Mr. B. S. Roach (local honorary treasurer) have been provided with offices in Elder Hall. Postal facilities and writing rooms have been provided for visitors.

Sir John Monash will be inducted into the presidency of the association by Sir George Knibbs (retiring president) at the Town Hall, when Sir John Monash will deliver an address on "Power Development."

On Tuesday morning several sections of the Congress will meet, and the sectional presidents will deliver addresses.

### LIST OF VISITORS.

Among those who signed the visitors' books were:—Sir John Monash (president), Sir George Knibbs (retiring president), Melbourne; Launcelot T. Harrison (Sydney); George W. A. Sweet (Melbourne); Charles C. Buttlerbark, Blanche Bauster (Melbourne); Dorothea R. Coverlid (Melbourne); Sydney Dodd (Sydney); J. A. Gilruth (Melbourne); W. J. Archer (Sydney); E. C. Schofield (Sydney); John F. McKinnon (Sydney); S. Bennett (Perth); Dr. and Mrs. E. Kidson (Melbourne); J. H. Harvey, Joseph H. Woodward, H. Wilson, J. P. Wilson, E. M. Wilson, J. H. McFarland, Miss Amy Fuller, F. M. Quodling (Sydney); F. J. Quodling, E. McLennan, I. Cookson, H. H. Scott, M. M. Williams (Sydney); E. E. Shepherdson, Anthony Musgrove (Sydney); W. R. Browne (Sydney); Fred P. J. Gray (Sydney); L. S. Lane (Sydney); A. J. Blomfield (Auckland); E. F. J. Bordeaux (Melbourne); Mr. and Mrs. C. L. Butchers (Melbourne); Mr. and Mrs. H. O. Chalmers (Melbourne); D. Mahony, Duncan R. Sommerville (Wellington); Augustus Worker (Melbourne); David Reid (Sydney); W. R. Jewell (Melbourne); Leslie W. Smith (Sydney); Leslie J. Thompson (Sydney); M. Wright (New Zealand); F. E. Loughton (Victoria); A. M. Loughton (Victoria); C. M. Wickens (Victoria); F. Buckhurst (Victoria); Edward Mayher (Western Australia); J. Reynolds (Tasmania); F. P. Gully (Perth); E. M. Gray (Sydney); Hugh O. Howling (Perth); E. A. Watts (Melbourne); D. B. Copland (Hobart); E. C. McClelland (Melbourne); J. W. Cockran (Melbourne); O. Rodway (Hobart); L. Rodway (Hobart); E. R. B. Piver (Qld.); Alice Michaelis (Melbourne); Jean S. Grief (Melbourne); R. C. Cowley (Brisbane); R. C. Park

(Brisbane), A. R. Bailey (Melbourne), W. H. Fleury (Ballarat), D. Rankin (Melbourne), M. Amoussou (Sydney), M. E. V. Fleury (Ballarat), T. R. Sagh (Melbourne), F. Sagh (Melbourne), R. D. Thompson (Perth), G. S. Flude (Melbourne), P. F. Thompson (Melbourne), E. T. Newton (Melbourne), P. M. Newton (Melbourne), M. E. Houston (Melbourne), J. H. Young (Victoria), I. C. Ross (Sydney), W. G. Woolnough (Sydney), H. D. Skinner (Dunedin), J. W. Mudas (Victoria), E. de C. Clarke (Perth), Stanley Addison (Melbourne), P. D. Riddell (Broken Hill), C. H. J. Clayton, R. W. Crabtree, E. N. Coghill, George Coghill, Reuben T. Patton, E. J. Hartung, Dr. A. E. V. Richardson, G. Ampt (Melbourne), W. Davies (Melbourne), F. A. Longmore (Melbourne), A. T. S. Simons (Melbourne), James A. Kershaw (Melbourne), G. H. Halligan, G. Stillman, S. Altmann, K. Peterson, E. Derriek.

K. McInerney, Sir James Barrett (Melbourne), Fred Berry (Sydney), J. A. and Mrs. Seltz (Melbourne), George S. Browne (Melbourne), Everitt Atkinson (Western Australia), W. A. M. Robertson, K. McDonald (Victoria), Professor Anstruther Lawson (Sydney), Ernest R. Pitt (Melbourne), G. D. Osborne (Sydney), Harold Raggall (Sydney), H. C. Wilson (Victoria), S. H. Barraclough (Sydney), George S. Gordon (Victoria), Ruth Sugden (Melbourne), E. A. Le Souer (Perth), J. N. Griffiths, N. T. Harding, M. R. Hansen, J. V. Purdy (Sydney), J. Nangle (Sydney), E. W. Timcke (Sydney), A. Gordon Gutteridge, E. F. E. Davey, Sir W. Baldwin Spencer (Melbourne), Gerald Lightfoot (Melbourne), D. P. Milner, E. R. L. Reed, Ernest W. Skeats, H. R. Seddon, I. K. Davis, Robert H. M. Jull (Perth), Mr. and Mrs. E. S. Richards (Melbourne), H. J. Priestley (Queensland), T. Parnell (Queensland), H. C. Richards (Queensland), Leo A. Cotton (Sydney), J. D. Stewart (Sydney), Edwin Cheel (Sydney), J. M. Baldwin (Melbourne), W. Agar, E. F. J. Love, F. E. Love, N. T. N. Wilmors, J. H. Saunders, Professor R. D. and Mrs. Watt, H. G. Whitfield, H. J. Finlay (Dunedin), T. H. Black (Dunedin), Charles H. Kellaway, N. A. Mirfield (Melbourne), L. F. Gillen (Hobart).

### LOCAL VISITORS.

Among the local visitors and those connected with the University of Adelaide are:—

Sir George Murray, Sir Frank and Lady Moulden, Sir Joseph and Lady Verco, Dr. Mildred Mocatta, Messrs. A. L. Gordon Mackay, L. J. Spafford, N. Champion Hackett, Frank H. Counsell, C. R. Churchward, Sydney Dodd, Ernest H. Ising, Oscar H. Walter, Charles Fenner, W. Wilson, H. Wilson, E. M. Wilson, and Mrs. H. J. Lipman, Messrs. H. S. Summers, C. E. Tilley, Ivan S. Magarey, Mr. and Mrs. S. K. Samuel, Mr. Geoffrey Samuel, Mr. J. F. Bailey, Mr. and Mrs. Edgar R. Walte, Mr. W. J. Kimber, Mr. S. Russell Booth, Mrs. Russell Booth, Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Woolcock, Prof. F. Wood Jones, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Crompton, the Rev. L. A. and Mrs. Bernstein, Prof. E. Harold Davies, Messrs. C. S. M., and H. M. Crompton, Miss Harriet A. Stirling, Messrs. E. L. Tilley, A. E. Scott, E. F. Gryst, E. W. Hawker, Misses M. L. and C. A. Benda, Messrs. Alan H. Robin, B.Sc., W. T. Rowe, Frederick Walsh, A. C. Richards, B.A., Dr. and Mrs. R. Puleine, Miss Puleine, Major and Mrs. G. W. Shaw, Mr. C. J. and Miss E. M. Tuckwell, Dr. Gertrude A. E. Halley, A. Jackson, Miss Lydia Longmore, Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Christie, Mr. and Mrs. J. A. C. Newbould, Dr. Frank S. Hone, Messrs. H. Rutherford Purnell, N. Reid, I. Bowman, M. C. Moore, Lionel B. Bull, Miss Helene Raffelt, Mr. E. Johnson, Dr. Helen Mayo, Dr. J. C. Mayo, Misses J. J. Topperwein, Harold Verco, and Addison, Messrs. H. B. Whitham, L. G. Watson, Misses Beatrice and Rosetta Bennett, Messrs. O. W. Tieggs and Edwin Ashby, Mr. and Mrs. A. W. G. and Miss Margorie Pitt, Messrs. Malcolm Fraser and S. J. Jacob, Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Price, Mrs. H. A. Price, Mr. and Mrs. G. L. Wood, R. Lockhart Jack, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Sefton Jones, Messrs. William and A. E. Fuller, I. I. Maloney, E. A. Matison, Commissioner and Mrs. S. J. Mitchell, Mr. and Mrs. E. S. Paterson, Prof. Walter Howchin, Messrs. F. W. Eardley and J. C. Fraser, Dr. and Mrs. W. A. Magarey, Messrs. Paul L. Hossfeld, M. Oliphant, Roy S. Burdon, Cecil J. Hackett, Allan J. Farquhar, A. B. Putland, and L. H. Sholl, Mr. and Mrs. William J. Adey, Miss Florence M. Pitt, Mr. M. Hallett, Miss Mary C. Dawbarn, Mr. Walter H. Baker, Miss A. Baker, Mr. and Mrs. H. W. Uffindell, Mrs. A.

A. Hittmann, Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Knuckey, Mrs. W. H. Lister, and N. Robert Crompton.