

people of this State are brought into touch with education in its higher form, the stronger must become their desire to have the means for attaining it permanently established among them. Again, two of Professor Henderson's lectures dealt with different phases of the same historical period. They presented vivid pictures of two men—St. Francis of Assisi and Richard Coeur de Lion—each in his way a type and embodiment of the times in which they lived. And the lecturer very clearly showed the main principles in the light of which anyone might profitably approach the further study, not only of the lives of those two men, but also of the whole history of their time. The hard utilitarianism of the Gradgrind school might argue, and often does argue, that these things have nothing to do with us; that it is of no practical value to read about people who lived 700 years ago. When one hears arguments of this kind, one recalls how St. Paul, referring to the characters in Jewish history, told the Corinthians that these and these things "happened to them for our ensamples." So it is with the study of all history. Just as we realise the ideals of the men of old—note when and how they succeeded, and discern when and why they failed to attain them—so shall we, in striving after our ideals, learn how to follow or to avoid their examples. So also in his third lecture the Adelaide Professor, in dealing very cursorily with one play of Shakespeare's, irresistibly suggested the spirit in which one might with best advantage read, not only that play and others written by Shakespeare, but also any work of acknowledged literary merit. And, finally, the last form of suggestion was that conveyed by the lecturer in his supplementary remarks. Man, he said, did not live by bread alone. It was much if his material wants were satisfied, but in his complex nature were artistic and literary wants which needed to be satisfied as well, if he would attain his proper mental manhood. With the desire would come the means for its gratification, as they had come in England and were coming in the more settled Australian States. The suggestion in these words, specially applied to Kalgoorlie, is obvious, and we have little doubt that at no distant date it will crystallise into practical results.

## PROFESSOR HENDERSON LECTURES.

### ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI.

Professor Henderson, lecturer on history in the Adelaide University, who is visiting the fields under the auspices of the committee of the Kalgoorlie Mechanics' Institute, delivered the first of his series of local University Extension lectures in the Congregational Church, Friday, his subject being "The Life of St. Francis of Assisi." The building was crowded. The mayor (Mr. J. H. Cummins) presided, and introduced the lecturer.

The professor, in opening his address, said it seemed the irony of fate that he should have to deliver a lecture within a couple of miles of "The Golden Mile" on St. Francis of Assisi—a man whose ideal in life was poverty. He had a romantic love for his ideal, and sought to attain it with as much fervor as did the knight of the middle ages follow his lady love. He was a native of Northern Italy, and lived his early years amid the Umbrian Hills. It was a time of war, and the towns were continually fighting one against the other, and one of the first records of Francis was that he was taken prisoner by the townspeople of Perugia. His father was a cloth merchant, and a wealthy man, whose ideals inclined towards a noble life, so he spared no money on his son while the lad associated with the nobles of the district. It was after one of their suppers that Francis first became imbued with his ideal as he wandered alone under the starry sky, such, perhaps, as the one they had that night in Kalgoorlie. One of his companions found him musing, and asked him, "Are you thinking of a wife?" He replied, "I am thinking of a wife more noble, more rich, more beautiful than your imagination can conceive." His companion did not understand the paradox, but Francis at the time was thinking of the Lady Poverty as he had found her in the Gospels. He visited Rome, and in the church of St. Peter he threw his money upon the altar, and going outside he changed clothes with a beggar. Francis was jeered at at the first as perhaps every man would be under similar circumstances, but gradually his sincerity drew followers. Then he found it necessary to apply to the Pope for sanction for his order, not for privileges. It was very necessary to mark the difference between sanction and privilege, if they were to properly understand the life of Francis. When he met the Pope Innocent III. two great ideals were brought face to face. He (the lecturer) was not called upon to pass criticism on either, but merely to state historical facts. The Pope believed that it was necessary to have organisation with wealth and power if the Church was to progress—provided always that the wealth and power were used for spiritual ends. Francis, on the other hand, absolutely abjured material wealth and held that for spiritual purposes a man should rely on the resources within himself. His three ideals were peace, labor and poverty. They were troublous times and Francis contended that as it was necessary to

be prepared to fight to retain wealth the spiritual man was better without it. When a friar told him it would be necessary for him to preach if he was to convert men he admitted that was so, but he contended that more could be converted by example than by word of mouth. He was a man of keen imagination, and one day he thought he saw the crucifix in the church of St. Damien bow towards him and say, "My church is in ruins. Build it up again." Though most people would have thought this to mean that the church was becoming too material, Francis took the words literally, and taking some of his father's cloth he sold it in the market and offered the money to the priest, but he refused to accept it. Francis' father was very enraged, and when they met one day in the market place Francis divested himself of his clothes in front of his father and the bishop, and said, so it was stated, "Henceforth I have only one father—God. I renounce all that I had, and give it back." Francis' second ideal was labor, and it was most unfair, as well as untrue, to assume that he encouraged or countenanced begging as a means of livelihood. Francis worked harder than any present worker, or was likely to work, and he insisted on the members of his order learning a trade if possible. Begging he only permitted as a spiritual exercise to keep his followers humble, or in cases where they were not paid for their work they were allowed to beg enough crumbs to sustain life. It was most unfair, as well as untrue, to assume that Francis would countenance the hordes of beggars who now infested the towns of Italy. His third ideal was poverty. This was a relative ideal. Many a man was poor on £2000 a year, while another was rich on £250, according to the tastes, but Francis insisted on the absolute elimination of all elements of personal gain and personal glory. His followers had to give up all their personal possessions, and one of their duties on taking their vows was to go forth and tend the lepers and the beggars. For housing Francis' ideal was to come as near to the Gospel as possible, and for a home when tired out, he slept in a hole in the ground, for "the birds of the air had their nests, but the Son of Man had not where to lay His head." Despite

the rigor of the rules, Francis soon exerted great influence, and the order increased so rapidly that it soon numbered 2,000,000. Francis then saw the need for subdividing it, for he could see, for instance, that it would never do for a married man to seek shelter under it. The works of the world had to be continued or society would soon become chaotic. He framed three rules for those who could not be accepted as Franciscans, and they were, firstly, to make peace with anyone with whom the person was at enmity; secondly, to give alms every day; and, thirdly, to work. About this time Francis went to Spain, but his mission was not a success, principally because he could not speak the language. He then went to Turkey and had an interview with the Sultan, but did not stay there long. Returning and landing at Bologna, the first object to meet his eye was a fine building, and on en-