

CONFERENCE AT THE HOUSE OF EDUCATION.

MISS MASON in answering some questions said: "We have had an immensely interesting discussion, and I sympathise with the dread expressed, of a "dead hand" being laid upon living education; but that implies authority; and the comfort is, that we speak with no authority, we are nobodies who volunteer these wares. We have tried the method and not found it wanting. Is it of any use to you? Will you try it? The proof of the pudding is in the eating. The world is full of delightfully keen teachers who are only too eager to make one experiment after another, and in this there lies a danger for the children. We offer what is no longer an experiment (for the method has been worked for fifteen years) and we know that it gives children what they want and leaves full room for the development of individuality. Shakespeare, to compare small things with great, gives ample room for this play of individuality. I shall ask you to listen later on to some answers to the question; What scene did you like best in *Henry VIII.*? We get almost the whole play covered in the scenes chosen, and I think it is evident that the choice and treatment of each scene is individual. Let us have desires, large, great, whole, but let us not be at the mercy of *chance* desires. A chance desire fills the horizon, the children delight in it, and it gives a certain stimulus to thought, but not the daily bread by which the children must live. Mr. Compton's remarks are deeply interesting, but it struck me on looking through a set of questions of the Common Entrance Examination, that few boys could have come across all the points taken up in the course of their regular reading. It seems to me that such an examination would be much more really serviceable if the examiner knew just what the boy had been doing from his sixth to his fourteenth year. That, while this examination is probably the best conceivable under present conditions, work on a common curriculum might, in the future, enhance the value of this and similar examinations. It is quiet intellectual activity that produces the best results at last. Suggestions are always [sic] welcome, but it would be understood that, though possibly all could not be acknowledged, if likely to be profitable they would certainly be adopted.