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TENNYSON STORIES.

Professor Henderson introduced two good stories into his lecture on Tennyson on Tuesday evening. He was relating that poet's facility for forming friendships, and of course Carlyle came up. "Tennyson called at Carlyle's house one night, and after a few words they each sat down before the blazing fire and looked into the glowing coals for two hours without either saying one word. Then Tennyson rose to go. Carlyle rose, too. The latter said, in his deep, hearty voice—'Come again, Alfred, we've had a grand time.'" (Laughter.) Professor Henderson's second story was one, he said, Tennyson always loved to tell. "The Prince Regent, whose character was not quite as high as his position, was walking in Portsmouth one day, when he saw rolling about in boisterous fashion over the other side of the road a boon companion of his, 'Hello, Towers,' said the Prince Regent, 'I hear you're the greatest blackguard in Portsmouth.' 'I hope, my lord,' replied Towers, 'you are not come to take away my reputation.'"

Ad. 25th July '06

BROWNING'S PHILOSOPHY.

Professor Henderson's lectures on "Poets of the nineteenth century" were brought to a close on Tuesday evening, when to a large audience in the Elder Hall he spoke on Browning's philosophy. There were certain risks in attributing philosophic teaching to a poet so essentially dramatic as was Browning; but there could be no doubt that he wished many of his ideas, even when conveyed in a dramatic form, to be taken seriously, while several of his poems, such as "Rabbi Ben Ezra," "Christmas Eve," "Easter Day," and "The Grammarian's Funeral," written as they were in response to his wife's request that he should express himself directly instead of through the medium of the drama, were plainly didactic. Browning believed struggle to be necessary to the growth of the soul. "Aspiration was heaven, stagnation hell." Heaven was not in Browning's view a place of rest, for eternal progress was the law of the spiritual life. Every effort to attain the good, brought its own reward in the influence it had on the soul. Browning carried his readers a step further still by his idea of the transmutation of evil. Evil, he had said, was "nought," but what he meant was that it was stuff for transmuting into good. They could get an illustration from the history of Venice, the inhabitants of which, as an outcome with their struggle with the waves, had built the mightiest fleets of their age. If they wanted to become physically strong, they must overcome obstacles. If they wanted to be strong morally they must do likewise, not be merely possessors of a "cloistered virtue." This was the crowning argument in Browning's philosophy of life. In conclusion he would say that Robert Browning's attitude towards life's problems was essentially heroic, the influence of his thought was bracing, and his optimism was strong enough to overcome all difficulties, provided his assumption be granted—that nothing was so important as the development of the soul.

Ad. 25th July 1906

FAREWELL TO A RHODES SCHOLAR.

Mr. W. R. Reynell, the third Rhodes scholar for South Australia, who is about to leave Adelaide for Oxford University, where he is to enter in October was entertained at a farewell dinner on Monday evening. The chair was occupied by Mr. R. L. Davidson, and the health of the departing student was proposed in felicitous terms by Mr. G. C. Campbell.

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THE WONDERFUL FARMER!

"We had a fine season last year, and you heard your farmers say they grew 30, 40, even 50 bushels to the acre. Your farmer grew 30 bushels to the acre? He grew 30 bushels? He grew 20 bushels? Did he? Marvellous man, that farmer! What did he do? He turned over the soil, ploughed and harrowed it, drilled it, put the seed in, and covered it over. And then he waited; and while he waited something wonderful happened. The mysterious powers in the seed, in a very mysterious way, used all those mysterious qualities in the soil. And under the influence of rain, over which the farmer has no control; under the influence of sunlight, which he does not even understand; under the influence of fresh air, which he does not know the value of, because he has not to pay for it; under the influence of all these mighty forces up came a little plant, up came ten thousand little plants; and in the autumn time stood the beautiful waving golden cornfield. And the farmer grew 20 bushels to the acre, did he? I tell you, hard as that work was to the farmer, that what he did, compared with what was done for him, was simply infinitesimal. He played the smallest part imaginable in the growth of that 20 bushels to the acre. Oh, we can give ourselves credit for a great deal, but by no means for the largest part. We forget those mighty forces in the universe which alone make us great, and attribute to our own works the great acts of God."—Professor Henderson, in his lecture on "Browning's idealism."

BROWNING'S IDEALISM.

LECTURE BY PROFESSOR HENDERSON.

On Tuesday evening the last of the series of three University extension lectures on "The poets of the nineteenth century" was delivered in the Elder Hall, before a full audience, by Professor G. C. Henderson, of the Adelaide University, the theme being "Robert Browning's Idealism."

—Development of a Soul.—

The lecturer said that in his first discourse he had spoken of the priest of Nature, Wordsworth; in the second, of the artist of the poetic world, Tennyson; and he wished in the closing lecture to speak of Robert Browning as the exponent of that philosophy in which he had attempted to justify the ways of God to men. There was a risk in constructing a philosophy of life from the works of a poet, and especially a dramatic poet; but Browning had infused something of his own spirit into his dramatic monologues especially. His wife had requested him to endeavour to express himself more directly and impressively than through the medium of dramatic writing, and it was after his marriage that Browning had written a great number of didactic poems in which, the lecturer believed, he wished the world to take him seriously and directly in regard to certain ideals that belonged to physical and moral philosophy. Browning was, perhaps, an extreme idealist, as when he said:—

To welcome each rebuff that turns earth's smoothness rough,  
Each sting that bids nor sit, nor stand, but go.

When at last he had said that "Evil is null, is naught, is silence implying sound," they probably thought him something of a fanatic. Browning's philosophy, however, was reasonable, and his beliefs the basis of a triumphant optimism. He considered a human soul of more importance than anything else, and in writing a letter to Mr. T. Milesand, at the time of the republication of "Sordello" in 1883, he had emphasized that in the remark, "My stress lay on the incidents in the development of a soul; little else is worth study."

—Heroic Quality of the Soul.—

Browning sympathized with men of strenuous character, and detested the dilettanti; he had been called "the modern Platonist," and he dwelt on the type that marked the distinction between the idea of the soul as simply the product of sensation, and that which considered it as something that not only was not the result of sensation, but defied sensation. He knew that strenuous characters must be those who were able to say "I shall, or I shall not," and he believed struggle to be essential to the growth of the soul. He had also seized upon the point that once there was awakened an enquiring spirit that made the student anxious to find out for himself what he did not know, there was laid the basis of a healthy education:—

Ah! but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,  
Or what is heaven for?

Heaven to Robert Browning was not a place for refined epicures; nor was it a place of rest in the sense of doing nothing, for that, to him, was hell. Heaven was aspiration. If the divine spark were kindled into a flame, and the individual became conscious of the better part of his nature, there was room for infinite progress Godwards; otherwise the reverse was the case. It was in the capacity to aspire that Browning would distinguish between man and the brute. In the development of the human life evolution did not always proceed at the same pace, and Browning loved to catch the individual when the pressure on the soul was almost at the breaking strain; for he knew that then men grew the fastest. He recognised, as Shelley and Carlyle had done, that the perception of beauty depended much on sorrow, and in nine cases of out ten there was a spiritual crisis in which the soul awakened and grew.

—Inspiration.—

Browning loved struggle, and did not want men and women to concentrate their attention merely on the tangible reward of their work. Not in intuition, but in strenuous effort came development. He reminded men bent on the development of soul and faculty, and in the intellectual, artistic, or spiritual life, there was no return without work, and development would depend exactly on native ability possessed and the amount of effort made. Robert Browning held that every struggle and effort was registered in the condition of the soul, which was either helped or hindered by it; that if development of soul were wanted there was no such thing as failure; that it mattered not what might be the end a man strove for; but it was of far more concern that he should put his best into his work. The student who entered the university to get a degree, when he obtained it perhaps valued the letters after his name but little; he had, indeed, gained his direct, but the importance was not in the tangible thing, but in the added perception of truth and of beauty, and in what came indirectly as the result of his study. (Applause.) Life must have its points of concentration. The student must have his degree, or some other mediate aim, to struggle for, or he would never make that intense application which led to the full development of his faculties. Cromwell, and nearly all great men, had declined to form plans too far ahead for fear of crossing the lines of Providence. Not knowing what might follow their immediate aim, they had struggled for that and left the rest to God.

—The Problem of Evil.—

Robert Browning had put into the mouth of Abt Vogler the words—

The evil is null, is naught, is silence implying sound:  
What was good shall be good, with, for evil, so much good more.

He had not said there was no such thing as evil in life. In "The Ring and the Book" he touched on the depths of infamy. Browning believed that taken absolutely evil did exist, but that in relation to the individual soul it was not only naught, but that in it there might be the more good. Evil was "stuff for transmuting." They had watched the sunset, the edges of the cloud touched

with scarlet or gold. A sunset with cloud was more beautiful than a sunset without cloud. What was beautiful in the sunset remained beautiful, with, for cloud, so much more beauty, because the cloud was transfigured by the light of the sun, and made to reflect something more glorious than itself. (Applause.)

—Transmutation.—

Evil might be transmuted into good. The Venetians in the twelfth century had found the waves hostile forces; but when they conquered them they became the very instruments of their greatness. England had become, after the downfall of Spain, supreme on the sea, and he (the lecturer) had no doubt that one reason why she had become the mistress of the waves was that on her own coastline—with its choppy waters, hidden sandbanks, and dense fogs—she had had so many difficulties of seamanship to overcome in order to carry on her own commerce. (Applause.) In order to develop muscle they must resist something, so Browning taught that in the moral realm it was by fighting that men overcame, and the man who struggled with and overcame a temptation had transformed its nature so that it became a means of good. The evil that was evil absolutely had become evil that was null, was naught, and for evil there was obtained so much good more.

—The Triumph of Good.—

Professor Henderson said he would close by referring to something that touched the lives of all rather nearly. Crucifixion, especially a crucifixion that touched an innocent being, was something awful to contemplate, and, taken absolutely, it was certainly evil to the last degree. Considering the Crucifixion in its relation to the life of the Being who could overcome, had not that very Cross been transfigured from something that was absolutely evil till it became the symbol of one of the greatest forces known

to humanity for the uplifting of mankind. Considered in relation to the individual Life that overcame in that trial, was it not true that "the evil was null, was naught, and for evil so much good more"? (Applause.)

The lecturer interspersed his discourse with a number of selections from the poet's works illustrating the various points.

Register 26th July

ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY.

NEW REGULATIONS IN MUSIC.

A meeting of the Senate of the University of Adelaide was held on Wednesday afternoon to consider the question of repealing the existing regulations for the public examinations in music, and substituting new ones in lieu thereof. Mr. F. Chapple, B.A., B.Sc. (warden of the senate) presided.

Professor Ennis moved for the repeal of the old and the adoption of the new regulations, which had been approved by the council. He said that for the last five years the music examinations had been conducted by the University in conjunction with the Associated Board, and that the agreement to that effect had expired through effluxion of time. For some years the University of Melbourne had conducted examinations in music, and at a general conference of representatives from all the universities of the Commonwealth States and New Zealand, held in the Victorian capital, it was resolved that all the universities represented should co-operate for the holding of the examinations. The proposed new regulations had been designedly made somewhat elastic, to meet the circumstances of the various centres.

Professor Watson seconded the motion. Miss F. E. Cooke, Mus. Bac., said there was a strong feeling of preference for the Associated Board system among many teachers.

Professor Ennis intimated that the University did not propose to renew the agreement with the board, and said that the question of expense had been a large consideration in the decision reached.

The motion was carried. The following are the new regulations:—

—Regulations.—

- 1. Public examinations in the theory and practice of music shall be held in the City of Adelaide and at such local centres and other places as the council may determine; these examinations shall be held at such times as the council may direct. 2. Candidates shall be admitted to the examinations without restrictions as to age or sex. 3. The Faculty of Music, or some other body to be duly constituted, shall, with the approval of the council in each instance, make all necessary arrangements for the holding of the examinations, appoint examiners, and determine their tenure of office and the duties to be performed by them, determine the scale of remuneration to be paid to the examiners, the fees and charges to be paid by candidates for the examinations, and settle other details incidental to the holding of the examinations. 4. Schedules defining as far as may be necessary the range of the examinations shall be published not later than the 31st day of January in each year.