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UNIVERSITY BALL.

The annual ball of the Adelaide University Sports' Association was held in the Town Hall on Friday evening. There was a brilliant gathering, and gaiety reigned until the early hours of the morning. His Excellency the Governor and Lady Weigall attended, and the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress (Mr. Frank Moulden and Lady Hackett) were present. The Governor and Lady Weigall, who were attended by Captain Houston Bowell, were received by Mr. R. H. Wallman and the secretaries (Messrs. A. B. Barker and G. B. Culross), and at the head of the stairs by Lady Hackett, Professor Mitchell (vice-chancellor of the University) and Miss Nan Mitchell. Among the other guests were members of the council and staff of the University. The first proceeding was a reception by his Excellency and Lady Weigall of the debutantes, who were 23 in number. They looked charming as they marched past. A fox trot for the debutantes followed, and then everybody took the floor and had a delightful time. The committee comprised:—Professors Chapman, Henderson, Kerr Grant, Osborn, and Wood Jones, Lady Hackett, Lady Kidman, Mesdames E. Britten Jones, de Crespigny, A. M. Cudmore, Harold Davies, Gavin Gardner, Kerr Grant, J. Stanley Murray, H. C. Nott, T. G. Osborn, Arthur Rymill, S. H. Skipper, Bronte Smeaton, Kyffin Thomas, Albion Tolley, R. H. Wallman, J. Way Campbell, Wood Jones, Misses McMillan, D. Nobes, and Ethel Reed, Mes. Talbot Smith, R. H. Wallman, D. A. Rowling, L. M. S. Hargrave, G. M. Hone, W. Smith, J. W. Smith, and A. H. . . .

Professor Cleland seems to be a supporter of Weismann's theory that the longevity of a species depends upon the time required to produce and protect its offspring. I thought this theory had been laid aside long ago. It seems to be a case of putting the cart before the horse. The reproductive capacity would surely be adapted to the longevity of the species rather than the reverse. Is not the theory entirely disproved by the fact that fishes and reptiles are longer lived than birds and mammals? Indeed, if I may say it without disrespect, Professor Cleland himself shows its absurdity by carrying it to its logical conclusion. He says that the only way greatly to prolong human life would be, if it were possible, to extend the period of helplessness of infancy!

Materialism.

I now come to a very serious question. I can scarcely believe that the learned professor still holds an exploded belief of last century; but his language is distinctly materialistic. This may be due to a peculiarly "medical" mode of thought and expression, and may not mean that he is a materialist. His frequent references to "machine" and "mechanism" remind me of a passage I lately read in Professor Eddington's "Space, Time, and Gravitation." Speaking of the 200 or more theories that have been put forward to explain the nature of gravitation, he says—"Many of them would nowadays be dismissed as too materialistic for our taste—filling space with the hum of machinery—a procedure curiously popular in the nineteenth century." Very materialistic also are his statements that the purpose of human life is simply to perpetuate the species; that there is no hope of any great extension of that life, because "our bodies are but the temporary homes of the germs," and that old age was "a normal process, because nature had obtained all that she deemed necessary for the perpetuation of the species." (It is a strange conception, this personified "Nature," with its definite purposes and aims.) The professor further speaks of death as "a leap into the abyssal depths of everlasting oblivion." (Here he does not word his idea so prettily as in Tyndall's famous phrase, "When you and I, like streaks of morning cloud, shall have melted into the infinite azure of the past.") The same view appears when the professor offers us the one desolate sort of "comfort," that "one lives again in one's children or children's children."

Now, whether Professor Cleland is a materialist or not, I have good reason to believe that this exploded dogma—in the face of our present knowledge an utterly silly dogma—is held by at least one other member of the teaching staff of the University; and it is simply disastrous that any taint of this foolish notion should affect our University students. For that reason I propose to add a few words on this subject. I can only scratch over the ground and quote from a few authorities, or to deal with it properly would fill a large volume. Materialism may be described as the belief that nothing exists in the universe except matter, its movements and modifications; that life itself and the phenomena of consciousness and will, including all our mental, moral, and spiritual faculties, are due to mechanical causes. It is often called the mechanical theory of the universe.

Darwinism and German Propaganda.

Certain scientific discoveries, but particularly Darwin's evolution theory, which was announced in 1859, led to the greatest outbreak of materialism ever known in the history of the world. Evolution appeared to have explained so much in the history of the processes of life, that it was thought that everything was capable of explanation in physico-chemical terms. No room was left for the supernatural. A very curious and important fact was that Darwin's theory happened to be especially useful to the German military party. His theory was that the origin of species was due to the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest. This fitted in with the policy of the Germans, who were able to educate the nation into the belief that war was the universal law of nature, that they were the "fittest," and in accordance with "the great biological law" they were predestined to dominion over the world. The German professors prostituted their talents and became propagandists, and in particular Haeckel, a very unreliable

scientist, exercised an immense influence and did not even hesitate to use fraud in distorting scientific facts. Mr. Joseph McCabe, although no doubt innocently, was his henchman in England, and spread Haeckel's writings in cheap editions over the entire English-speaking world. It can readily be seen how this German propaganda added to the wide spread of materialism.

This state of affairs was, however, only a passing phase, and before the end of the century notable changes took place. Darwin himself had never been a materialist.

In his "Descent of Man" he said—"The birth both of the species and of the individual are equally parts of that grand sequence of events which our minds refuse to accept as the result of blind chance. The understanding revolts at such a conclusion." But, more important still, was the frank confession of by far the greatest thinker of the time, Herbert Spencer, in 1896:—"The processes which go on in living things are incomprehensible as results of any physical actions known to us. . . . We are obliged to confess that life in its essence cannot be conceived in physico-chemical terms."

The Advance of Knowledge.

Since that time there has been an enormous advance in scientific knowledge in all directions, and the whole aspect of the world has changed. It is impossible in this article to give more than a slight glance at a point here and there. But first should be mentioned that Darwin's main theory has gone by the board. No biologist now believes that the struggle for existence or natural selection could ever have caused a new species to appear. That theory—which created the outcroak of materialism—is itself dead and buried. It is also a very remarkable fact that evolution is changing its meaning. Leading biologists are now being forced to believe in what is called the Mutation theory, that evolution proceeds by the sudden unaccountable appearance of large changes in the organism—which, in other words, as it seems to me can only mean that species arise suddenly, and this again is practically equivalent to the Special Creation in the Book of Genesis. As regards matter itself our knowledge has made huge advances. It is now practically certain that matter does not exist. The very minute, hard, dead, unchangeable atom of last century is now found to be a centre of ever-moving energy, a sort of miniature solar system, in which elementary particles of negative and positive electricity take the place of the sun and planets (although not necessarily moving in the same manner). Radio-activity has also shown us that atoms are by no means unchangeable. As regards life and mind, we now realise that even the simple acts and movements of the lowest forms of animal or vegetable life are not mechanical reactions, but display volition and purpose. The study of the cells of the body has hugely widened the enormous gap that separates even the lowest forms of life from the inorganic world. The great discoveries of physiology and psychology as regards the processes of the brain and nervous system, the wonderful modern discovery of the Unconscious in ourselves, telepathy, and a host of other facts met with in anthropology and every other science tend to show that the mind or soul is something which exists of an entirely different character from that of the body, and exists independently of the body. The last wonderful discovery by that marvellous genius, Einstein, emphasises the whole tendency of modern knowledge towards the belief that the universe is essentially one of Mind.

Recent Testimony.

When I was in London last July our greatest psychologist, Professor William McDougall, in his presidential address to the Society for Psychological Research, made the following statement:—"However materialistic may be the dominant habit of thought among men of science there are but few of them who will confess to a whole-hearted acceptance of materialism as a philosophic creed. The bulk of them are sufficiently well educated to know that as such it is untenable." This, of course, means that a materialist is an ignorant man, who has not kept himself abreast of modern knowledge; and at the time it seemed to me somewhat discourteous. But, on thinking it over, one sees that it is a proper expression of an obvious fact, and I find that Professor Benjamin Moore, a leading bio-chemist, expresses himself in equally strong language. The latter statement is the more interesting because, if materialists still exist, one would expect to find them especially among the bio-chemists. In "The Origin and Nature of Life" Professor Moore says:—"Very often the exclusive study of one branch of knowledge at close quarters causes the student to lose perspective and deny the importance, or even the existence, of other knowledge. Such a person is merely uneducated or, it may be, is incapable of education through some natural defect. . . . The assertions of such a person should not irritate the man who has been gifted with higher sense; he is rather to be pitied, helped as far as possible, and taught like one who is partially blind or deaf. As an example of the effects of narrow study there may be taken the statement that the life-processes contain no problems save those of chemistry and physics. . . . The physicist and chemist have proven nothing more than that the physico-chemical processes are the instrument upon which something is played."

"Eternal Justice."

Reverting to Professor Cleland's lecture, one passage is very curious. He speaks of the invasion of disease germs and the defence by the human cells as "a battle-royal between two opposing living factors, each in the eternal justice of things equally entitled to live and multiply as species." This reference to an "eternal justice" as existing in the scheme of the universe is diametrically opposed to materialism, and may indicate the professor's actual belief. Whether the microbe and the human cell stand on a level is, however, extremely doubtful. The cell is surely an infinitely more wonderful, and capable thing than a microbe, and it is also part of man, the crown of creation. It is a very important fact in any enquiry into the scheme of the universe that evolution tends always upwards—and that the nature of the Supreme Power in the world must be judged from its best and latest work, the minds it has produced. There are other matters in the lecture that I would like more light thrown upon, but this article has grown too long. One thing I cannot in the least comprehend, namely, what Professor Cleland means by the "evolutionary origin" of disease. "Disease" must again be used in some unusual sense.

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ELDER CONSERVATORIUM.

STUDENTS' CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERT.

The audience at the Elder Hall on Monday night was large and appreciative, and the fifth concert of the 1921 session proved decidedly successful. It was a chamber music concert by students of the ensemble classes, under the direction of Mr. Gerald Walenn and Mr. Harold Parsons, Mus. Bac. The programme was well chosen, to illustrate the charm of what may be called the miniature work of the great composers, also the value of ensemble playing in giving a wider, deeper comprehension of music than is possible otherwise. In the playing of the students it was pleasantly evident that they had grasped the need for balance and restraint in order to bring out the full beauty of each composition. That much rehearsing must go to the perfecting of such works as those presented goes without saying, but besides mere technical accuracy the young musicians evinced commendable poise, and put real feeling and expression into their rendering—something above and beyond what is to be expected as a rule of the student on the concert platform. Haydn's Trio in G No. 1, "Rondo all Ongarese," was chosen as the first number, and in this Miss Dulcie Smith, Miss Gwen Moss, and Mr. John Meegan acquitted themselves decidedly well. There followed the first movement of Schumann's "Sonata in A minor," for piano and violin, with Miss Faith Stone at the piano and Miss van Senden as violinist, and a very charming rendering they gave. Mr. Richard Watson, who was in good voice, sang two solos, "A pleading" (Tschai-kowsky) and "To Anthea" (Hutton). The first movement of Beethoven's "Trio in E flat major" was played tastefully by Miss Doris Kentish, Miss Alice Price, and Mr. Eric Gibbs. Two movements from Haydn's "Trio in E flat" came next. The first (Allegro Moderato) being rendered by Miss Nellie Brindal, Miss Aila Zeven and Miss Alice Cummins, and the second (Presto) by Miss Muriel Prince, Miss Doreen Stone-man, and Miss Alice Cummins. Miss Charlotte Davidson sang Bohm's "Still as the night," Mozart's "Trio in B flat major, Op. 14, No. 3" (first movement) was played by Miss Marjorie Beare, Mr. Mervyn Williams and Miss Alice Cummins in a way that brought out the brightness so characteristic of that composer. Miss Ariel Shearer and Mrs. Wyles gave a particularly telling rendering of Cesar Franck's "Sonata in A major" for piano and violin. The pianist brought out well the curious wavelike effect of the composition and the violinist evinced the possession of command of tone and expression. Mr. Ewart Lock was heartily applauded for his singing of Mendelssohn's "I am a roamer," from "Song and stranger," and the final number was the "Trio in D minor, Op. 49," by the same composer. This was well played by Miss Nance Lamphee, Miss Elma van Senden, and Mr. Carlyle Jones.

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DISEASE AND MATERIALISM.

(By J. T. HACKETT.)

I unfortunately missed Professor Cleland's lecture, but the reports appear sufficiently to indicate his views. There are several matters that seem to require further elucidation. First comes the startling statement that disease is to be regarded as something beneficial to humanity. (Keats spoke of this world as a "vale of soul-making," but the professor was not speaking of the influence of pain and evil in developing the souls of men.) As being something beneficial, the professor must be speaking of "disease" in some unusual sense. He tells us—"Disease, or rather the phenomena accompanying it, indicate in most cases the effort made by the organism to limit or minimise, and then to repair, an injury. . . . Without disease we would cease to exist as a race; nay, even a single day's events would probably be fatal to many." All this seems to show a very curious confusion in the use and meaning of words. Let us begin with the fact that microbes invade an organism, and the phagocytes or other cells of the body and its anti-toxins are marshalled in force to resist the invasion. Now in the first sentence quoted the professor tells us that disease indicates this effort by the defending force. In the second sentence "disease" definitely means this defence, and in the sentence we can actually substitute the words "the defending force" for the word "disease." It is very bewildering. Disease ordinarily means the disturbance that follows an attack by germs. If the germs are successful the result is death—which is certainly not beneficial to the organism. If the invader is defeated it seems to be in the professor's mind that the suffering necessarily entailed is due to the resistance by the cells of the body. It is as if France should attribute her cruel losses and devastated country to the effort she put up to resist the German invasion. Also, as that effort was successful, the whole thing was beneficial to her, and she ought to be duly grateful to the Huns. So we should also welcome an attack of typhoid or small-pox!