

Register 13<sup>th</sup> Aug. 1903.

Reg. 13<sup>th</sup> Aug.

Register 14<sup>th</sup> 1903. 32

But one regards with dismay the possible passing out of general reading of Dickens and George Eliot. It is not a far cry to the mid-Victorian era; yet to the average reader, or non-reader, there is a suspicion of the obsolete, of mustiness, and wordiness, in the novels of that period, which engenders hesitation to undertake their perusal. George Eliot has been declared by a critic to have portrayed the working of the human heart in a fashion excelled by only Shakspeare himself, and Dickens's pictures of the joys and sorrows of middle-class life entitle him to rank in her honourable company. The man in search of "something to read" will, however, pick up and put aside their stories, remarking with Polonius concerning the Player's recital:—"This is too long." Are, then, the novels of the master storytellers of the last century to be cast to the literary void because they cannot be condensed into "short story" form—because, as Mr. Reid observed, the quart cannot by any possible physical stratagem be all poured in the pint pot? Regrettable as is the tendency, it is a natural evolution for which the present-day reader should not be held altogether responsible. To the demand that one must read the novels and stories of a past age, the answer is cogent—that one cannot read everything, unless one possesses, like Huxley, the capacity to "tear the heart out of a book" without steadily ploughing through it. The literature of to-day is not so wanting in attractive and meritorious qualities as to discourage the exercise of a natural desire to read first what appeals to immediate experience. The pity is that if this desire be gratified to any considerable extent no time is left even for reflection, much less for a perusal of the older long stories. Another consideration is the prevalent feeling that there is a kind of moral obligation to read the modern writers. This is enforced by the ubiquitous literary friend who persists in enquiring until one wearies of the "damnable iteration"—"Have you read So-and-So by Such-and-Such?" A negative answer falls like a confession of Original Sin. Thus the old resolve to some day read "Peacocks"—when one has time—fades away into the limbo of New Year resolutions and such other vague promises of reformation. But Romance is not dead, because the old romantic writers are mostly unread. Observe the vogue of modern romantic novels—for instance, "The Conqueror," the fascinating story of Alexander Hamilton's career, "Richard Carvel," the works of Mr. Anthony Hope, and (coming nearer home) "For the Term of His Natural Life" and "Robbery Under Arms." Nor can it be urged with any logical demonstration that the scientific spirit of the last half-century has had much to do with the neglect of Scott and Thackeray or the decay of Romance itself, if it has decayed. The literary inclination is swayed more by the emotions and tastes than by the intellect; and, even were it not so, the fact that science is the natural enemy of error and falsehood can hardly be a sufficient reason for alleging that she will not tolerate, or looks coldly upon, what does not pretend to be other than fiction.

Nor is it just to conclude that the devotion to scientific methods tends in itself to the stultifying of the imagination. There is such a thing as the "scientific use of the imagination," as Tyndall taught; and its exercise has led to many a modern discovery of the profoundest importance. Charles Darwin, the "Abraham of Science," has been cited as an example of the baleful effect of the dry light of science upon the imaginative faculties; but the real value of Darwin's great work—the result of lifelong devotion to the discovery of truth—is in its subordination of the speculative faculty, its simple, straightforward, and dispassionate argument, and its unswerving adherence to observed facts, whether they seemed to support his theories or to undermine them. One is inclined, however, to occasionally apply to scientists also Mr. Augustine Birrell's tirade against historians—"Their name is Perfidy! Unless they have a good style they are so hard to read; and if they have a good style they are so apt to lie!" Darwin's great lack from a literary point of view was in style, and grace, and force of diction, and in a sense that was characteristic of the man himself. To go no further, however, than the great scientific expositor of the last century, the man who styled himself "Darwin's Bulldog," shall any one say

that Huxley lacked style, vigour, and felicity of expression, or that he was deficient in the lively imagination which necessarily gave them birth? Against the one illustration of Darwin as the fountain of science and the grave of romance, it is easy to find contemporary writers in the same field who embodied the spirit of romance as applied to science. Take, for example, R. A. Proctor, whose astronomical works are popularly written and full of charm; and that remarkable genius, W. K. Clifford, who could weave a fascination about even a geometrical problem, as Sir Frederick Pollock attests. The scientific spirit of the time, the desire for precise and exact knowledge, has, more than any other moving cause, explored Shakspeare from opening scene to final "curtain" in search of new light upon the work and upon the poet himself. Modern investigation has given to us a wider knowledge of the man Shakspeare than was ever possessed by any other age, possibly not excepting that in which he lived, and moved, and had his being. We may, after all, lay the flattering unction to our souls, while we still study and admire the beauties of "The Tempest" and "The Merchant of Venice," and while we possess enthusiastic scholars like Mr. Reid to point the way, that we have something of the romantic left in us. We may also feel justified as a people in following the spirit of science into the deepest recesses of her explorations, yet being able to see, even in this "wireless and horseless age," the elements of real romance.

Reg. 13<sup>th</sup> Aug.

Mr. W. Geoffrey Duffield, B.Sc. (Adelaide), and B.A. (Cambridge), has been granted the "Nobel" Scholarship, or Student Assistantship (worth £50, for one year), at the National Physical Laboratory, Bushy House. The Nobel bequest is in the nature of a postgraduate course for the purpose of original research. The National Physical Laboratory was established in 1899, under control of a board representing the Royal Society, and the great technical societies. A Government grant-in-aid of £4,000 is contributed to the administrative expenses. The board took over the management of the Kew Observatory as a branch of the laboratory. The Chairman is the President of the Royal Society, Lord Rayleigh, D.C.L., F.R.S., is Chairman of the executive committee, and Dr. R. T. Glazebrook, F.R.S., is director. Mr. W. Geoffrey Duffield, who is the present holder of the Angas Engineering Scholarship, has just taken honours in the Mechanical Science Tripos at Cambridge, at the end of his second year. Mr. Duffield is the elder son of Mr. D. Walter Duffield, of Glenelg.

Reg. 13<sup>th</sup> Aug.

**UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS.**  
In Executive Council on Wednesday morning the statutes of the University dealing with the "Joseph Fisher Medal of Commerce" and "Joseph Fisher Lecture in Commerce" regulations, affecting the degrees of Bachelor of Law, Bachelor of Science, repealing the title of elementary commercial examination, and substituting the new title of "Junior Commercial Examination," were approved.

Reg. 14<sup>th</sup> Aug.

**UNIVERSITY SPORTS.**  
The various athletic clubs connected with the University recently decided to inaugurate an annual sports day, and the first will take place on the Adelaide Oval this afternoon. Good entries were received for the various events down for decision. All lectures at the University this afternoon have been suspended.

**SHAKSPEARE'S ROMANTIC PLAYS.**

**"MEASURE FOR MEASURE."**  
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION LECTURE.

At the University on Thursday evening the Rev. John Reid, M.A., gave the second of his series of lectures upon Shakspeare's romantic plays. There was a large attendance, and the able discourse was interspersed with frequent marks of appreciation. The lecturer, before commencing the study of the play, completed his introductory remarks of the previous Thursday, and dealt with the significance of the change from tragedy to romantic play in its bearing on Shakspeare's lifework. The dramatist's masterpieces were studied in their chronological order and grouping. Shakspeare's selection of subject was carefully presented. The change of feeling and of outlook brought about a corresponding change in the manner of versification. Mr. Reid dilated upon the history of English blank verse, and gave typical illustrations of its improvement by successive generations.

Before proceeding to the study of the first tale in the series, the lecturer said he found himself called upon to defend the choice of his subject, and to explain why a play such as "Measure for Measure" could well be included under the heading given to the course. The story would teach its lesson and defend its own position, but chiefly loyalty to Shakspeare and fidelity to the laws of historic literary criticism demanded the inclusion of "Measure for Measure" in the series.

Mr. Reid then proceeded to give the reasons for the writing of the story. He said it was the outcome of the condition of life surrounding the dramatist—the state of London at the close of the reign of Queen Elizabeth; the sins and sorrows of the great city. Shakspeare was revealed as a reformer of morals, and no true student of the play could deny the grand lesson embodied in it. The dramatic development of the story was next touched on, and the lecturer's elocutionary declamation of important passages assisted his audience to grasp their meaning. The tale implied a lesson for both the ruler and the ruled, and at the same time a reproof to the self-righteous. Comparisons between the plea for mercy at the lips of Isabella and of Portia in "The Merchant of Venice" disclosed that the latter's sprung from the rhetoric of the head, while that of the former came straight from the rhetoric of the heart. The solution of the problem revealed the possibility of social regeneration; that justice should be tempered with mercy, and firmness controlled by wisdom. Mr. Reid closed his second lecture by a fine study of the chief characters in the story, and deduced lessons for the guidance of human nature to-day.

Reg. 15<sup>th</sup> Aug. 1903.

**DEVELOPMENT OF THE VIOLIN SONATA.**

On Friday evening Professor Ennis, Mus. Doc. (director of the Elder Conservatorium) gave the second of his lectures on the development of the violin sonata, in connection with the University extension lectures. After referring to the work of Corelli, and Purcell, he traced the development noticeable in the compositions of their immediate successors. He pointed out that by the end of the Commonwealth in England, a secular spirit had taken possession of English music. Of all the forms of musical art, that which suffered most in the decline during the Commonwealth was church music. Referring to the work of Leclair (1697-1764), he said he had introduced a more brilliant style of execution, and his writings were characterised by an increase of the emotional element. There were piquancy and grace in his compositions but these were combined with theatrical pomposity, which somewhat marred their attractiveness. Speaking of the contributions of Tartini (1692-1770), he traced the influence of Veracini, in his writings, which were characterised by a charm of dreaminess and melancholy. Several other composers were dealt with, and illustrations of different styles of writing were given by Mrs. Ennis on the violin, Dr. Ennis acting as accompanist.