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ADELAIDE: FRIDAY, JULY 21, 1899.

THE UNIVERSITY UP TO DATE.

The ideal of a "People's University" is among the noblest of the age, but it is open to serious misconceptions. Curious results were produced by the old-fashioned notion that every young man born in a certain station of life ought to be sent to a University, and be converted willy-nilly into an educated man by living for three or four years amidst academic associations. So many dunces were sent to Oxford and Cambridge that at last the standard had to be successively lowered in order to suit their capacity, and the examinations became a mere farce. Lord Chancellor Eldon used to relate that he gained his Bachelor of Arts degree at Oxford for giving correct answers to the questions "Who founded New College?" and "What is the Hebrew for the Place of a Skull?" We need not add that degrees are not now conferred on such easy terms in British or Colonial Universities. With reference to higher popular instruction a serious fallacy would be the idea that with the average intellect any real good could be effected by attempting to force a University or College education upon either poor or rich where they did not show special aptitude for it. The door of the University ought to be open, and yet there should be no attempt to drive people into the building. The biological forces of heredity have completely upset the theory that every son of a rich man could be converted into a College don, and they would as thoroughly demolish any system which proceeded upon the assumption that all poor boys could make the best use of a College education. What are needed for the establishment of a "People's University" are means to enable any young man or woman endowed with a true taste and capacity for study to follow the beat of the mind and improve the talents by cultivation. The accident of station in life gives little or no indication of the presence or absence of the genius for study. Englishmen in India are amazed at the ridiculous caste system under which the son is compelled to follow the profession of his father, no matter what his natural abilities may be; yet in relation to the learned professions European nations have to a large extent preserved a caste distinction in virtually assuming that the intellects specially adapted to these walks of life are provided by the well-to-do classes only.

After all, however, the interests of the learned professions ought to be regarded as only a subordinate part of the wider policy of a popular University, whose high aim should be to assist all classes of the people in developing latent natural talent. Science and literature are now touching closely on so many occupations that it would be difficult to say where the learned professions begin and where they end. Above all, that lofty motive—the love of knowledge for its own sake—has permeated so many grades of society as to create a demand for much better teaching than was readily tolerated in the last century. Amongst comparatively poor people has arisen an aristocracy of "plain living and high thinking," and those who belong to this order can afford to pity the opposite class, who indulge in high living, but have neither the capacity nor the training for anything but the lowest grade of thinking. When Coventry Patmore was earning only 30s. a week one of the greatest literary London celebrities of the day said that his home was the most refined which he had ever been privileged to enter. To the intellectual aristocracy of this type, no matter what their incomes may be, the local University Extension Lectures specially appeal. On Tuesday evening Dr. Stirling opened his series of discourses on the fascinating topic of "Life—the Problem of Physiology." During the course of his lectures he intends to discuss the nature of this problem and the extent to which both early and recent physiological researches have thrown light upon it; and also the strange relations which exist between "psychology," the science of the mind, and "physiology," the science of the body. He will then speak of the groups of theories

classed under the headings of vitalism and monism, adducing facts and generalizations to indicate the probable limits by which human knowledge on these subjects is bounded. Finally, he will elaborate details regarding the chemical constituents and organic structure of cells, and the changes which accompany the vital processes, leading up to the final physiological transformation known as death. Dr. Stirling spares no pains, either in the preparation of specimens or in the arrangements for displaying lantern-slides and diagrams, to render his discourses interesting as well as instructive; and he should accordingly be commended. In the realm of physiological teaching Australia is fortunate in possessing three such capable and enthusiastic exponents as Dr. Stirling, of Adelaide; Professor Martin, of Melbourne; and Professor Anderson Stuart, of Sydney. Lecturers of this class have long ago risen superior to the old medical professional prejudice which endeavoured to put a ring fence round the domain of physiological knowledge, and to warn all outside enquirers that they were trespassers.

Great popular as well as scientific interest attaches to Professor Bragg's series of lectures on "Wireless Telegraphy." The London "Times" recently remarked, commenting on Signor Marconi's achievements in this department, that his services to science were chiefly valuable because he had succeeded in enlisting the sympathy of the Press and in attracting the attention of the public to a line of scientific research which had been quietly proceeding in the laboratory long before he came into prominence. Popular instruction on a scientific matter of this kind may often most advantageously be conducted on the plan of reasoning backwards, and analysing results which have been achieved. Some startling feat is accomplished by scientific methods which perhaps have been disclosed only by patient investigation. The people as a body take up the topic merely as a "nine days' wonder," but the more active-minded naturally enquire into its why and wherefore. Then comes the opportunity of the scientific lecturer or writer to enlist the services of thinking men and women in mastering some of the fundamental principles of science. Beyond the limits of Adelaide the two special courses of lectures arranged for this year are also of a scientific character—those on "Astronomy," to be delivered by Mr. R. W. Chapman at Moonta; and those on "The Cell and Its Life," by Mr. W. Fuller at Kooronga. Professor Mitchell is taking his audiences through a complete character-analysis of "Hamlet," and Professor Ives is lecturing on "Harmony and Counterpoint," while Mr. E. G. Blackmore will begin next week his historical addresses on "The Nineteenth Century." The facilities offered by the extension movement will certainly bring the University of Adelaide closer to the definition of a Popular University given by a recent magazine-writer—"A University which shall stand in the same relation to the average adult citizen, pursuing self-improvement collaterally with the work of life, as the old Universities stand to the leisured classes." When, in addition to Extension Lectures, the new scheme for utilizing the University in the work of teaching the teachers shall have been brought into operation the conception of a truly popular institution will have become still more nearly realized than it is even now.

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION LECTURES.

The fifth lecture by Professor Ives on the theory and practice of harmony attracted a satisfactorily large audience to the University on Monday evening. Some of the more elaborate chords used in musical composition were treated upon and analysed on the blackboard, and their use in various classical writings was referred to. The Italian, French, and German forms of the beautiful chord known as the augmented sixth were introduced and explained at length. Various theories for their derivation were advanced, and the lecturer gave full rules for their treatment and use. The function of passing notes, diatonic and chromatic, was then taken up by Professor Ives, who gave copious illustrations on the piano and blackboard of their employment in one or more parts. Included in this branch of the lecturer's discourse was also a passing reference to auxiliary notes, anticipations, and arpeggios. An interesting what was brought to a conclusion with the introduction of those chords known as suspensions. The 9 to 8 and its three inversions were described with illustrations from Sullivan's opera "Patience" and his song "The lost chord," portions of both being played to exemplify the application of these chords. At his sixth lecture, which is to be given next Monday evening, Professor Ives will continue the subject of suspensions, and explain the origin and use of diatonic discords.

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UNIVERSITY EXTENSION LECTURE.

Dr. Stirling delivered the second of his series of lectures on "Life, the problem of physiology" at the Adelaide University on Tuesday night before a large audience. The discourse dealt with "Vitalism," and after having briefly reviewed the principles laid down in his previous address, the lecturer spoke of the inadequate and now abandoned theory which had been built on the supposition that vital force was limited to the world of living matter, and was not identical with chemical and physical force. The claims for the existence of such a separate and extra force were limited to the fact that so far scientists had failed to reduce vital phenomena to chemical and physical force. This, however, was largely due to misconceptions as to what constituted the first principle in organism. The atom had been regarded as the starting-point or unit in their investigations, but later research had shown that this position was untenable. Through many centuries careful research had been made for the vital force, but no one had been able to discern and characterise any such factor. The old theory had been adhered to longer than would otherwise have been the case on the ground that several substances belonging to living matter could not be found apart from organisms, and could not be made. This argument had recently been weakened by the manufacture of at least one of these substances in the course of scientific experiment. It was true that they had not been able to make all the bodies referred to, but it must be borne in mind that they had no idea of the exact chemical conditions under which they arose in the living organism. If they would explain the phenomena of the world they must go to something different from the atom to find the first principle of life. The cell was the elementary principle of all organism. In explaining cell physiology a number of limelight views were used, and the amazing variety of forms found in individual cells was dealt with. Although the forms differed so widely, the size, though varying somewhat, was limited, and was usually exceedingly small. The individualisation of living substance was explained in an interesting manner, and the properties of protoplasm were described.

Parliamentary News
Advertiser 10th Aug

THE UNIVERSITY LANDS.

Mr. PEAKE moved—"That negotiations should be opened with a view to the surrender to the Government of the lands dedicated to the Adelaide University, on terms to be agreed upon." He said the lands were dedicated under clause 16 of the Act of 1874, and the effect of the alienation was not seriously considered. The lands held were in Tatiara, 10,000 acres; in Wirreanda, 15,000 acres; on Craigie plains, 10,000 acres; and at Parnaroo, 15,000. The Tatiara land was very valuable, two-thirds of it being arable, and the Queensland Land and Mortgage Company occupied the greater part of it for sheep grazing. The University made the worst kind of landlord, because naturally it looked only for revenue. The motion was not tabled out of any ill-will towards the University, and if it would give up the lands he would give an equivalent in return. The Government could not secure large estates for closer settlement, and many young men had to go elsewhere, as they could not get land in South Australia. Before the Government attempted to carry the Compulsory Repurchase Bill, they should exhaust all other means of getting good land. On the motion of Mr. O'LOUGHLIN, the debate was adjourned till Wednesday, September 20.