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The Week in Review.

NOTICE.

The Editor will be pleased to receive for consideration Short Stories and Descriptive Articles, illustrated with photos, or suggestions from contributors.

Bright, terse contributions are wanted dealing with Dominion life and questions.

Unless stamps are sent, the Editor cannot guarantee the return of unsuitable MSS.

University Reform.

THE University Reform Association has come forward with a somewhat bulky pamphlet in support of its claims. The pamphlet contains much valuable information on the problems that confront all students of higher education, and few will contest the statement that our University badly needs overhauling and that its principal defects are clearly traceable to faulty organisation. Forty years ago Parliament framed a temporary system to meet special conditions that no longer exist, and Parliament has never devised or inquired into the system since. The pamphlet deals exhaustively with organisation, appointment, finance, examinations, libraries, research and reorganisation. The two outstanding features in regard to finance are the haphazard distribution of the funds, and the fact that accounts are kept in such various forms that comparisons of expenditure are not easy. As regards libraries, it is of great importance that the books should be readily accessible to students. There is always a tendency to make a college library into a museum where the books are securely locked away in glass cases or wire cages. There should be a lending department, distinct from the reference library. All books should be available for reference, and the lending library should consist mainly of duplicate copies. Many modern text books are so full of references that no student can make any material advance in his studies unless he has ready access to a really good library.

External Examiners.

The crux of the whole reform agitation seems to be the question of outside examinations. Our students are examined by their own professors at the college examinations, and the final examinations are conducted by English examiners. The reformers object to this last arrangement. To us it seems in every way undesirable that the actual teacher should examine his own class. At the large English schools no form master examines his own form, and the services of outsiders are frequently requisitioned in scholarship, and other important examinations. At Oxford and Cambridge the examiners are seldom those who have been engaged in the immediate tuition of pupils. Frequently at both these universities outside assistance is obtained. The value of our degrees depends to a large extent on the fact that the examiners are men of world-wide eminence in the respective spheres of learning. The art of the teacher, and the art of the examiner are not necessarily akin, and we cannot see what useful end would be served by altering our present system in this matter. In America the teacher often has the absolute right to confer degrees on his own students, but no one could pretend that American degrees have anything like the same value as our own. The reformers would have us believe that our University is in a bad way. That it is not perfect we admit, but we think it compares favourably with most of the American Universities, and the pass degree demands a higher standard of knowledge than a similar degree at either Oxford or Cambridge. It is not to be expected that a young country should be able to compete with older lands in the domain of pure scholarship, but we have shown that in the world of science we can more than hold our own, and we have every reason to feel proud of a University that has turned out so many eminent graduates in the few short years of its existence.

Levelling-up Process.

The ancient Spartans, the finest soldiers the world has ever seen, were proud of their long hair which they carefully combed before going into action. But it would seem that our local territorials are to be compelled to wear their hair very short on the grounds that long hair is unmilitary. A staff-sergeant-major told the members of his company that many of them were wearing their hair too long, and added "A lot of you have not got your hair cut yet; you can never be soldiers with hair like that. It does not matter about the girls; get it cut." One associates very short hair with convicts, but it is difficult to see why the length of the hair should affect a man's efficiency as a soldier. The sixty thousand Spartans who marched against Mardonius and his 300,000 troops, and who crushed the Persian host and so altered the whole face of history, wore hair reaching to the waist. The historian tells us that on the eve of Thermopylæ Leonidas and his three hundred "combed their long hair for death" before they entered on the most heroic struggle the world has witnessed. Facts are against the staff-sergeant-major. Anyway, it seems absurd that men who serve in the territorials should be compelled to go about like shorn lambs, and it is small surprise that many members of the company should have expressed indignation at the regulations which require them to do so. The Defence Department, however, states that it only requires short hair one day in the week, and the men may wear it long on the other six days. That is some comfort.

The Eugenics Society.

The Eugenics Education Society of New Zealand has issued its first annual report. The objects of the society are to set forth the national importance of eugenics, to spread a knowledge of the laws of heredity, and to further eugenic teaching at home and in the schools. Dr. Closs, in his address on "Eugenics and Disease," sketched the history of tuberculosis and its ravages amongst the races of the world. He said that it was only within comparatively recent years that medical attention had been aroused to its grave importance. Attempts had been made in all the chief medical centres of the world to combat this scourge, but the goal appeared to be as far off as ever. All the anti-tuberculin preparations discovered had hitherto proved unavailing to cope with the insidious disease. The legislature and charitable and philanthropic institutions had apparently disregarded the law of natural selection while trying to cure this most intractable disease. It was well for the people to recognise the danger of alliances with tubercular subjects, and it was the aim of eugenic teaching that such alliances should not be entered into. The remedy was in the hands of the people themselves, and the science of eugenics recognised the potent influence of educating the minds of the people to dread the disease. By means of education marriage into consumptive families would be diminished, and in time the disease would lessen also. Personal sacrifices, therefore, would have to take the place of the law of natural selection. Nature was constantly endeavouring to improve the race by ending the diseased stock, and the efforts of man were in many instances directed towards the preservation of the tainted stock, and consequently towards the propagation of disease. These efforts were the outcome of sentiment and ignorance, and it seemed that the science of eugenics had come into being with the main object of educating people to think seriously about improving themselves physically, morally, and in every possible way, and also that their offspring should be the better equipped to pass on to posterity a healthier and a stronger race. It was often noticed that an hereditary disease in the ancestors was missed for one or more generations, and then, perhaps under the best environment, it suddenly showed itself again in all its hideous qualities. This clearly showed that heredity told in the end, no matter how good the environment might be. As legislation now stood man, with all his sympathy for suffering humanity, tended to override Nature's laws in its eliminating process, and to prolong the unfit in the land to propagate their species, trusting to environment to work a cure.

The Influence of Heredity.

The question as to how far medicine tends to preserve the lives of the unfit is, of course, an old one. History is full of records of attempts to secure a race that should be physically sound. The exposure of infants to climatic hardships was the primitive way of securing the survival of the fittest. Plato, in the third book of his Republic, contended that the science of medicine was of very disputable advantage. He thought that it should never be employed to prolong the lives of those who had bad constitutions. The sooner the weaklings died the better for the race. Bacon, on the other hand, thought that it was a great thing to bring comfort to the invalid and to cheer the sufferer. It is curious to find Macaulay, the arch-apostle of British Philistinism, supporting Bacon against Plato in this matter, and denouncing Plato's views as impractical while "Bacon fixed his eye on a mark which was placed on the earth, and within bow-shot, and hit it in the white." As long as doctors differ as they do on the laws of health, and as long as Nature defies our most cherished theories, we can never regard eugenics as an exact science. Athletes, "as sound as a bell," are seldom long-lived. Scholars, with bent shoulders, far more often attain longevity. A master of a college at Oxford or Cambridge is young at seventy. Gerald Massey came of a weak stock. His parents were chronic invalids—poor, underfed, undersized. The family never had more than ten shillings a week amongst them, and they lived in the damp, insanitary surroundings of the English marshes. Massey left school when he was eight, a puny weakling, and worked as an errand boy. At twenty-one he produced a book of verse, which Landor described as equal to anything he knew in literature, and which won unqualified praise from Ruskin. Massey lived to be nearly ninety, and enjoyed good health to the end. Lord Houghton came of a thoroughly healthy stock. His parents on both sides belonged to families noted for longevity, and not devoid of intellect. He was educated with every care. Yet he died at a comparatively early age; he was always more or less of an invalid, and he produced nothing in the way of verse equal to Massey's lyrics. We find in the same family children that are healthy and children that are weak; we find the intellectually brilliant and the mentally defective. Charles Lamb was one of our most charming essayists; his sister had to be confined in an asylum. Heredity doubtless counts for much; environment, perhaps, counts for more; but Nature has an uncomfortable way of trumping our best card.

Daylight Saving.

Joshua has his imitators in the advocates of the Daylight Saving Bill. The idea is to put forward the hands of the clock in the summer so that when the clock points to 7 it will be in reality only six. By this means lazy people will be cheated into getting up earlier. The farming community does not seem enthusiastic in its support of the measures. Farmers contend that they get up quite early enough as it is, and that they are often astir at three in the morning. Sir Joseph Ward thought that it would be an excellent thing if Parliament sat in the daytime and rose at 6 p.m. Mr. Witty thought we might to get the sun to fall in with the proposal by rising at

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