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Earth was Stone Cold.

and gradually warmed up on account of the slow process of evolution of matter present in the earth. These new theories had enormously extended the period during which they could imagine the earth had been in existence. This was the chief lesson they could draw from radium. As science advanced in all its departments, they had to bear in mind that the period of time during which the laws of nature had been in operation must be enormously extended. Every new discovery pointed to a greater period of time. He thought that the dawning view was that it was possible there was a process of evolution going on which had no beginning, and would have no end. Evolution was proceeding in cycles, and in other parts of the universe it was just possible there might be a reversal of the process which was going on on the earth. This idea would have been pooh-poohed a very little while ago. In the future they would have to regard the universe as having been in existence practically continuously; they could not regard it as ever having had a beginning, and they could not look upon it as having an end. The whole progress of science lay in this direction, and it opened out a tremendous field of thought. Formerly, it was considered that they were draining away their sources of light and heat. He did not think that view would be held at present. He thought it was more reasonable to think that there were processes which reversed the normal decay of nature. There was no reason to suppose that they were not proceeding through cycles of evolution continuously. (Loud applause.)  
The lecture was illustrated with interesting photographic views, reproduced by means of lantern slides. At the close of the lecture a vote of thanks to Mr. Soddy was moved by the Premier (as reported elsewhere), and enthusiastically awarded.

TEACHING AND ORIGINAL RESEARCH.

Mr. Frederick Soddy, lecturer in physical chemistry and radio-activity at the Glasgow University, who recently delivered a series of scientific lectures in Western Australia under the auspices of the Perth University Extension Committee, left Fremantle by the homeward-bound mail steamer last week. Prior to his departure Mr. Soddy made some interesting remarks to a representative of The West Australian relative to the lines on which colonial universities should be conducted. After mentioning that a business man of that State had remarked to him that £100,000 would not be too much to pay to a really good professor of mining engineering, he added:— "I sincerely hope that if Western Australia gets a university it will be an up-to-date institution, profiting by the mistakes made by other universities. There are two functions for a university. One is to teach and the other to carry on original research. I have been told that in some of the eastern States the work of the professors has been almost entirely restricted to teaching—that they have been overburdened with work that should have been done at school, and have not been given time in which to carry out the work of research. The new conditions of Western Australia—you are right up against nature—necessitate your sending out of the country to procure the best men who have spent their lives in specializing in scientific research, and I hope the people here will recognise that men who are worth getting are worth attracting. It is not so much a question of extraordinarily high salaries—it is really a matter of affording them facilities for carrying out their own work in their own way, free from irritating interference. And it is well to remember that men so anxious to come that they are prepared to submit to all sorts of conditions are the least likely to prove satisfactory. If you admit that it is necessary to send out for the professors, then by all means permit them unhampered to look to the work of the university in their own way, and provide for them time in which they may prosecute their researches. These advantages are of infinitely greater importance to the really valuable professor than a munificent salary."

"THE MERCHANT OF VENICE."

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION LECTURE.

On Tuesday evening, at the Adelaide University, the Rev. J. Reid, M.A., delivered the second extension lecture in "the comedies of Shakespeare" series, and took for his theme "The Merchant of Venice." There was a good attendance. The lecturer first traversed the history of the Jews in England in the middle ages; but said that, however hard their lot might have been, to the credit of the country it might be said that it was so infinitely worse on the Continent as to make England a very paradise for the Hebrew race. (Applause). He gave an eloquent delineation of the character of Shylock in "The Merchant of Venice." It was the greatest wonder that, as they read the story and saw the play, they were sorry for the defeated Shylock. He was no incredible monster, but a man whose origin and environment had made him what he was, and who, in his very pitilessness, they were constrained to pity. Shakespeare's art had brought this man within the range of their pity. Shylock had a heart once capable of tenderness, but which was petrified at last by relentless cruelty and long and bitter oppression. Shakespeare showed how he became what he was—God-made like the rest of us; man-made, like far too many. He was a living reproach to the Christianity of the middle ages. From the days of Macklin, whose impersonation drew from Pope the couplet—"This is the Jew whom Shakespeare drew," the true Shylock had never been lost sight of on the British stage. Portia was, in the opinion of eminent judges, the most perfect of Shakespeare's radiant presentments of perfectly balanced womanhood. The lecturer traversed the history of the bond and casket stories in the play, and concluded an eloquent deliverance with an analysis of the more important passages of the play.

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At the meeting of the council of the University on Friday, a report was received from Professor David, of the University of Sydney, who acted as examiner of theses for the Tate Medal. On the recommendation of Professor David, the medal was awarded to Mr. Herbert Baskin.

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At the meeting of the Council of the University on Friday a letter was received from Dr. Woolnough tendering his resignation as lecturer on mineralogy and petrology in consequence of his having accepted a position in the University of Sydney, the resignation to take effect at the end of the current year. The council accepted the resignation with regret, and expressed its high appreciation of Dr. Woolnough's enthusiasm and devotion to duty.

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AMUSEMENTS.

ELDER CONSERVATORIUM.

Dr. Ennis gave his annual organ recital at the Elder Conservatorium on Monday evening, when there was a fairly large audience. The programme submitted, in common with those presented on former occasions, was quite a model of its kind, and would satisfy the utmost purist, for it was entirely devoted to what some organists delight to term "legitimate organ music." For this reason it was perhaps, to the majority of the audience, a little less interesting than some previous programmes given by the versatile and accomplished professor of music, which have invariably contained some noteworthy transcriptions, a department of the art in which he excels on account of his fine technical skill and wide orchestral knowledge. It is to be regretted that the Conservatorium arrangements allowed Dr. Ennis to be heard only once a year; and it is to be hoped that in the near future a series of recitals may be given. One of the most successful items was Rheinberger's "Sonata in A flat," a scholarly and interesting composition, in three movements, which was played with excellent technique and mature judgment in the selection of registers. Several happy effects were obtained in the middle section, a *reposito andante*, and in the finale the full power of the instrument was displayed to advantage. A bracket of two familiar compositions by Guilmant, the piquant "Adagetto in B minor," and "March Funebre et Chant Seraphique," was played with taste and much judgment, and evoked a recall, the response to which the recitalist bared his acknowledgments. Dr. Ennis gave a satisfactory rendering of Saint-Saens' graceful "Benediction nuptiale," and introduced a bright little minuet from Boellmann's "Suite Gothique," which proved an effective concluding number. The recital opened with Bach's showy "Prelude and fugue in D," which Adelaide music lovers have heard played by M. Wiegand, Mr. Edwin Lemare, and as a piano-forte solo by Mark Hambourg. Miss Gull Hack, the vocalist of the evening, sang Schubert's "Young man" with good expression and taste, and introduced a couple of songs by Richard Strauss entitled "My heart so sad" and "To my baby." In her final contribution the familiar "Bel Raggio," from Rossini's "Semiramide," she displayed much flexibility, and in response to the plaudits of the audience bowed her acknowledgments. Dr. Ennis accompanied on the piano-forte in a manner that left nothing to be desired.

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THE COMEDIES OF SHAKESPEARE.

The Rev. J. Reid, M.A., began a series of six lectures on "Select comedies of Shakespeare" at the Adelaide University on Tuesday evening in connection with the extension course. The subject, "A Midsummer Night's Dream" was dealt with in a masterful manner by Mr. Reid, who was attentively listened to by a large audience. The lecturer stated that when Shakespeare reached London there were already four great dramatic writers, Marlowe, Lilley, Field, and Green, whilst a theatre had also been erected. Mr. Reid paid a great tribute to the contributions of Robert Green to play writing, and styled him the "loveliest, brightest, and most musical of the forerunners of Shakespeare," though the latter himself perfected all the contributions to these schools of high renown in what was at present known as Shakespearean drama. Comedy had up to that time been stilted and wooden, but Shakespeare introduced life into it, and invested it with all the characteristics of human existence. The lecturer spoke of the critics of Shakespeare, entered into a review of the probable sequence of the plays, and declared his conviction that not Roger Bacon, nor any other, but Shakespeare himself, wrote them all. In beautiful language he portrayed the old actor-manager bringing the man of Stratford the commission to write a piece at short notice for a wedding, at which royalty was to be invited, and then went on to analyse "A Midsummer Night's Dream," which was the result of that conference. At the conclusion of the lecture Mr. Reid was warmly applauded.

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AMUSEMENTS.

THE ELDER CONSERVATORIUM.

The concert given in the Elder Hall on Monday evening by the Conservatorium choral and orchestral classes was particularly notable because the programme included an original setting by Dr. Ennis of a poem by a well-known South Australian writer, Mr. G. F. Blinzer. The director of the Conservatorium has before given ample evidence of his powers as an executant, both in organ and piano-forte music, but it remained for music-lovers to judge his qualities as a composer. To those who had had opportunities of testing the wide knowledge and unquestionable culture of Dr. Ennis it came as no surprise that the musical setting of "An Ode to Music" was distinguished by scholarly skill in orchestration, a full command of melody and an apt regard to the vocal possibilities of the work. The orchestral portion of the ode was particularly excellent; Dr. Ennis has evidently a strong liking for oboe and the horns, and both instruments were prominent in his musical scheme, although the strings were utilised with almost equal success. The initial invocation was spirited and bold in coloring, and the succeeding chorus "When the mythical maidens wandered" was instinct with poetic grace and delightful melody, the orchestral work being peculiarly charming. The soprano solo, which was finely sung by Miss Katie Joyce greatly pleased the audience and the subsequent choruses and the exhilarating finale, which was pregnant with fire and vim, formed a fitting climax to a work which does its composer infinite credit, and will well bear immediate repetition. Dr. Ennis met with an ovation at the close of his work, which he conducted with mastery skill. The second portion of the programme was occupied with an excellent performance of Dr. Charles Villiers Stanford's choral setting of Teanyson's dramatic ballad, "The Revenge." Here, again, there was a singular wealth of orchestral ingenuity and appropriate color while vocally the Conservatorium choral class did excellent work, with one reservation. In the work by Dr. Ennis, as in that by Dr. Stanford, their enunciation was very faulty, and one was irresistibly reminded of the Gilbertian couplet, "No single word is ever heard, when singers sing in chorus." Apart from this, however, the members of the chorus acquitted themselves admirably, the adjustment of light and shade being nicely observed, and the ensemble work reflecting the greatest credit upon their talented conductor, Dr. Ennis. It may not be out of place to mention here that something of a record was attained at this concert. Throughout the performance not one person left the hall, and the significance of this fact will be recognised by all who are regular attendants at concerts in the Elder Hall and elsewhere.

We hear from Sydney that the Columbia Skating Rink, which is being conducted in the Exhibition Building, Prince Alfred Park, and managed by Mr. Charles Bastard, of the City Baths, Adelaide, is proving a great success, so much that the Sydney theatres are feeling the effects of the boom in rollerskating. The season closes early in September.