

has raised in the *British Medical Journal*, will be doubly interesting in the face of this object-lesson of the abhorrence felt by women who find they are perpetuating a loathsome disease and handing on "a constitutional taint" to unborn generations.

Blenheim Palace should be able to keep up its traditional splendour, being so well replenished with dollars from the United States. It has not been given to other estates in England to have reigning over them two successive duchesses chosen from American heiresses. Miss Consuelo Vanderbilt, daughter of the millionaire familiarly known in the States as "W. K.," on her marriage with the present Duke of Marlborough, ought to be able to buy back the famous Marlborough pictures and china. This advent of American women to our shores not only hastens the forward movement for independence among women, but it has the effect of releasing encumbered and heavily-mortgaged estates from the "durance vile" of long-suffering creditors.

The *British Medical Journal*, in commenting on "The Female Offender" by Lombroso, states that "we (meaning men) have got into a habit of using towards women a language of conventional compliment, and ostentatiously giving up all points in their favour." We are very glad to hear it, as we have by no means recognised such to be the case. Professor Lombroso's views have been too often quoted to bear repetition. He practically sums up women as a hopelessly depraved sex, whose only virtue—the maternal instinct—is shared by all the lower animals. Women might perhaps find the Professor's "Male Offender" amusing reading, but it has not been considered worth translation into English.

No one takes a deeper and more practical interest in the provision of female medical assistance to the women of India than the Queen. And, indeed, the scheme now known as Lady Dufferin's was suggested and talked over by her Majesty long before it became an accomplished fact. Lady Elgin, the wife of the present Viceroy of India, is in constant private communication with the Queen concerning the medical education of native ladies. Lady Elgin is shortly to start with her husband on a seven weeks' tour to all parts of the Empire. While he is impressing on the native mind the fact that India is under one rule, and that the Governor-General is the great Queen's right hand, Lady Elgin will use her time in consolidating and organising the Queen's Hygienic Association for the women of India. It is an open secret that the later Viceroys of India have been chosen with due regard to the capabilities of their wives.

The most enthusiastic advocates for fresh fields being opened up for women's energies, will hardly support the "new move" in the direction of work which has begun by the employment of women stevedores at the East India and Millwall Docks. During the past week the loading and unloading of several ships and steamers has been carried on by women. So far they have only been employed where the cargoes are of a light character. At present the men stevedores have expressed no resentment, but have watched the encroach on their domain with tolerant amusement. That the women stevedores are in earnest may be deduced from the fact that they have already formed a Union of their own.

Science Notes.

THE DECAY OF NATURAL HISTORY.

AS the sum of man's knowledge of nature is daily added to, so the tendency towards specialisation in study must likewise increase. When the Poet at the Breakfast-table remarked to his neighbour with a note of interrogation, "I suppose you are an entomologist?" the neighbour replied, "Not quite so ambitious as that, sir. I should like to put my eyes on the individual entitled to that name! A society may call itself an Entomological Society, but the man who arrogates such a broad title as that to himself, in the present state of science, is a pretender, sir, a dilettante, an impostor! No man can be truly called an entomologist, sir; the subject is too vast for any single human intelligence to grasp."

"May I venture to ask," said the Poet, a little awed by his statement and manner, "what is your special province of study?"

"I am often spoken of as a Coleopterist, but I have no right to so comprehensive a name. The genus *Scarabæus* is what I have chiefly confined myself to, and ought to have studied exclusively. The beetles proper are quite enough for the labour of one man's life. Call me a Scarabeeist if you will; if I can prove myself worthy of that name, my highest ambition will be more than satisfied."

This may be regarded by some persons as a joke at the expense of biologists, but, be that as it may, Wendell Holmes was a biologist himself, and knew what he was writing about. In his preface to the *Poet at the Breakfast Table*, he refers to the Scarabee as a character representing a class of beings who had greatly multiplied during the interval between the earlier and later breakfast-table papers. The preface is dated 1882, but there is little doubt that the number of scientific specialists is even greater now than it was then. On the other hand, said Wendell Holmes, we have had or have the encyclopædic intelligences like Cuvier, Buckle, and more emphatically Herbert Spencer, who take all knowledge, or large fields of it, to be their province. We, who have not the encyclopædic intelligence of Cuvier, Buckle or Spencer, have some difficulty in determining which kind of knowledge to strive after—that of the specialist or, may we say, the generalist. Whichever type we adopt as our own, we shall fall lamentably short of qualifying to be described as well educated, according to the clever but hopeless definition of a well educated man as "one who knows something of everything and everything of something."

A considerable part of the presidential address delivered by Mr. Thiselton-Dyer to the newly-established botanical section of the British Association was of the nature of a warning against specialisation. "The modern university student of botany puts his elders to blush by his minute knowledge of some small point in vegetable histology. But he can tell you little of the contents of a country hedgerow; and if you put an unfamiliar plant in his hands he is pretty much at a loss how to set about recognising its affinities. Disdaining the field of nature spread at his feet in his own country, he either seeks salvation in a German laboratory or hurries off to the tropics, convinced that he will at once immortalise himself. But *calum non animum mutat*; he puts into 'pickle' the

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