

We'll All Lose Our Teeth, Predicts London Doctor

Our Eyes Will Also Disappear, Is the Opinion Based on the New Theory of Evolution: That All Progress Is Based on Some Form of Degeneration—Interesting Summary of Health and Happiness From a London Correspondent

London, Nov. 7.—"Eyes are going," "Teeth are going," "Hair has gone!" This is the prediction of an eminent London physician.

"Mankind," he says, "is but a species of bald ape—if the hair on the head degenerates as it has on Man's body. It would be but a natural process of evolution.

"But teeth are also going. Only a short time ago the 'missing link' brought to light at Pitt Down, Sussex, by Charles Dawson, shows the female skull of a sort of human ape, with receding chin, heavy simian teeth and a very large and flat cranium. No doubt, in evolving from the simian stages, these massive and protruding jaws and strong teeth of the gorilla have degenerated to those of mankind. But there is no cause for regret in this.

"Now as to eyes. Philosophers say that sight will become less and less necessary as civilization proceeds, and mental vision will supply its place. It is also true that nature eliminates in time that part of our structure which is not found necessary—we have only to point out the disappearance of the human tail, the pineal gland deep down in the brain, which is a vestige of an organ of sight; the vermiform appendix, etc. Inevitably thousands of years ago our ape brothers might have chattered: 'Hair is going, claws are going, tail is gone!'

Degeneration Marks Progress.

"The lesson to be drawn is that some form of degeneration is the necessary accompaniment of progress. This evolution is accompanied by effects on the individual human body, which are often far from pleasant. But still, if a person has a normally developed nervous system there is little doubt that the pleasures of life outweigh its sorrows. I do not believe it is so much fear of death as a desire to live for the pleasure of living that keeps so many of us from self-destruction. And this applies to all classes—except, perhaps, the poor, who are more often content with a life of a dyspeptic and bloated bondholder compares very unfavorably with the lively jollity of a factory girl. Thus it is seen that happiness depends more upon a favorable nervous structure than upon outward environment and a large landed estate.

"Now comes the great question. If this favorable nervous structure cannot be induced by taking thought, is it at the present time able to support a large proportion of the happiness, or has it undergone degeneration in a respect so vital to the well-being of humanity? As we cannot know at this day the working of brains other than our own, this question cannot be fully answered. But as one of the chief essentials of scientific discovery is to interrogate Nature in the right way, we can form an indirect answer. Any one who imagines that these are known facts which indicate a diminished capacity of the nervous system to sustain happiness finds his judgment upon a pessimistic diathesis of which he is a victim.

Nordau Condemned Wholesale.

"It is now some time since Dr. Max Nordau created in America a furore by his book 'Degeneration.' Nordau, condemned wholesale and in a totally unwarrantable manner. He saw signs of degeneration in Wagner, Nietzsche, Zola, Ibsen, Tolstoy—in fact, in the greatest brains of the century—and said that such men were unfit to exist as members of a civilized community.

"When a writer collects a group of dissimilar persons under the general appellation of degenerates he is not far from meriting the stigma himself. So it is with Nordau. He takes a totally unfounded and distorted view of his age. We stand now in the midst of a severe mental epidemic; a sort of black death of degeneration and hysteria. He goes on to say, 'I do not believe it is so much fear of death as a desire to live for the pleasure of living that keeps so many of us from self-destruction. And this applies to all classes—except, perhaps, the poor, who are more often content with a life of a dyspeptic and bloated bondholder compares very unfavorably with the lively jollity of a factory girl. Thus it is seen that happiness depends more upon a favorable nervous structure than upon outward environment and a large landed estate.'

The Medical View of the Case.

"Now let us take a medical view of the case—an optimistic view. The disharmonies of life result in irritation. The existence of ungratified desire is one of these disharmonies; disease, old age and death are others. Metchnikoff in his 'Essays on the Philosophy of Optimism' treats at great length on the phagocytic theory. These phagocytes, he contends, abound in the fluids of the body, where they devour noxious bacteria and cause immunity from disease. Now Metchnikoff believes that these beneficial microbes in old age become destructive and attack the tissues of the body itself, and so by nefarious treason destroy the organism which they have, up to then, defended. As a case in point he refers to the whitening of the hair. Color of normal hair, as everyone knows, is due to quantities of pigment. With old age and the outbreak of the phagocytic rebellion, certain hair cells become suddenly active and develop into phagocytes, which swallow this color matter and go off to other parts of the body.

"The hair, having the pigment removed, is left colorless. In the same way the nerves, the kidneys, the liver and the arteries are attacked by the phagocyte. To destroy them would be dangerous, for the body would have no defence against disease and it would soon succumb. The solution lies in the injection of sera, which would strengthen the tissues and render them immune to phagocytic action. In the supposition that sleep and fatigue are engendered by multiplication of toxic substances in the organism, it has been argued that an anti-toxin be injected to destroy these symptoms. In the same way Metchnikoff suggests

happiness—insanity, cancer and a certain number of diseases, such as appendicitis, neurasthenia, etc., which, it is stated, are increasing in the Many Diseases Wiped Out.

"It appears characteristic of the common mind that attempts are usually made to prove the increase of certain diseases, and to infer national degeneracy therefrom. But it appears to be forgotten that other diseases are being wiped out, and no theory of human improvement appears founded on that fact. Changed conditions cause a readjustment of the relative proportions of various diseases to each other—but there is no ground for argument unless it can be shown that disease as a whole is more prevalent and more virulent than in times past. And this at present requires to be demonstrated. Such terrible afflictions as leprosy and typhus fever have all but disappeared from civilized countries—and tuberculosis is rapidly diminishing. Competition in malignant microbes is diminishing, as the struggle for their existence is rendered easier by those formerly held in check are now able to flourish unexpectedly.

"So, with the destruction of infectious diseases, every one, of necessity, will die of insanity or cancer. If the recent announcements in the papers prove true, the latter can be treated as bacteriological disease.

"I doubt if insanity is also not in the same category. It is said cancer is increasing. The answer to this is that it is a disease of those that have passed the prime of life; then, too, those most liable have some well-defined organic weakness. Now, in the improved hygienic condition of humanity, the proportion of the aged is greatly increasing, and, as to organic weakness—there are people that would be apt to be carried off by other diseases in times past whose maladies are now held in check by modern science.

"As to insanity, the above argument holds equally good. In this case the increase is directly traced to the decrease of another disease—consumption. Everyone knows that the feeble-minded are singularly prone to fall victims to it. Dr. Hunter states 'many an imbecile owes his existence to the fact that his parents failed to die of tuberculosis.' Also the standard of sanity is now far higher than it was formerly—many persons now considered to be imbeciles would then have been regarded as sane, if erratic.

"There is certainly no reason whatever to believe, as is popularly supposed, that the increase in insanity is due to the stress and complications of modern life. It is not the active businessman who usually becomes unbalanced. Indeed, a far greater percentage of imbecile cases come from rural localities. Also, acquired insanity is not inherited, and cannot, therefore, operate as a cause of degeneration. A more plausible factor for degeneration is inherited insanity of the idiotic, imbeciles and others in the ill-defined category known as feeble-minded. It is, of course, on account of this class that the vasty increasing interest in eugenics is being taken. Measures are necessary to prevent the propagation of these unfortunate, many of whom in the old days would have died from neglect.

Is Neurasthenia Increasing?

"Then we have a wide range of minor disorders, known as 'nerves,' hysteria, neurasthenia, hyper-sensitiveness, etc. It is not easy to find out whether these cases are increasing or not. It must be remembered that throughout the Middle Ages 'demoniacal' possession was everywhere common—all kinds of psychoneurotic epilepsies, such as tarantism, flagellation, dancing mania, St. Vitus dance, etc., were in evidence. Possibly, however, more nervous weakness is now brought on by suggestion than formerly, which is due to the slow development of a sixth sense.

"Finally, I wish to refer to the opening words of this article: 'Eyes are going.' Sir J. Tweed, president of the Royal College of Surgeons, and of the Ophthalmological Society, states, 'I do not see that there is any evidence, so far as the eyesight of the population is concerned, of any physical deterioration of the people.'

"The only sign of deterioration is from people in rural districts. But as to teeth, the matter does not stand so well. There is no doubt that the teeth of the people have become worse of late years—the cause is undoubtedly due to the increased use of soft and 'patented' foods and more sugar than formerly. Metchnikoff expresses the opinion that a proper system of hygiene of the mouth will do much toward removing a condition of things which, however, is not an indication of degeneracy.

As to the decline of the race. The decline of the race is a subject which is being discussed by newspapers and magazines. I venture to believe that the teeth of the people have become worse of late years—the cause is undoubtedly due to the increased use of soft and 'patented' foods and more sugar than formerly. Metchnikoff expresses the opinion that a proper system of hygiene of the mouth will do much toward removing a condition of things which, however, is not an indication of degeneracy.

And now, with all the cries of the pending downfall of the race, I find in our ears by newspapers and magazines, 'There is no doubt that the teeth of the people have become worse of late years—the cause is undoubtedly due to the increased use of soft and 'patented' foods and more sugar than formerly. Metchnikoff expresses the opinion that a proper system of hygiene of the mouth will do much toward removing a condition of things which, however, is not an indication of degeneracy.'

Poet—"You said the other day in your paper that poverty is not a crime." Editor—"Well?" Poet—"And yet you define my verses as being because you say they are poor."—Puck.

Coogan, the customer—There's as much nourishment in a pint of peanuts as in two pounds of roast beef. Grogan, the butcher—"But there's no gravy, an' nothin' for th' cat, an' no hash the next day."—Puck.

The Death of Arthur Chamberlain, Brother of "Joe"

A Vigorous Personality and Great Figure in Birmingham's Life—Fought His Brother's Tariff Policy—Became More Radical as His Brother Became More Conservative—His Battle Against the Liquor Trade.

The death occurred on Oct. 21 of Mr. Arthur Chamberlain, youngest brother of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain.

Mr. Chamberlain had been ill for some years, and latterly his condition had become so serious as to forbid his further participation in those active pursuits which he had formerly followed with such zest. A few years ago he had acquired a residence in Devonshire, and thither he retired to pass the short remainder of his days.

The two brothers were much alike in personal appearance, but Mr. Arthur Chamberlain had a fresh and wonderfully clear complexion, and it was a little affection of his (at least until later years) to wear a necktie of a peculiar shade of dull pink. His alertness and cold austerity were declared in the hard, dry tones with which he would hector a meeting either of the magistracy or of shareholders. He always spoke his mind, whether what he had to say was palatable or not. And that characteristic he carried to his relations with "Joe." They were closely attached, and Mr. Arthur Chamberlain had a profound regard for his elder brother, but he did not hesitate to fight him tooth and nail as the author of what he described as the "raging and tearing propaganda" of "Reform." They were next-door neighbors in the Birmingham suburb of Moseley, and a wicket gate in the garden fence enabled them to visit each other unceremoniously. Once Mr. Arthur Chamberlain gave to a representative of the "Manchester Guardian" a scathing criticism of the Tariff "Reform" leader's program, and having done so, he proudly took the newspaper to the wicket gate to have a peep at "Joe" walking in his garden. And he did it in the spirit of a hero-worshipper.

As Licensing Reformer.

Not the least significant of the services Mr. Arthur Chamberlain rendered to his day and generation was in connection with licensing reform. For ten years, from 1891 to 1904, he was chairman of the Birmingham licensing justices, and his tenure of office was marked by a bold forward policy which materially advanced the cause of licensing reform throughout the country.

Before he attempted to reform the drink traffic Mr. Chamberlain made a very thorough study of the law, and closely examined its effect in actual operation. In this way he obtained at first hand a mastery of the principles

of practical licensing reform, which was used with telling effect in dealing with the cases which came before the licensing authority. One of his boldest strokes was the compact which he entered into with the brewers which aimed at sweeping away a large number of superfluous and not very profitable public-houses in return for better facilities in connection with more suitable premises. Through the instrumentality of this movement many care was taken in sanctioning structural improvements at other houses to secure conditions favorable to ready supervision and to the automatic discouragement of secret tipping and other abuses. He pursued his policy so resolutely and with so much success that "the trade" became seriously alarmed. It became more than a local question. The shock of the controversy could be felt at Westminster, and it was regarded as so ominous as to call for intervention in the interests of Mr. Balfour's Government.

Displacement Plot.

The inner history of the plot by which Mr. Arthur Chamberlain was superseded in the chairmanship of the Birmingham Licensing Bench has never been made public. It is not such an episode as anyone would be proud to recall. It was, however, a significant indication of the ascendancy of the brewing industry in the politics of the time. The incident, taken in conjunction with others, roused all classes of progressive opinion to the danger threatening, and it is probable that the deposing of Mr. Arthur Chamberlain, by the aid of Birmingham members of Parliament, who were understood to have hurried to the magistracy's meeting armed with a direct bat from Westminster, did more to advance the cause for which he stood than could possibly have been achieved by his re-election.

During the ten years of his chairmanship, from 1894 onward, the number of licensed houses in the city was reduced from 2,322, or 1 to every 212 of the then population of 422,000, to 1,163, or 1 to every 246 of the population, which had increased by 1903 to 533,000, in the year following his deposition 50 more licenses were surrendered as a result of his policy. He not only effected something like a revolution in Birmingham, but he visited other populous parts of the country to expound his policy.

In Politics and Business.

Though Mr. Arthur Chamberlain never entered Parliament, his influence was sought by many constituents, and once, prior to "the split," he took the platform as Liberal candidate for a Midland seat. Regarded for a considerable time as a Liberal Unionist, he began in 1893 as a temporary ally of the Liberal party on the Free Trade issue, but as time went on he became more and more Radical. In July, 1901, for instance, he and his daughters entertained 1,000 women Libs. at Moor Green Hall, and he then declared against any Conference being held to decide the Parliament bill. "We don't want what the people say is best for the country," he said, "we want what the people say is best for the country." He next became president of the Ashton Liberal Association.

In the civic and commercial life of Birmingham he was a constant figure. He had served on some of the local public bodies, and gave his time to the shaping and strengthening of various philanthropic institutions. A great captain of industry, he was fond of leading forlorn hopes in the sphere of commercial competition, and left his impress on the trade of the country in many directions. It was one of his characteristics that having decided upon a line of action he was absent from any of the concerns involved in pursuing it to its conclusion. At the same time he had a real gift of sympathy, and in no instance was it more touchingly expressed than in his plans for the poor when free trade was assailed.

Sympathy With Workers.

The sympathy for the working classes was strikingly displayed in March, 1912, when he came out as a strong supporter of the miners on strike. His proposal was that the men's demands should be granted, that the state should either reimburse the colliery owners the extra cost or should allow them to break their contracts which they could renew at higher prices.

When the London dockers' strike took place that year, Mr. Arthur Chamberlain sent two sums of £1,000 to the fund raised by "The Daily News" for the starving women and children. How far he had travelled from the "Unionism" of his brother and nephew may be discerned from the fact that he wrote to "The Daily News" complaining that the Government ought to intervene more definitely on the side of the men, and protesting that the Government would become divorced from the general labor movement. "The result will be one that the Whigs will rejoice in," he said.

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REX BEACH


JOHN FOX, JUN.

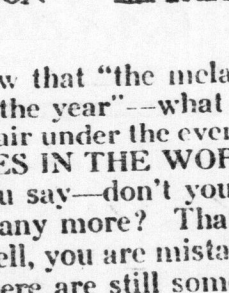

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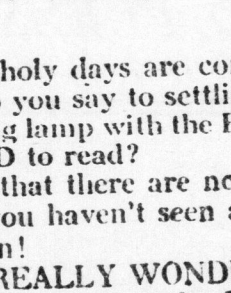

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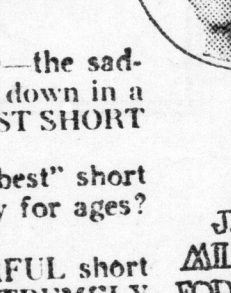

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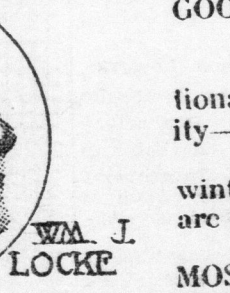

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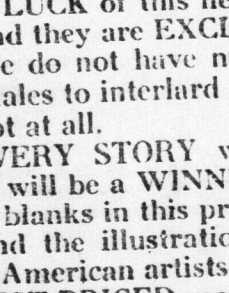

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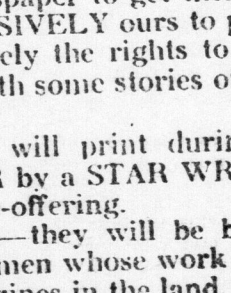

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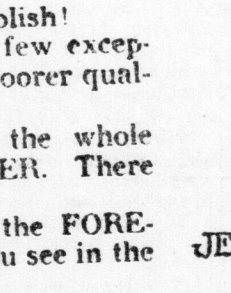

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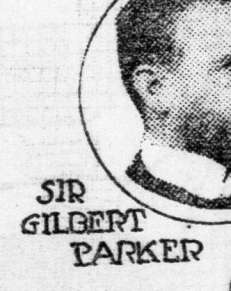

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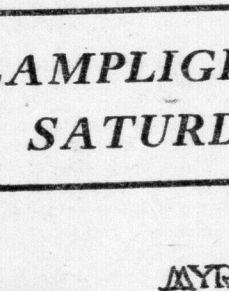

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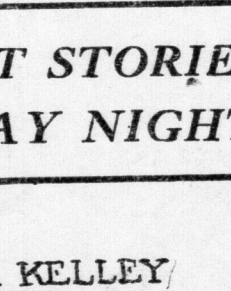

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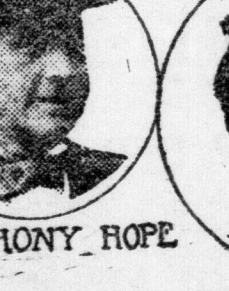

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