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Dr. Davenport tells how he bred weird, nameless creatures by "Mutation."

American scientific men and their greatest organization were the first to pay their official tribute to the great English exponent of evolution. Charles Robert Darwin, in 1909, which marks the one hundred anniversary of his birth and the fiftieth of the first publication of his "Origin of Species." This tribute was paid yesterday, when the Association for the Advancement of Science practically concluded its sixtieth meeting by holding two great Darwin memorial meetings, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon, followed by a memorial dinner at night at Lehmann's Hall.

At these meetings and dinner there were gathered not only the most prominent of local scientific men, but their most eminent associates of the whole country, gathered around the board to honor the memory of Darwin. They were men no longer skeptics regarding the Darwinian theory of evolution and selection, but men convinced of the truth of his doctrines almost in toto.

There were not only Americans present but Dr. E. B. Poulton Hope, professor of zoology of Oxford University, was a notable figure as the representative of English Darwinians. Also present was Dr. Albrecht Penck, of Germany.

In connection with the memorial of Darwin attention was called to the fact that 1909 is a wonderful year for centenary celebrations, which the scientific men so appropriately started upon New Year's Day. The year of Darwin's birth marks also the birth of a large number of men and women who won great distinction. Among them were Abraham Lincoln, William E. Gladstone, Edgar Allan Poe, Oliver Wendell Holmes and Elizabeth E. Browning.

All homage to Darwin.

While they were mentioned incidentally, all the homage was paid to Darwin. Speakers recalled the doubt with which his doctrines were received, the storm of criticism and denial caused and the calumny heaped upon the author of the theory which, it was said, was in opposition to the Bible.

All phases of Darwin's theories and of his life, public and personal, were touched upon and described. Men who had studied deeply of his works and who had delved into the history of his life spoke of both to the edification of their hearers.

The day meetings of McCoy Hall, which were open to the public, as was also the dinner, were the largest general meetings of the gathering. Those who spoke in the morning were Prof. T. C. Chamberlain, president of the association; Dr. John M. Coulter, of the University of Chicago; Dr. Poulton and Dr. E. B. Wilson. Dr. David Staff Jordan, of the Leland-Stanford University, elected as president of the next meeting was not present, but his paper was read.

Dr. Chamberlain's Tribute.

Dr Chamberlain said, in part:

"The greatness of a man is shown in what he is, in what he does, and in what he sets adoining.

"If the long list of contributions to this association in the last half century were searched for products of thought whose stimulus sprang from the life and work of Charles Darwin, it would

reveal an impressive testimonial to his greatness as a source of inspiration in our scientific world. If it were possible to give such an intellectual product a material embodiment and as appropriate form, we could raise no more sincere monument to his memory. Even in the less tangible form it inevitably bears, it is our monument. By response, individual and collective, to the marvelous suggestiveness of Darwin's inquiries and interpretations of members of this association have been for these 50 years paying their truest tributes. More or less unconsciously, no doubt, but none the less genuinely, we have thus been doing honor to one of the greatest of intellectual leaders.

"In the first decades of the great Darwinian movement in biology the tribute of our members may not have been wanting in demonstrations of the force of old adhesions, but even then, whether by resistance or by co-operation, we gave our testimony to the new power that made itself felt in the scientific world. A little later we paid the tribute of conviction – the genial tribute of willing conviction on the part of some of us, and the even more significant tribute of reluctant conviction on the part of others; but in one way or another we paid a universal tribute.

As members of proud race.

"If we of the older school permit ourselves to be reminiscent, the tides of thought and feeling of the early days of the half century we celebrate easily surge back into consciousness. We recall readily the stirrings in the biological field when the great question of derivation of species arose into a concrete and, as it seemed to some, a threatening form. But it was not among us as biologists, but among us as a member of a proud race, that emotion was most deeply stirred.

"The biological realm was, indeed, the center of the great movement. But though the revolution had its origin in the biological field, it was by no means limited to it. It soon became a radiant influence so penetrating and so stimulating that it has been felt in every field of thought. No realm of the intellectual world has failed to respond to the power of Darwin's method, the candor of his spirit, and the force of his clear insight and restrained judgment.

"Darwin not only gave form to the whole trend of evolutionary inquiry, but he chastened and refined the moral aspects of thought in all lines of serious intellectual endeavour. It would be too much to say that he was the father of evolutionary conception of the so apparent chastened moral attitude of thought now felt to be binding in the scientific world. We would do him a dishonour most obnoxious to his candid and truthful spirit if we were to assign him more than historic truth amply warrant. We must not fail to recognise that before his time the evolutionary conception had found place in the thought of not a few philosophic inquirers, not the least among whom was one of his own lineage, but yet it was Charles Darwin, more than any other, who gave definiteness and concreteness, who gave method and spirit to the doctrine of deviation and who thus became parental to the great movement in a sense equalled by no other."

Dr Poulton's address.

Dr Poulton said:

"It is impossible to refer more than briefly to the storm of opposition with which Darwin's 'Origin' was at first received. Among the commonest criticisms in the early days and one that Darwin felt acutely was the assertion that he had deserted the true method of scientific investigation. These wild criticisms were soon set at rest.

"It is remarkable to contrast the maturity, the balance and the judgment with which Darwin put forward his views with the rush and haphazard objections and rival suggestions advanced by his critics. It is doubtful whether so striking a contrast is to be found in the history of

science, on the one side 20 years of thought and investigation pursued by the greatest of naturalists, on the other offhand impressions upon the most complex problem, hastily studied and usually very imperfectly understood. It is not to be wondered that Darwin found the early criticisms so entirely worthless."

[...]

The "Mutation" Theory.

By "mutation," or succession, Dr. Davenport said he had bred birds with webbed toes, with or without nails on the toes, and chickens with naked necks and with combs of all shapes.

In part he said:

"The mutation theory is not only not opposed to Darwin's theory, but it is in accord with it.

"In the last four years I have bred, handled and described over 10,000 poultry of known ancestry. Of striking new characters I have observed many – some incompatible with normal existence, others not. In the new egg, unhatched. I have obtained Siamese twins, anteriorly duplex individual, and those with short upper jaw (like that of the niata cattle, pug dogs and some swine and carp). I have birds with duck-webbed toes; without toe nail or with two toe nails on one toe; with three toes, four toes, five toes, six toes, seven toes; with two pairs of spurs; without oil gland or tail (though from tail ancestry); with naked neck and feathers whose barbs are twisted, dichotomously branched or lacking altogether. Of the comb alone I have a score of forms, such as single comb, double, triple, quintuple and walnut, Y-shaped, cupped-shaped, consisting of two horns or four or six, or absent altogether. All of these conditions have been presented to man in the course of numerous hybridization experiments. Thus, while variations are never absent in poultry, sudden appearance or disappearance of full-fledged character is most striking."

Banquet at night.

Several hundred scientists and a number of ladies enjoyed a delightful menu at Lehmann's Hall at night. After the coffee and cigars Prof. Henry F. Osborn, of Columbia University, was named toastmaster. In a few words Professor Osborn told how he had once met the great Darwin while a student in Huxley's laboratory in England. He said that out of all the students he was the only one lucky enough to get an introduction to the great revolutionist and evolutionist and that he has always retained a distinct mental picture of Darwin from that meeting. He said that he was impressed more than anything by the mildness of the great thinker's eyes and the grace and gentleness of his bearing.

Professor Osborn then introduced Dr. W. H. Welch, of the Johns Hopkins, who spoke on "The Relation of Medicine to Darwinism." Dr Welch declared that the science of pathology is deeply indebted to Darwin for his theory of adaptation and natural selection makes intelligible certain phenomena of diseases that previously baffled physicians. He named a random incident after as proof of his assertions. He mentioned the fact that the blood vessels take up the work of an artery after an artery is cut is directly in line with the Darwinian theory of adaptation.

Following Dr. Welch came Dr. Albrecht Penck, the noted German scientist, who is a close student of Darwin. Dr. Penck paid his respects to those who opined that the history of the world was not extensive enough to permit of a literal interpretation of the Darwin theory.