

Last Days of Great Scientist

Michael Faraday's Illness

AS early as 1831, at the age of forty, Michael Faraday, whose centenary was recently celebrated, complained of a failing memory. After the great series of discoveries and experiments he had made between 1830 and 1840 he was forced to take a long rest of four or five years. His trouble was accentuated by a belief that the physicians did not understand the extent of his affliction. "Whereas according to the declaration of the true man of the world, Talleyrand," he wrote on a scrap of paper, "the use of language is to conceal the thoughts, this is to declare in the present instance, when I say I am not able to hear much talking, it means really and without any mistake or subterfuge or omission that I am not able, being at present rather weak in the head and able to work no more."

Nervous as he was by nature, and made much more so by these attacks, it is unlikely he suspected his physicians, of not understanding the quality of his affliction, even if they did not appear to understand how much it affected him. He himself, in non-medical language, diagnosed it as a decay of the physico-mental faculties of his mind. This decay, severe as was its manifestation in 1840, only affected his memory and the nerves of his head. Ten years or so later its less violent recurrences were to affect the muscles of his arms, legs and throat. The attacks did not at any time alter the quality of his mind.

Between 1859 and 1863, at which latter date he was obliged to retire from all forms of activity, while constantly unwell, he was able to continue very elaborate researches and to produce results of great value. But at this time he complained that he forgot what he had just finished and could not remember whether or not he had thought out such and such a problem.

The lectures he gave in his latter years were a severe strain, as was also the work he did for Trinity House, particularly that during 1865, when his magneto-electric machine was being tested. He made long journeys in the snow and several times spent the night at sea off Dungeness Lighthouse.

He passed a great deal of his last years at the house at Hampton Court given him by the Queen. Here he rambled about the woods with his niece and was very happy, though his mind began to wander a little, and once he thought he had made a discovery of some kind of acid which was to be of medical value. A visitor from London came to see the old man as he sat in his chair looking out of the window on to the green. "I am just waiting," said Faraday. He died in the afternoon of August 25, 1867, in his study.

The Sacking of Kaiapohia Pa

Stirring Commemorative Celebrations

IT is just one hundred years since Te Rauparaha, the great North Island fighting chief, made a raid on the South Island Maoris, sacking the Kaiapohia Pa. The occasion is an outstanding event in the history of the Maori people, and the centenary is to be fittingly celebrated on October 24, 25, and 26.

These celebrations will mean the gathering together of the greatest number of Maoris seen in the South Island for many years. There will also be a distinguished assemblage of Europeans, including Lord Bledisloe, who will officiate at the opening ceremony in connection with a fence erected on the site of the old stockade.

This memorial fence has been erected to mark the centenary of the raid, which, to the Maoris of the South Island, was a most disastrous affair, but in which the defenders of the pa fought with the greatest gallantry against the better armed warriors from the North. It was the fickleness of the wind which decided the fate of the pa.

The celebrations will show due reverence and veneration to those long dead. In the time-honoured manner, the Maoris of to-day will remember their forbears in the form of a tangi and the festive part of the proceedings will follow. The custom of the Maoris with regard to their dead has always been that after a tangi there shall be a festive celebration to help the mourners to forget their worries and troubles.

The entertainment portion of the celebrations will, however, not take place on the site of the old pa where the massacre took place, but on the domain opposite.

The proceedings on the third day, Monday, October 26, will be broadcast by 3YA, the announcer being Mr. Te Ari Pitama. Singular interest attaches to this, as the paternal grandfather of Mr. Pitama was captured at the fall of Kaiapohia pa and was made the personal slave of Te Rauparaha, who had taken a fancy to the appearance of the youth. During the night he was tied to his captor's wrist, but succeeded in escaping in a dramatic manner. Mr. Te Ari Pitama is well known to 3YA listeners as a lecturer.

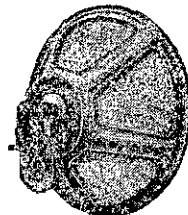
At 7.45, from 3YA next Monday evening, Mr. Te Ari Pitama will give a talk entitled "One Hundred Years Ago."

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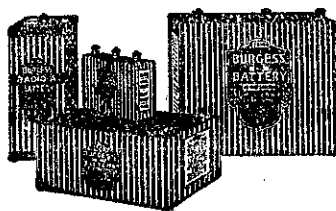
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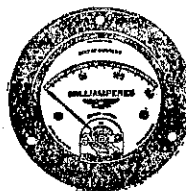
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