

INITIATIVE IN EVOLUTION

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Initiative in evolution by Walter Kidd

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WALTER KIDD

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IN EVOLUTION**

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BY
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AUTHOR OF "USE-INHERITANCE," "DIRECTION OF HAIR IN ANIMALS AND MAN,"
"THE RANGE OF TOUCH IN MAMMALS AND REPTILES," ETC.

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE.

THE Great War imposed on speculative biology a moratorium as in the long vacation of lawyers, in which are causes left over to the next term. And so the old case Lamarck *versus* Weismann was not heard in the Courts of Science during the war. In the present term it is due to be heard afresh, and at some future date to come up for settlement. The chapters that follow comprise some of the pleadings on behalf of the plaintiff and are part of the brief of a junior counsel. This adjective, alas! signifies not the years—for such are often old enough to be the fathers of the leaders—but the standing and attainments of a junior. But in the open Court of Science, and on suited occasions, it may be the business of a junior to question, in the interests of his client, the authority even of Attorneys-General and Lords Chief Justice. In matters of thought and inquiry it is useless to retreat within a stronghold and bar the gates. It may be satisfactory to himself for one Milner to write a book on behalf of a certain body of doctrine and call it *The End of Controversy*, but the book should have held the sub-title *The End of Progress*. The Newtons, Pasteurs and Darwins have seldom wielded the weapon of controversy, though the triumph of *The Origin of Species* would have been slower without the aid of Darwin's brilliant champion and candid friend. But, if the leaders seldom need such help, for the Gibeonite it is a matter of course and simple necessity. With all the urbanity due to the great subject-matter should this pleasant duty be performed. Who would not prefer to the fierce Spaniard the genial Portuguese, discussing all subjects without rancour, and lover of bull-fights though he be, taking care to wrap in cork the horns of his fighting bulls?

The earlier chapters treat of the arrangement of the mammalian hair, which has occupied my attention for over twenty

years, and this has led straight to the other subjects, because of their bearing on Lamarckism and Initiative in Evolution. The tentative conclusions reached years ago have been strengthened by further knowledge and reflection, and perhaps by certain criticisms. The furrow ploughed may have been lonely, but the pursuit has not been without the mild pleasure of seeing fresh scattered portions of the field coming into their natural order. The resulting state of mind resembles that of a certain Mr. Burke recorded in the annals of a golf club, second to none, the Ancient, and now Royal Blackheath, among whose minutes appears the following :—

“20th September, 1834.

Present, Mr. Burke, *Solus*.

The dinner was good, wine abundant, and the utmost harmony prevailed. The want of grouse was severely felt this day.”

It is written on page 101 of the *Chronicles of Blackheath Golfers*.

My debt to such writings as those of Professors Arthur Keith, Woods Jones, Graham Kerr, and Professors Sherrington, Starling, Schäfer, McDougall and Ward is too obvious to the reader to need more than a bare mention.

I have to thank one critic, Miss Inez Whipple, now Mrs. H. Wilder Harris, for her able if hostile criticism of two former books of mine which has been of use in this one ; and Mr. R. E. Holding for good help extending over many years in the preparation of the illustrations, and for many a good suggestion.

W.K.

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