

THE ROYAL SOCIETY.

NIETZSCHE AND HIS PHILOSOPHY.

The usual monthly meeting of the Royal Society was held at the Society's rooms last night, when His Excellency the Governor, who was accompanied by Lady Ellison-Macartney, presided over a good attendance.

Mr. E. Morris Miller, of the University of Tasmania, gave an address on the subject of "Nietzsche and the Morality of Might." He pointed out how the idea, largely erroneous, that the German movements which culminated in the present war were inspired by Nietzsche had given a special interest to the works of that philosopher. The doctrines of Nietzsche, properly considered, were far from being a basis for pan-Germanism or the recent actions of the Germans. Nietzsche marked a reaction from the pessimism of Schopenhauer; following Greek ideas, he showed the will for power running through all the forms of life. Like the Greeks, Nietzsche divided humanity into two classes, slaves and masters; what was good for the slaves was bad for the master, and vice versa. His doctrines, he considered, could be understood only by the select few. His theory of truth was essentially pragmatized: he held that what worked was true. There was much that was high and noble, mixed with baser elements, in the philosophy of Nietzsche, and even those doctrines of his with which one could not agree were stimulative of thought.

Mr. L. Dechaineux asked whether Nietzsche were really mad, and, if he were, whether that fact did not discount the whole of his philosophy.

Mr. Morris Miller said Nietzsche was undoubtedly a man who suffered greatly, and this made the, on the whole, exuberant optimism of his philosophy the more remarkable. The value of his work was to be considered, however, apart from his own personal idiosyncrasy. His philosophy had been stimulative to a high degree; it was to be noted, for instance, that in his theory of truth he had largely anticipated the pragmatists' school which had since made such a stir in the philosophic world.

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