

"BUT WISDOM IS JUSTIFIED OF ALL HER CHILDREN."—Luke 7: 35.

# THE JOURNAL OF HEREDITY.

A POPULAR SCIENTIFIC QUARTERLY.

EDITED BY

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Vol. I.

**OCTOBER, 1885.**

No. 1.

*\$1.00 PER YEAR.*

*Specimen Copies, 25 Cts.*

PUBLISHED BY

**THE JOURNAL OF HEREDITY PUBLISHING CO.**

(INCORPORATED)

OFFICE, 1 CENTRAL MUSIC HALL,

CHICAGO, ILL.

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## THE JOURNAL OF HEREDITY.

### HEREDITY IN BUSINESS MERIT.

The indications of superior breed are partly personal, partly ancestral. We need not trouble ourselves about the personal part, because full weight is already given to it in the competitive careers; energy, brain, morale, and health being recognized factors of success, while there can hardly be a better evidence of a person being adapted to his circumstances than that afforded by success. It is the ancestral part that is neglected, and which we have yet to recognize at its just value. A question that now continually arises is this: a youth is a candidate for permanent employment, his present personal qualifications are known, but how will he turn out in later years? The objections to competitive examinations are notorious, in that they give undue prominence to youths whose receptive faculties are quick, and whose intellects are precocious. They give no indication of the direction in which the health, character, and intellect of the youth will change through the development in their due course, of ancestral tendencies that are latent in youth, but will manifest themselves in after life. Examinations deal with the present, not with the future, although it is in the future of the youth that we are especially interested. Much of the needed guidance may be derived from his family history. I cannot doubt, if two youths were of equal personal merit, of whom one belonged to a thriving and long-lived family, and the other to a decaying and short-lived family, that there could be any hesitation in saying that the chances were greater of the first-mentioned youth becoming the more valuable public servant of the two.

A thriving family may be sufficiently defined or inferred by the successive occupations of its several male members in the previous generation, and of the two grandfathers. These are patent facts attainable by almost every youth, which admit of being verified in his neighborhood and attested in a satisfactory manner.

A healthy and long-lived family may be defined by the patent facts of ages at death, and number and ages of living relatives, within the degrees mentioned above, all of which can be verified and attested. A knowledge of the existence of longevity in the family would testify to the stamina of the candidate, and be an important addition to the knowledge of his present health in forecasting the probability of his performing a large measure of experienced work.

Owing to absence of data and the want of inquiry of the family antecedents of those who fail and of those who succeed in life, we are much more ignorant than we ought to be of their relative importance. In connection with this, I may mention some curious results published by Mr. F. M. Hollond,\* of Boston, U. S., as to the antecedent family history of persons who were reputed to be more moral than the average, and of those who were the reverse. He has been good enough to reply to questions that I sent to him concerning his criterion of morality, and other points connected with the statistics, in a way that seems satisfactory, and he has very obligingly furnished me with additional MS. materials. One of his conclusions was that morality is more often found among members of large families than among those of small ones. It is reasonable to expect this would be the case owing to the internal discipline among members of large families, and to the wholesome sustaining and restraining effects of family pride and family criticism. Members of small families are apt to be selfish, and when the smallness of the family is due to the deaths of many of its members at early ages, it is some evidence either of weakness of the family constitution, or of deficiency of common sense or of affection on the part of the parents in not taking better care of them. Mr. Hollond quotes in his letter to me a piece of advice by Franklin to a young man in search of a wife, "to take one out of a bunch of sisters," and a popular saying that kittens brought up with others make the best pets, because they have learned to play without scratching. Sir William Gull† has remarked that those candidates for the Indian Civil Service who are members of large families are on the whole the strongest.

Far be it from me to say that any scheme of marks for family merit would not require a great deal of preparatory consideration. Careful statistical inquiries have yet to be made into the family antecedents of public servants of mature age in connection with their place in examination lists at the earlier age when they first gained their appointments. This would be necessary in order to learn the amount of marks that should be assigned to various degrees of family merit. I foresee no peculiar difficulty in conducting such an inquiry; indeed, now that competitive examinations have been in general use for many years, the time seems ripe

\**Index Newspaper*, Boston, U. S., July 27, 1882.

†*Blue Book*, C-1446, 1876. On the Selection and Training of Candidates for the Indian Civil Service.

for it, but of course its conduct would require much confidential inquiry and a great deal of trouble in verifying returns. Still, it admits of being done, and if the results, derived from different sources, should confirm one another, they could be depended on.

Let us now suppose that a way was seen for carrying some such idea as this into practice, and that family merit, however defined, was allowed to count, for however little, in competitive examinations. The effect would be very great; it would show that ancestral qualities are of present current value; it would give an impetus to collecting family histories; it would open the eyes of every family and of society at large to the importance of marriage alliance with a good stock; it would introduce the subject of race into a permanent topic of consideration, which (on the supposition of its *bona fide* importance that has been assumed for the sake of argument) experience would show to be amply justified. Any act that first gives a guinea stamp to the sterling guinea's worth of natural nobility might set a great social avalanche in motion.—*Francis Galton, F.R.S., author of Hereditary Genius, Inquiries Into Human Faculty, etc.*

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“THE parent whose blood and secretions are saturated with tobacco, and whose brain and nervous system are semi-narcotized by it, must transmit to his child elements of a distempered body and erratic mind; a deranged condition of organic atoms which elevates the animalism of the future at the expense of the moral and intellectual nature.” Speaking of the savage race and the increasing imbecility of their progeny through the use of firewater as well as tobacco, Sir Benjamin Brodie remarks: “We may also take warning from the history of another nation, who, some few centuries ago, while following the banner of Solyman the Magnificent, were the terror of Christendom, but who since then, having become more addicted to tobacco smoking than any of the European nations, are now the lazy and lethargic Turks, held in contempt by all civilized communities.”—*Rev. Edward P. Thwing in Facts About Tobacco.*

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Art is to man what the created universe is to God. I here use the word art in the most general sense, as manifestation of the human spirit on every plane of expression, material, intellectual and moral.—*Elizabeth Peabody.*