

association. This book gives explanations and schedules for the registration of *personal* data as life advances, just as the *Record* gives for a comprehensive account once for all of *family* data; the details, however, being very different in the two books: they are much more medical in the 'Album.' It is believed by the Life-history sub-committee that the medical value to the possessor, of his own life-history up to date, would be considerable, and of great service to the children. They also feel, that, if these albums are commonly kept, it will be possible hereafter to obtain extracts of a great many of them for purely statistical purposes, which would be of high scientific value. The albums will contain a vast amount of information which is now left to perish, and the lack of which is a great hinderance to obtaining that complete and comprehensive knowledge of the family antecedents of numerous persons, which is at present the paramount desideratum to inquirers into heredity.

I shall be very grateful to any of your readers who may see my forthcoming 'Record of family faculties,' and may make themselves acquainted with what I want, who will send me information concerning their own families. But I cannot explain my wants with sufficient brevity either here or by letter, and must, perforce, refer those who care to know them to the book itself.

FRANCIS GALTON.

42 Rutland Gate, London, December, 1883.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

. Correspondents are requested to be as brief as possible. The writer's name is in all cases required as proof of good faith.

Mr. Francis Galton's proposed 'family registers.'

MANY obliging letters reach me from America, offering family information for my use, of the kind described by my friend, Mr. Henry F. Osborn, in your issue No. 39, as that which I want.

The scheme there described is one that I circulated to gather opinions and to obtain guidance before determining its precise form. This is now done, and with your permission I will say a few words upon it.

The information wanted applies to so many different individuals in the same family group, and differs so much in minuteness, according to the degree of kinship, and it has to be arranged in so special a manner, that a copious explanatory description and numerous tables are requisite. There is no real complexity; nevertheless, I feel assured, that, without considerable guidance, endless mistakes will arise. Correspondents will send pages of useless matter; and, on the other hand, they will be silent about simple facts, the absence of which will seriously diminish the value of otherwise copious returns. I therefore found it necessary to prepare a book containing a full account and explanation of what was wanted, in order to exhibit the various hereditary tendencies that converge upon any given person, and containing at the same time all the necessary schedules. This I have done: it is in the press, and will be published about Christmas by Macmillan, and will be procurable in America.

As regards the prize scheme, I found it inadvisable to restrict it to medical men, and I have thrown it open to 'British subjects resident in the United Kingdom.' I could not extend it farther, owing to the extreme difficulty of verifying statements of facts alleged to have occurred abroad. My self-imposed task will be hard enough as it is. The conditions of the prizes are fully explained in a fly-leaf to the English edition.

Let me take this opportunity of saying a few words about another book to which my name is attached as editor, and which will appear at the same time. It is called the 'Life-history album,' and was prepared by a sub-committee, of which I was asked to be chairman, who acted by direction of the Collective investigation committee of the British medical