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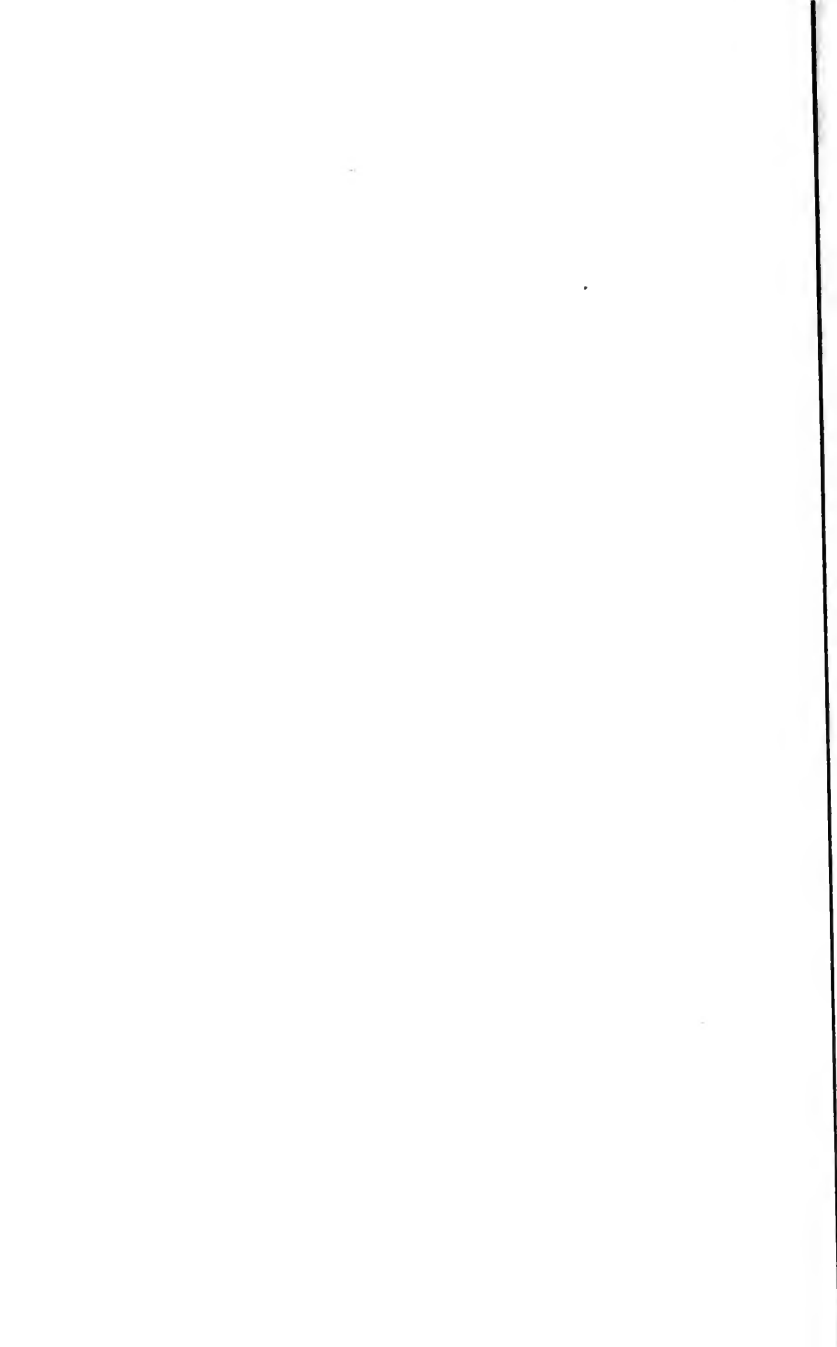
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HEREDITY  
AND CHRISTIAN PROBLEMS

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HEREDITY

AND

CHRISTIAN PROBLEMS

BY

AMORY H. BRADFORD

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New York

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To the Memory of my Mother





## PREFACE

DURING the last twenty-five years there have been great changes in the thought of the world. At the beginning of that time the doctrine of evolution was just coming to the front and had hardly begun to be applied to the sciences of theology and of human society. The very word *sociology* was nearly if not quite unknown. The method of human reasoning was largely *a priori*. But during the last few years all has been changed. Now the science of sociology has taken its place beside theology, and even disputes its claim to be queen of the sciences; now theology itself is studied inductively. Its teachers no longer form their theories and then endeavour to adjust facts to them; but they study the facts of human nature and divine revelation and from them derive their theories. In some respects the progress of science has affected theology very little. It has in no way altered our doctrines of God, of the need of human redemption, or of the fact that such redemption has been

provided. But, on the other hand, it has given a philosophical basis for what the early theologians loosely called "original sin;" it has made necessary an entirely new study of the doctrine of the will and of human accountability. More than most persons dream, the old ways of presenting such truths have disappeared, and would no longer be tolerated even by those that call themselves conservatives. There is no philosophical basis for the ideas of reprobation and condemnation for sins never committed. There is no longer need of arguing against such teaching; it has gone, and would nevermore be heard if it were not raised from its grave every now and then by over-zealous opponents, who ignorantly imagine that they are fighting against living antagonists. It would be a great gain in Christian pulpits if there could be a clearer understanding of what is already dead and buried. The living forces of evil are so numerous and so vital that no time should be spent in battling against exploded theories.

Among all the changes wrought by science, no fact is clearer than that it has made essential an entirely new system of education. The old educators studied books; the new study life: the old emphasized knowledge; the new say, Not

less knowledge but more careful study of the pupil. Formerly the world asked, What do these teachers know about arithmetic, grammar, geography, etc.? but now the inquiry is also, What do these teachers know about children?

In the same way, all that belongs to the sphere of penology has undergone a radical transformation. The old theories were that the offender was an object of vengeance, and that it was the duty of government merely to protect itself and punish law-breakers; but the new teaching is that no criminal ceases to be a man, and that government is charged not only with the protection of its citizens but also with the salvation of its offenders. This teaching is yet only dimly realized, and is still vigorously denounced by many who have not fully grasped the teachings of Christ; but it is steadily making headway, and it cannot be long before the redemptive duties of government will be better appreciated. In order that that duty may be properly discharged, the criminal classes must be carefully studied in themselves. What are these men in their essential nature? What tendencies are in them? Where did their tendencies come from? What forces are at work upon them? No man is fit to make laws for criminal classes that has not

made a study of heredity and the circumstances in which human life is passed.

Moreover, in these days, in theological circles at least, much is being said about "the return to Christ," and the demand is that all questions of theology and sociology should be referred to Him for adjustment. All this is well; but the return to Christ means not only a return to His teaching but a new study of His person. Why should He be trusted more than others? If He is to be ranked in the category of the world's teachers, the return to Christ means one thing; if He was a unique Being who cannot be classified with the seers, sages, and masters of the past, the answer will be altogether different. This book is not an attempt at anything original in the way of scientific investigation; it takes facts that are now the commonplaces of science and endeavours to apply them to some of the problems that face every Christian thinker and worker, and, indeed, almost every man of every phase of faith who seeks the welfare of his fellow-men. It is not offered as a solution of ever-recurring problems, but it is hoped that it may help at least a little toward their solution. The problems of the ages are the same. Each generation as it passes adds a little to the sum

of human knowledge, and some time in the long future, as the result of the labours of those that have gone before them, we may hope that men will no more see "through a glass darkly, but face to face." In the meantime, it is occasion for devout thanksgiving that, largely as the result of recent scientific progress, the views concerning duty and responsibility are becoming juster and more humane; the outlook on the world's weakness and sorrow, its vice and crime, not quite so discouraging; the doctrines concerning God and human destiny far more worthy of His immortal children.

It remains for me only to say that this book condenses many years of study and thought. Its chapters have been written at different times and for different occasions; some of them have seen the light in magazines and reviews, but it is my hope that they may be found not without unity in thought and aim, even though their form may sometimes suggest the diverse circumstances under which they have been prepared. In almost every case I have made full acknowledgment of my indebtedness to various authors. In a few instances, however, the full reference has been lost. In such cases I have still referred to the authors, when known, without attempt-

ing to say exactly where the quotations may be found.

I would seem ungrateful did I not here acknowledge the valuable assistance that I have received in the way of revision from my friend, the Rev. William Forbes Cooley, of Chatham, N.J., who has rendered me most efficient service, and from my tireless secretary, Miss J. E. Lockwood, who has read and worked over these chapters until she must almost know them by heart.

AMORY H. BRADFORD.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,  
MONTCLAIR, NEW JERSEY,  
June 29, 1895.

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# HEREDITY AND CHRISTIAN PROBLEMS

## CHAPTER I

### THE LAW OF HEREDITY

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THE problem of which this book is a study is the relation of heredity and environment to thought and conduct, with especial reference to the facts and theories of religion; or, phrasing it differently, heredity and environment as factors to be considered by students of theology and ethics, and by servants of humanity. My object is purely practical. While I have studied the subject carefully for many years, I cannot claim to be, in the strict scientific sense, an original investigator. In these pages the well-attested results of the researches of others are gathered and weighed, not so much for a more exact knowledge of the subjects themselves, as for a clearer understanding of their bearing upon the life of man and the modifications they call for in the theories concerning human duty and responsibility.

No careful observer can have failed to note that there is a growing freedom and an ampler knowledge in the treatment of all the problems that most clearly concern the individual and society. The sanctity of facts is now unquestioned. It is, no doubt, easier to study man from the standpoint of the speculative philosopher or the dogmatic theologian than by inductive research into our essential nature and actual environment, but the result of the former process is only deeper darkness. Inductive study alone can furnish reliable knowledge concerning duty and responsibility—what man ought to do and to answer for.

I begin with a definition of terms, though that is hardly necessary, since few words are now better understood than heredity and environment. Heredity is the law through which the individual receives from his parents by birth his chief vital forces and tendencies, his physical and spiritual capital; environment consists of "all the events and conditions"<sup>1</sup> surrounding him afterwards that modify his nature and change the tendency of his life.

Two laws govern the transmission of life, viz. the law of uniformity, and the law of diversity. The latter is shrouded in mystery. It is the sub-

<sup>1</sup> *The Jukes*, Dugdale, p. 12.

ject of much controversy, and will be considered later.

“Heredity,” says Ribot, “is that biological law by which all beings endowed with life tend to repeat themselves in their descendants; it is for the species what personal identity is for the individual. By it a groundwork remains unchanged amid incessant variation; by it Nature ever copies and imitates herself.”<sup>1</sup> According to Weismann, it is “the process which renders possible that persistence of organic beings throughout successive generations, which is generally thought to be so well understood and to need no special explanation.”<sup>2</sup> It is “that property of an organism by which its peculiar nature is transmitted to its descendants.”<sup>3</sup> Each child not only is related to the whole race as a species, but is in a peculiar sense the offspring of individuals, bearing within him signs of his parentage, not only in his bodily organism, but also, with equal clearness, in his mental and spiritual constitution.<sup>4</sup> And this ancestral influence is so prevailing that the characteristics of the child and all his tendencies, if not

<sup>1</sup> *Heredity*, Ribot, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays on Heredity*, Weismann, Oxford Translation, p. 71.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 72.

<sup>4</sup> *A Physician's Problems*, Elam, p. 1.

determined before his birth, are at least so clearly defined, that for him to go outside the lines laid down by his ancestry will be very difficult.

The law of heredity I make no effort to establish; I assume it. It is not doubted by careful students of human nature, any more than by students of biology. The mistake should not be made of supposing that it is a new discovery, one of the as yet unproven hypotheses of modern science; or that we owe our knowledge of it to Charles Darwin, August Weismann, and a few other scientists. These men have indeed done much in this field of research, but heredity and environment have been recognized as the most potent forces in the development of life as long as history has been written.

In what sense is there a law of heredity? Laws in nature are known only as the results of processes of induction. From the phenomena of nature and life an invariable order is inferred. The something in obedience to which that order results we call laws, and to a knowledge of these we rise by the study of apparently isolated facts. "Suppose," says Ribot, "all the facts of the physical and moral universe reduced to a thousand secondary laws, and these to a dozen primitive laws, which are the final and irreducible

elements of the world; let us represent each by a thread of peculiar colour, itself formed by a collection of finer threads; a superior force—God, Nature, Chance, it matters not what—is ever weaving, knotting, and unknotting these, and transforming them into various patterns. To the ordinary mind there is nothing besides these knots and these patterns; for it these are the only reality; beyond them it knows nothing, suspects nothing. But the man of science sets to work; he unties the knots, unravels the patterns, and shows that all the reality is in the threads. Then the antagonism between fact and law disappears; facts are but a synthesis of laws, laws an analysis of facts.”<sup>1</sup> If, now, we unravel the fabric of human life, shall we find the threads of heredity in its warp? Without doubt we shall. There are easily verified facts in abundance which make it evident that heredity is a veritable law, holding true at once in the physical, the mental, and the moral spheres.

(1) By the act of generation all that distinguishes *species* as *species* is invariably transmitted. “Like produces like.” Monkeys always give birth to monkeys; birds to birds; fish are the offspring of fish; and human beings inva-

<sup>1</sup> *Heredity*, Ribot, p. 136.

riably spring from human parents. No question is ever raised as to whether "like produces like" so far as it concerns the transmission of the characteristics of the *species*.

(2) Race peculiarities are also invariably transmitted. The child of Caucasian parents—of the pure stock—is always Caucasian in colour, in figure, in mental aptitudes, in moral tendencies. "A spaniel was never produced by a bull-dog," nor a canary by an eagle. A Shetland pony never gave birth to an Arab steed, nor a Southern mustang to the great dray-horses whose legs of iron transport the produce of our cities. Pure-blooded whites never have negro children, or *vice versa*.

(3) Family and individual characteristics are also hereditary. The aquiline nose of the Bourbon family, the fecundity of the Guises and Montmorencies, the taste for natural history of the Darwins, and the faculty—not to say genius—of the Bachs for music are too well known to need more than mention. On the fact that purely individual characteristics are hereditary are based many of the rules of life insurance. Men expect that children will resemble their parents, or not very remote ancestors, as regards tendencies to health or disease.

Therefore I think we may say with Ribot, "Heredity always governs those broadly general characteristics which determine the species, always those less general characteristics which constitute the variety, and often individual characteristics. Hence the evident conclusion that heredity is the law, non-heredity the exception. Suppose a father and mother—both large, strong, healthy, active, and intelligent—produce a son and a daughter possessing the opposite qualities. In this instance, wherein heredity seems completely set aside, it still holds good that the differences between parents and children are but slight as compared with the resemblances." <sup>1</sup>

Heredity acts in four ways:<sup>2</sup>—

(1) *Direct Heredity*, when the qualities of both parents are transmitted to their offspring. Of this there are two forms:—

(a) When the child takes after both parents equally. Of this there are probably no perfect examples. The disturbing conditions are so numerous as to make this type all but impossible; so that practically there is always in the child a preponderance of one of the parents.

(b) When the child takes after both parents,

<sup>1</sup> *Heredity*, Ribot, pp. 144, 145.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 147.

but more especially resembles one of them. Here, again, there are two forms: (1) When the heredity takes place in the same sex; and (2) when it occurs between different sexes,—the more common form.

(2) *Reversional Heredity*, Atavism, consists in the reproduction in the descendants of the moral or physical qualities of their ancestors. It occurs frequently between grandfather and grandson, grandmother and granddaughter.

(3) *Collateral, or Indirect Heredity*, which is of rarer occurrence than the foregoing, exists, as indicated by its name, between individuals and their ancestors in the indirect line,—uncle or grand-uncle and nephew, aunt and niece. It is another form of atavism, and occurs where there is “‘representation of collaterals in the physical and moral character of the progeny.’ We often observe,” Ribot continues, “between distant relatives . . . striking resemblances of conformation, face, inclinations, passions, character, deformity, and disease.”<sup>1</sup>

(4) *Heredity of Influence*, very rare from the physiological point of view, and probably not proved in any single instance in the moral order. “It consists in the reproduction in the children

<sup>1</sup> *Heredity*, Ribot, pp, 170, 171.



by a second marriage of some peculiarity belonging to a former spouse."<sup>1</sup> Of this I will not speak. It has no special bearing on the present line of thought.

It is not within the scope of this paper to show that this classification is correct. It rests on an extended induction of facts which has been made with great care by such general investigators as Lamarck, Darwin, Mivart, and Wallace, and such special students of heredity as Lucas, Morel, Ribot, Galton, Elam, and Brooks.

There are exceptions to this law, but they are neither so numerous nor so inexplicable as are sometimes supposed.

Spontaneity has undoubted play, and in cases of genius seems to have supreme control; but it is a question whether a more careful induction of facts would not show what are called exceptions, or spontaneous variations from the primitive type, to be in thousands of instances only suppressed or exaggerated heredity. In many other cases they could doubtless be traced to the influence of prenatal environment. It is true that beautiful children are sometimes born of ugly parents. So, also, there are on record numerous cases of monstrosities, such as that of Edward Lambert

<sup>1</sup> *Heredity*, Ribot, p. 147.

and his sons and grandchildren, which I will mention again, where the conflict between the tendency to return to the normal type and the tendency toward reproduction is plainly discernible. Besides these the following apparent exceptions to our law have been noted. Pericles had two imbeciles and one maniac in his family. Thucydides was the father of a fool and a blockhead. The great Germanicus was the father of Caligula, Vespasian of Domitian, and Marcus Aurelius of Commodus. "And," says Lucas, "in modern history it is enough to mention the sons of Henry IV., Louis XIV., and of Cromwell."

Concerning all exceptions to the law of heredity there are two theories: (1) That of Lucas, who holds that "the biologic fact of generation is governed by two laws,—one of spontaneity, the other of heredity." (2) That of Ribot, who maintains that "the causes of spontaneity are only accidental; it is never more than a chance, the result of the fortuitous play and concurrence of natural laws; but it is not the effect of any distinct and special law. On this theory there would be one law of heredity with its exceptions, not two laws, the one of heredity, the other of spontaneity."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Heredity*, Ribot, p. 199.

Brooks inclines to the former view. According to him, "We find in all except the lowest organisms that heredity is brought about by two dissimilar reproductive elements, and we find that each organism is the resultant of two factors—heredity and variation."<sup>1</sup> Again: "The fact," he says, "that variation is due to the male influence, and that the action upon the male parent of unnatural or changed conditions results in the variability of the child, is well shown by crossing the hybrid with the pure species, for when the male hybrid is crossed with a pure female the children are much more variable than those born of a hybrid mother by a pure father."<sup>2</sup> In other words, Brooks makes the predominant influence of the male parent, and not mere chance, the cause of variation. Heredity, then, would be the special function of the female line.

The position of Schopenhauer in his purely metaphysical system is substantially this, although his starting-point is antipodal. As interpreted by Ribot he held that "Whatever is primary and fundamental in the individual—character, passions, tendencies—is inherited from the father; the intelligence, a secondary and derivative fac-

<sup>1</sup> *Heredity*, Brooks, p. 314.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 321.

ulty, directly from the mother. He was pleased to imagine that he found in his own person the irrefutable evidence of this doctrine. Intellectual and subtle like his mother, who had literary tastes and lived in Goethe's circle at Weimar, he was, like his father, shy, obstinate, intractable; he was a man of 'scowling mien and of fantastic judgments.'"<sup>1</sup>

It has been often affirmed also that sons resemble their mothers and daughters their fathers. A careful examination of statistical tables, such as those of Galton, shows that the reverse is so often true as to vitiate all theories which rest on that foundation. With the object of our inquiry the causes of variation might seem to be of secondary importance. The relation of heredity to the will, to character, to religion, seems at first to be the same, whatever the theory as to the cause of the exceptions. A very serious fact, however, and a far-reaching question confront us at this point. The fact is that the word *variation* is only a general term for the beginnings of improvement or of decline. The question is, whether man can so control or influence variation as to insure progress and prevent degeneration? In other words, Can acquired traits be

<sup>1</sup> *Heredity*, Ribot, p. 154.

transmitted to descendants? This introduces us to a great discussion in which, in our time, Herbert Spencer and August Weismann are the leaders. Without entering into that discussion, I shall in the next chapter endeavour to interpret the two theories.

## CHAPTER II

### THEORIES OF HEREDITY

STUDENTS of biology have ranged themselves into hostile camps, controversy between which has at times raged with a severity almost worthy of theologians in the days of bell, book, and candle. On the one side are those that believe in the transmissibility of acquired characteristics, and on the other those that disbelieve in it. Latterly, these parties have been led by Herbert Spencer and August Weismann, the latter a professor in the University of Freiburg; Charles Darwin being on the side of Spencer, and Hackel on the side of Weismann. Of these masters of science, the latter has probably the greater reputation as an original investigator, while the former is the pre-eminent English philosopher of our time. It is not easy to state in simple terms the exact difference between their theories. They agree as to the fact of heredity, and differ but little in their definitions. They are at variance chiefly in their explanations of the process by which heredity works. Darwin, Spencer, and

their school teach that acquired characteristics are transmitted. Darwin supported the doctrine by his hypothesis of pangenesis. Very small particles, he thought, infinitesimal in size, are constantly thrown off from all the cells of the body; "these particles collect in the reproductive cells, and hence any change arising in the organism at any time during its life is represented in the reproductive cells."<sup>1</sup> The moment an explanation of the process by which characteristics are transmitted is attempted, the difficulty of the problem is apparent. Thus it is said, that there is growing up in our time a race of near-sighted men and women. The clear vision of the days when our ancestors roamed the forests and were dependent on the sense of sight for protection has disappeared. The habit of seeing objects at short range in course of time made many men near-sighted; they handed down the peculiarity to their children, who increased it, and in turn transmitted it, and so congenital near-sightedness became common. In the same way the presence of disease in many families is accounted for, and also the possession of exceptional gifts of body and mind. In the opinion of these masters of

<sup>1</sup> *The Variation of Animals and Plants under Domestication*, Darwin, Vol. II. pp. 349-399.

biological science, heredity preserves and transmits the physical, mental, and moral accumulations of the past as surely and manifestly as a parent passes on to his children the fortune which he has acquired.

The teaching of Weismann is theoretically very different; but when applied to the life of the individual and to society much of its antagonism to Spencer's doctrine disappears. Weismann began his inaugural lecture as Pro-Rector of the University of Freiburg in 1883 by asserting the reality of heredity with much positiveness and amplitude, and by accepting the statement of Hackel regarding it, that reproduction is "an overgrowth of the individual."<sup>1</sup> He denied that acquired characteristics are transmitted, however, and insisted that variability is the result of organic changes in the reproductive cells, which changes are the result chiefly of the fortuitous combinations of certain elements in the germ-cells. He concedes, however, that during formative periods of the individual, environment may affect the germ-cells directly. Thus the fact that short-sightedness is increasing he also would doubtless account for by heredity, but, instead of saying that short-sightedness became hereditary when first acquired, he

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on Heredity*, Weismann, p. 72.



latter only arise when they have been preceded by corresponding changes in the former, then we can, up to a certain point, understand the principle of heredity; or, at any rate, we can conceive that the human mind may at some time be capable of understanding it. We may at least maintain that it has been rendered intelligible, for we can thus trace heredity back to growth; we can thus look upon reproduction as an overgrowth of the individual, and can thus distinguish between a succession of species and a succession of individuals, because in the latter succession the germ-plasm remains similar, while in the succession of the former it becomes different.”<sup>1</sup>

I will now endeavour, by familiar illustrations, to make clearer these apparently opposing theories. According to the view of those who believe that acquired characteristics are transmitted, human life is like a clear stream which flows from the mountains. On its way it passes through one region after another in endless succession, receiving in its varied course something from a thousand rills and rivulets on the surface and in the soil, so that it is no longer pure as at first, but carries with it many and varied substances from many and varied districts. In other words, the

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on Heredity*, Weismann, pp. 105, 106.

original river is now a kind of composite stream, in which is something from every locality through which it has flowed. Such, say Spencer and his school, is the life which is in every man; it is not as it came from the primal source, but as all living beings have made it. But Weismann would say that the life of man is rather a stream flowing underground from the mountains to the sea, and rising now and then in fountains, some of which are saline, some sulphuric, some tintured with iron, and that the differences in the fountains are due entirely to the soil passed through in breaking forth to the surface, the mother-stream down underneath all the salt, sulphur, and iron flowing on toward the sea substantially unchanged.

When, now, these theories are applied to human beings, the counsels they would have for workers for humanity would be widely different but for Weismann's concession about the direct influence of environment on the reproductive cells, for without that his theory would put the forces of heredity entirely beyond human control and shut us up to the use of the environment of, and personal appeals to, the individual for all morally progressive work. As it is, the outlook is more hopeful. If acquired characteristics are

transmitted, the original substance of our life is at present in part corrupted, and in part developed and improved; and if evil tends to wear itself out, and good characteristics have in them elements of endurance, then the prospect for man is good, since the final supremacy of the good seems to be foreshadowed.

If, on the other hand, the stream of being flowing on from age to age remains unchanged by any individual acquisitions, but may be affected by changes in environment, then, as civilization advances, as life asserts itself, as the environment improves, it is evident that the river of life will soon cease to rise into fountains through any strata which will taint its primal sweetness, and will show itself in springs in which it shall be sweet and pure and cool as when it first gushed from the mountain's side. Individuals are hampered; the men they might be they are not; they are failures or wrecks, not because there is not good life in them, but because it cannot get expression. If Spencer is right, and acquired characteristics are transmissible, then it is the duty and the privilege of the Christian man to work for the creation of such conditions as will put in the place of the tendencies toward evil which now exist better traits

of character, that, these being transmitted, may result in nobler types of manhood. If Weismann is correct, and the peculiarities of individuals are due to their environment, then the problem is simpler still, and all that any can do, or need do, is to seek to make possible a full and true expression of the normal human life.

I have gone somewhat particularly into this difference of theory, not to discuss the scientific question at issue, but to show that the Christian problems I am to consider are not greatly affected by the theory of heredity that may be adopted.

## CHAPTER III

### PHYSICAL HEREDITY

IT will help us to form intelligent opinions concerning the law of heredity if we consider it more in detail, and with illustrations. Two laws govern the transmission of life, viz. the law of uniformity, and the law of diversity. Under the law of uniform transmission of organization children receive from their parents not only the general physical characteristics of their parents, "but also their mental and moral constitutions."<sup>1</sup> This resemblance is not only in their original and essential characteristics, but, some maintain, "even in acquired habits of life, of intellect, of virtue, of vice."<sup>1</sup> Under the law of diversity deformity and ugliness give birth to manly strength and beauty; the sick bear offspring remarkable for health; "virtue is succeeded by vice, intellect by imbecility, and the converse of all these phenomena."<sup>1</sup> The one law accounts for all that comes from the past; the other law for all that is new and peculiar in the development of life.

<sup>1</sup> *A Physician's Problems*, Elam, p. 4.

Illustrations of the action of heredity may be found in great abundance in the works of Darwin, Weismann, Maudsley, Galton, Elam, and the many other students of this fascinating subject. "Hereditary influence may manifest itself in the limbs, the trunk, the head, even in the nails and the hair, but especially in the countenance, expression, or characteristic features."<sup>1</sup> These facts were often observed in ancient times. Among the Romans we read of the Nasones, Labcones, Buccones, Capitones, etc. The significance of these names is in the fact that all were derived from hereditary peculiarities. The family of the Bentivoglios were distinguished by a small but evident tumour which occurred in generation after generation, and which acted as a kind of barometer, predicting atmospheric changes, and growing larger when the wind became moist.<sup>2</sup>

An illustration of indirect heredity is taken from Quatrefages. He says, as quoted by Ribot: "I am acquainted with a family into which married a grand-niece of the illustrious Bailli de Suffren Saint-Tropez, the last French commander in the great Indian wars against the English, with Hyder Ali for his ally. This lady had two

<sup>1</sup> See *Heredity*, Ribot, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

sons, the younger of whom, judging from a very fine portrait, bore a very striking resemblance to his great-great-uncle, but was not at all like his father or mother. The celebrated sailor, therefore, and his great-great-nephew reproduced, with an interval of four generations between them, the features of a common ancestor." <sup>1</sup> This is a case of indirect heredity, or atavism, acting in both branches.

Among the curiosities of this subject are the examples of anomalies and monstrosities. The case of Edward Lambert is often cited. His "whole body, with the exception of the face, the palms of the hands, and the soles of the feet, was covered with a sort of carapace of horny excrescences, which rattled against each other. He was the father of six children, all of whom from the age of six weeks presented the same singularity," <sup>2</sup> which was kept up through five generations. Sexdigitism is hereditary, and some have declared that even peculiarities of handwriting are transmitted. The handwriting of Abraham Lincoln, grandson of the martyr-president, is said to be almost exactly like that of his grandfather; and yet the grandfather died

<sup>1</sup> *Heredity*, Ribot, p. 172.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 7.

when the grandson was very young, if not before he was born. The Bourbon family has always been distinguished by the aquiline nose.

Ribot gives a curious instance showing that sometimes one of the parents transmits the entire physical, the other the entire spiritual, nature. He says: "The most curious and incontestable instance of this is the case of Lislet-Geoffrey, engineer in Mauritius. He was the son of a white man and a very stupid negress. In physical constitution he was as much a negro as his mother; he had the features, the complexion, the woolly hair, and the peculiar odour of his race. . . . He was so thoroughly a white as regards intellectual development that he succeeded in vanquishing the prejudices of blood, so strong in the colonies, and in being admitted into the most aristocratic houses. At the time of his death he was Corresponding Member of the Academy of Sciences."<sup>1</sup>

In Washington Territory I myself saw an instance which seems more like the inheritance by a daughter of the entire nature of her father. The young woman, about thirty years of age, was one of the most beautiful in form, feature, and complexion, one of the most attractive in

<sup>1</sup> *Heredity*, Ribot, p. 155.



speech and graceful in manner that I ever met. Imagine my amazement when I was shown her mother -- a stupid old squaw, who seemed hardly more than an inert mass of fat. The young woman was the daughter of an officer of the Hudson's Bay Company and of this squaw whom he had married. In any drawing-room in the world the daughter would have attracted attention by her beauty, and she no more resembled her mother than a lily resembles a heap of sand.

Heredity affects the size and shape of the body. Frederick William I. had his favourite regiment of giants, whom he would not allow to marry women of stature inferior to their own. Their offspring were gigantic, and their descendants, the most superb specimens of physical manhood in Europe, are still to be seen in various parts of Germany.<sup>1</sup> It may be traced in the complexion. Plutarch mentions a Greek woman who gave birth to a negro child, and was brought to trial for adultery, but it transpired that she was descended in the fourth degree from an Ethiopian. The story is officially vouched for of a negro woman who gave birth to a white child, and was terrified at what she supposed would be the inference of her husband, until he told

<sup>1</sup> See *Heredity*, Ribot, p. 3.

her that his father was white, and that, for many generations, there had been a white child in some branch of the family.<sup>1</sup> These, of course, are instances of atavism, which, in the silk-worm, appears even after more than a hundred generations.

Heredity influences the internal organism, the heart, the osseous, muscular, and nervous systems, and the size and form of the cerebral convolutions. Some families for generations are distinguished by fecundity; such were the Montmorencies, the Condés, and Guises. Longevity runs in families. In some the line of threescore and ten is almost always reached, while others seldom have aged members. The Turgot family is mentioned as one in which the fifty-ninth year was rarely passed.

Diseases run in families. One is peculiarly liable to consumption, another to insanity, another to rheumatism. Life insurance companies base their calculations on this fact. A consumptive parent is believed to entail on his offspring a tendency to consumption. A friend of mine was refused life insurance in one of our largest companies because his mother died of consumption, although he himself was a strong man, and his

<sup>1</sup> See *Heredity*, Ribot, p. 169.

father was vigorous at nearly seventy. M. Esquirol says that one-half the cases of insanity amongst the higher classes in France, and about one-third amongst the lower classes, have been inherited from parents or ancestors. According to one authority, seventy-seven per cent. of the cases at the Bicêtre were hereditary, and, according to Dr. Burrows, eighty-four per cent. Two important considerations in regard to this question should be given full weight: first, that the native inferiority or taint may be of very different degrees of intensity, so as, on the one hand, to conspire only with certain more or less powerful exciting causes, or, on the other hand, to give rise to insanity even amongst the most favourable external circumstances. Second, that not only insanity in the parents, but any form of nervous disease in them — epilepsy, hysteria, and even neuralgia — may predispose to insanity in the offspring; as, conversely, insanity in a parent may predispose to other kinds of nervous diseases in the offspring.<sup>1</sup> What is true of consumption and insanity is true of all nervous diseases, of gout, dyspepsia, skin diseases, and so on through the list.

<sup>1</sup> *Physiology and Pathology of the Mind*, Second Edition, London, p. 243.

This is the place to consider the heredity of the tendency toward intemperance. No one believes that intemperance itself is transmissible; but that the physical condition that makes intemperance easy, and, if circumstances favour, almost inevitable, is transmitted is clearly taught by all students of this subject whom I know. On this point testimony is required, and only that of experts will be offered. Elam quotes the following from the "Psychological Journal:" "The most startling problem connected with intemperance is, that not only does it affect the health, morals, and intelligence of the offspring of its votaries, but that *they also inherit the fatal tendency and feel a craving for the very beverages which have acted as poisons on their system from the commencement of their being.*"<sup>1</sup>

Morel, one of the ablest investigators of this subject, says: "I have *never* seen the patient cured of his propensity whose tendencies to drink were derived from the hereditary predisposition given to him by his parents."

Dr. Hutchison says: "I have seen only one case completely cured, and that after a seclusion of two years' duration. In general, it is not cured; and no sooner is the patient liberated than he manifests all the symptoms of the disease. . . . Such

<sup>1</sup> *A Physician's Problems*, Elam, p. 40.

individuals are sane only when confined in an asylum." <sup>1</sup>

We now come to one of the most terrible features of this terrible habit. The vice of one generation, when inherited, does not appear in the second generation merely as a habit, but in most cases as a disease. This disease, known as oinomania or dipsomania, is easily distinguished from ordinary intemperate habits. It is described as "an impulsive desire for stimulating drinks, uncontrollable by any motives that can be addressed to the understanding or conscience, in which self-interest, self-esteem, friendship, love, religion, are appealed to in vain; in which the passion for drink is the master-passion, and subdues to itself every other desire and faculty of the soul." <sup>2</sup> Of this class M. Morel says: "Such cases present themselves to our observation with the predominance of a phenomenon of the psychical order, which I have already had occasion to mention, i.e. *a complete abolition of all moral sentiments*. One might say that no distinction between good and evil remains in the minds of these degraded beings. . . . They quit their homes without troubling themselves where they may go; they

<sup>1</sup> *A Physician's Problems*, Elam, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 73.

cannot explain the motives of their disorderly tendencies; their existence is passed in the extremest apathy, the most absolute indifference, and volition seems to be replaced by a stupid automatism." <sup>1</sup> Dr. Elam says: "*Theoretically* considered, this impulsive tendency may probably not be absolutely irresistible, but *practically*, it is almost, if not altogether so." <sup>2</sup>

What has been said of intemperance is still more true of the opium habit. Sometimes the use of opium manifests itself in a succeeding generation in the craving for intoxicating liquors, and sometimes in a craving for opium. The elder Coleridge was an opium eater, and he used to say that in all his relations of life his will was powerless. Hartley Coleridge inherited his father's imperious desire for stimulants, and with it his weakness of power to resist. His brother thus wrote of him when he was young: "A certain infirmity of will had already shown itself. His sensibility was intense, and he had not where-withal to control it. He could not open a letter without trembling. He shrank from mental pain; he was beyond measure impatient of constraint. . . . He yielded, as it were unconsciously, to slight

<sup>1</sup> *A Physician's Problems*, Elam, p. 74.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 74.

temptations, — slight in themselves and slight to him, — as if swayed by a mechanical impulse, apart from his own volition. It looked like an organic defect, a congenital imperfection.”<sup>1</sup> He wrote of himself: —

“O! woful impotence of weak resolve,  
Recorded rashly to the writer’s shame,  
Days pass away, and time’s large orbs revolve,  
And every day beholds me still the same;  
Till oft neglected purpose loses aim,  
And hope becomes a flat, unheeded lie.”

Thus we are forced to face the fact that he who forms his own character is at the same time helping to form the character of subsequent generations. The pleasures of one generation may become the curses of the next. The continuity of the race is a terrible and remorseless reality. Streams of tendency, hot with passion and lust and lurid with disease, flow from generation to generation. We are not simply ourselves; we are also products of the past.

These illustrations show in a general way the operations of the law. But narrow the range of observation. Particular qualities, dispositions, and habits are subject to the operation of this law. We now face a fact of solemn and awful signifi-

<sup>1</sup> *A Physician’s Problems*, Elam, p. 75.

cance. Because of the interaction of the laws of uniformity and diversity in heredity, it is not possible always to predict just what physical characteristics will be transmitted. Health, or disease, or organic peculiarities may not recur, inherent intellectual or moral qualities may not always be transmitted; "but," says Dr. Elam, "*an acquired and habitual vice will rarely fail to leave its trace upon one or more of the offspring, either in its original form or one closely allied. . . . The habit of the parent becomes the all but irresistible instinct of the child; the voluntarily adopted and cherished vice of the father or mother becomes the overpowering impulse of the son or daughter; the organic tendency is excited to the uttermost, and the power of will and of conscience is proportionately weakened,* — weighty considerations in forming a judgment on the responsibility of those so fatally affected by this direct inheritance of crime. And so it is by a natural law, and not by any arbitrary or unjust interpolation of divine vengeance, that the sins of the parents are visited upon the children, — that the fathers eat sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *A Physician's Problems*, Elam, p. 5.



## CHAPTER IV

### INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL HEREDITY

THE subject of heredity becomes far more interesting and more complicated when we approach the sphere of mind. Physical illustrations are more easily verified than mental and moral. Many that unhesitatingly grant the operation of this law in the bodily organism strenuously deny that its action can be traced in the realm of intellect and morals. But examples of intellectual and moral heredity are not difficult to find. The influence of ancestry on those now living is freely acknowledged by nearly all great educators and religious teachers. Ribot says: "This [heredity] holds good also of psychical qualities: a given animal possesses not only the general instincts of the species, but also the peculiar instincts of the race. The negro inherits not only the psychological faculties which are common to all men, but also a certain peculiar form of mental constitution, namely, an excess of sensibility and imagination, sensual tendencies, etc." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Heredity*, Ribot, p. 144.

Dr. Moore says: "Our education may be said to begin with our forefathers. The child of the morally instructed is most capable of instruction, and intellectual excellence is generally the result of ages of mental cultivation.

"Sir A. Carlisle says that many years since an old schoolmaster told him that, in the course of his personal experience, he had observed a remarkable difference in the capacities of children for learning, which was connected with the education and aptitude of their parents; that the children of people accustomed to arithmetic learned figures quicker than those of differently educated persons; while the children of classical scholars more easily learned Latin and Greek; and that, notwithstanding a few striking exceptions, the natural dulness of children born of uneducated parents was proverbial."<sup>1</sup> "I think," says a careful observer, "the hereditary powers will generally be found best calculated to do that which the parents, through successive generations, have done."<sup>2</sup>

The investigations of biologists have been devoted to physiological rather than to psychological phenomena; but another class of investigators

<sup>1</sup> *A Physician's Problems*, Elam, pp. 32, 33.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 33.

have, with like care, studied the action of the law in the region of the mind. This inquiry brings us no doubt to questions at issue between materialists and spiritualists, but the answer is unaffected by that discussion. If mind is the product of matter, and heredity is a physiological law, then of course it concerns the whole man. If the spiritual nature is independent, if it dwells in the body as a man in his house, then there are distinct phenomena to which the appeal can be made. If, in the third place, there is a mutual relation between the body and the mind, if each modifies the other, and heredity is a law of the material organism, then it must also be a law which so intimately concerns the mind's action as to make its study essential to any scheme of spiritual philosophy. The investigations of Galton are almost entirely in the sphere of mind, and he has certainly shown that mental and moral characteristics are hereditary; that a child resembles its parents quite as closely in mind as in body.

In tables illustrating the heredity of the imagination, I find a list of fifty-one of the most eminent poets of the world, and of that number twenty-two are known to have had illustrious relatives. Probably many more of them had relatives who possessed the soul of genius, without the opportunity

for its manifestation. The family of Æschylus numbered eight poets. Burns had his mother's sensibility.

Coleridge was a poet and a metaphysician. The following abridged list of his descendants is taken from Galton. His son Hartley was also a poet, and subject in his precocious childhood to visions. His imagination was singularly vivid, and of a morbid character. He inherited also his father's love for stimulants. The Rev. Derwent Coleridge, another son, was an author likewise, and principal of the Chelsea Training College. The daughter, Sara, was also a writer, and possessed all her father's individual characteristics. She married her cousin, and of this union was born Herbert Coleridge, a philologist. If, now, the lineages of Goethe, Hugo, Milton, etc., are studied, it will hardly need an argument to show that heredity works among the poets.

Among artists, it is sufficient to note that Flaxman was the son of a moulder of plaster casts; Thorwaldsen was the son of a poor sculptor; and Raphael's father was a painter, as was also the mother of Vandyke; but the law may be studied further in the families of Bassano and Bellini, Paul Veronese, Carracci, Murillo, Teniers, Titian, and Van Der Velde.

(The hereditary character of musical talent is well known. Allegri, author of the "Miserere," was of the same family as Correggio the painter, and the artistic talents are probably radically one, whether they be manifested in rhythm, in colour, or in sweet sounds. Andrea Amati was only the most illustrious member of a family of violinists at Cremona; Mozart's father was a violinist; Beethoven was the son of a tenor singer; and Mendelssohn was of a musical family. The Bachs supply perhaps the most distinguished instance of mental heredity on record. The family began in 1550, and lasted through eight generations, to the year 1800. During a period of nearly two hundred years it produced a number of artists of the first rank. There is no other instance of so many remarkable talents in a single family. Its head was Weidt Bach, a baker of Presburg, who used to seek relaxation from labour in music and song. He had two sons, who commenced the unbroken line of musicians of the same name that, for nearly two centuries, may be said to have overrun Thuringia, Saxony, and Franconia. They were all organists or church singers. When they had become too numerous to live near each other, and the members of the family were scattered abroad, they resolved to meet once a year on a stated day,

with a view to keeping up a sort of patriarchal bond of union. This custom was continued until nearly the middle of the eighteenth century, and very often there gathered together more than one hundred persons bearing the name of Bach—men, women, and children. In this family are mentioned twenty-nine eminent musicians. Fétis, in his “Dictionnaire Biographique,” mentions fifty-seven members of this family.

As further evidence of mental heredity note, among scientists, the families of Aristotle, Bacon, Bentham, and James Watt; and among men of letters, the families of Addison, Thomas Arnold, Hallam, Macaulay, Seneca, and Madame de Staël. Dr. Galton attempted to prove that genius is hereditary. The following are samples of his many illustrations.

#### THE ADAMS FAMILY.<sup>1</sup>

John Adams, second President of the United States.

John Quincy Adams, sixth President of the United States.

Charles Francis Adams, Minister to England, etc.

Charles Francis Adams, Jr., scholar and statesman.

John Quincy Adams, son of Charles Francis, student of social problems.

#### THE DARWIN FAMILY.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Erasmus Darwin, physician, physiologist, and poet; his father a man of letters, eminent in his time.

<sup>1</sup> *Hereditary Genius*, Galton, p. 124.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 209.

Charles Darwin, son of Erasmus, died young after having won the gold medal of Edinburgh University for a medical essay.

Dr. Robert Darwin of Shrewsbury, also a son of Erasmus, an eminent physician.

Charles Darwin, the illustrious modern naturalist, grandson of Erasmus: one of his sons was second wrangler at Cambridge in 1868, and is a Professor of Mathematics there; another was second in the Woolwich examination of the same year, while a third is a distinguished teacher of botany at Cambridge.

M. E. Caro, of the Institute of France, reviewing this part of his work, argues that Galton has not proved genius to be hereditary, but simply that special faculties are transmitted. He says the solitary great men, like Bossuet, Pascal, Byron, Goethe, Dante, Shakespeare, cannot be accounted for either by organic evolution, the intellectual medium, or generation. "To this day the great gift of inspiration in science, poetry, and art has not revealed its secret. Those sovereign minds, precisely by what they possess that is incommunicable, rise high and alone above the flood of generations which precede and follow them, and, by reason of this superior side of their nature, they do not belong to nature. Those exalted originals in mind who tower above mankind have no fathers and leave no sons in the

blood. Notwithstanding Mr. Galton, the least hereditary thing in the world is genius."<sup>1</sup> But M. Caro's conclusions do not affect the law of heredity; he only maintains that the examples of loftiest genius are exceptions to the law and unaccounted for by any law. Who might not ask himself, what law of heredity can account for Martin Luther and John Calvin, for Shakespeare and Wordsworth, for Florence Nightingale and Abraham Lincoln? In attempting to account for these, it must be remembered that sons are quite as likely to resemble their mothers as their fathers. The mothers of great men are usually unknown; and what genius and power among women have been shut out of sight of the world, or perhaps, alas, suppressed, history does not tell. We know that Commodus resembled Faustina and not Aurelius; that Caligula was not like his father, but the very picture of his detestable mother, Agrippina; we know that Napoleon II. was as much like the weak Marie Louise, as Napoleon I. was like the magnificently strong and brave Letizia Ramolino; we know that Goethe resembled his mother, and that Lord Byron received, if not his genius, certainly his temper and uncontrollable passion, from the maternal side.

<sup>1</sup> *Popular Science Monthly*, December, 1883.



Now, great men are more apt than others to marry mediocre or inferior wives. They are attracted by what they do not find in themselves. As a consequence, their children are not their equals; their greatness has been diluted. The children are not like themselves alone or their ancestors, but like their wives and the families from which the latter sprang. Still, eliminating that which is usually ascribed to genius, and comparing characters, habits, and ways of doing things, children invariably resemble their parents more than they differ from them.

So far as our knowledge goes at present, after every ancestral allowance has been made, certain lonely great souls still rise above humanity, as the Alps and Andes above the earth. The genesis of genius is as mysterious as the genesis of life. If there is a law of heredity, the evidence for its operation in the sphere of mind is as clear, as positive, and as complete as the evidence of its operation in the sphere of matter.

Physical characteristics, we have seen, are transmitted, and education and accident often make their impress upon children. Thus far we have been only advancing toward the fact that the moral nature of man is subject to hereditary law.

In making this plain we shall study the action of heredity in pauperism, vice, and crime.

The moral nature is subject to hereditary law. It is so in the sense that a disposition, a habit of the will, a condition of temperament, may be transmitted, and may become a force so strong as to be almost irresistible. Lecky says: "There are men whose whole lives are spent in willing one thing and desiring the opposite," which is only a variation of the apostle's words, "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law in my mind." (Romans vii. 23.)

James I. of England and VI. of Scotland is one of the most mournful figures in English annals. How could it be otherwise with the son of Mary, Queen of Scots, and her first cousin, Darnley, whom she married when she was only nineteen years of age?

It was not strange that Agrippina, wife of Germanicus, should have been the mother of Caligula, and of that still more detestable Agrippina, the mother of Nero. Nor was it strange that Domitius, who married the second Agrippina, should have said that from himself and his wife nothing good could come.<sup>1</sup>

Lord Byron's mother is thus described: "Little

<sup>1</sup> *Parents' Guide*, Mrs. Hester Pendleton, p. 32.

is known of the early history of Mrs. Byron, but quite enough of the extraordinary violence of her temper, and its effects upon her health after any sudden explosion of cholera, to warrant the belief that some cerebral disease occasioned that degree of excitability which is quite unparalleled in the history of any lady of sane mind." <sup>1</sup> It is not strange that Macaulay could write of a man born of such a mother: "Never had any writer so vast a command of the whole eloquence of scorn, misanthropy, and despair. That Marah was never dry. No art could sweeten, no draughts could exhaust, its perennial waters of bitterness. Never was there such variety in monotony as that of Byron. From maniac laughter to piercing lamentation, there was not a single note of human anguish of which he was not master." <sup>2</sup>

The law of heredity in its relation to pauperism and crime has been exhaustively treated by R. L. Dugdale, in his little monograph, entitled "The Jukes," in which the unhappy descendants of one neglected and vicious girl are traced through many generations. It is a book to be carefully studied by all interested in the relation of sociology to theology. Its facts are almost too terrible to be summarized. It shows that a very large pro-

<sup>1</sup> *Parents' Guide*, Mrs. Hester Pendleton, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 22.

portion of the descendants of this woman became licentious, in the course of six generations 52.40 per cent. of the females being harlots and 23.50 per cent. of the children illegitimate; that there were 7.50 times more paupers among the women than among the average women of the State, and nine times more paupers among the male descendants than among the average men of the State, while of the sick among them 56.47 were paupers. Of seven hundred cases examined, two hundred and eighty became pauperized adults; and this study covered but about one-third of the family. Moreover, of these seven hundred only twenty-two had acquired property, and eight of those had lost what they had gained. Seventy-six are known to have been convicted of crimes and punished, while it is scarcely to be doubted that more than double that number were really criminals. The diseases from which they suffered were among the most terrible and debasing known to the medical profession; in other words, the unmistakable wages of sin.<sup>1</sup> It is possible that this is an exceptional case, but it is more than

<sup>1</sup>The result of the investigations of Mr. Dugdale have been before the public for several years. They are repeated here in the hope that they may possibly reach some readers who may not be acquainted with his almost startling little book.

probable that the records of crime in other States would show cases equally striking.

If any law is well established it is the law of heredity, as manifested in the transmission of qualities and tendencies that lead to vice, pauperism, and crime. Indeed, much of pauperism is only one manifestation, and much of vice is largely the outcome, of physical disease, the hereditary nature of which we have already discovered. A large proportion of the dangerous classes have received from a vicious ancestry qualities and tendencies which, with their environment, they are almost powerless to resist. That which is the heritage of intemperate and licentious parents,—a weakened vital state which almost destroys ambition and makes labour seem impossible,—society denounces as laziness. But we are always at first what others make us. Our parents determine the time and place of our birth, and the surroundings into which we shall come, and from them, or through them, come our characteristics. The virtues and vices of those who have lived in other ages reach into our time and affect us. Disease, habit, moral and intellectual tendencies and qualities, vices and virtues, all are in the stream of heritage which comes from the past. There are exceptions, no doubt, to this law, and in it are

many "unexplored remainders." For a time, and for no manifest reason, one quality will neutralize another; but the great fact remains beyond challenge that the past is at work in the present, its power reaching down through the ages, to all the race, modifying every human life, touching and influencing every individual's thought and will, and, more than any other force, colouring history.

A question of tremendous import arises at this point. Is heredity as active in the direction of blessing as of bane? Is a tendency toward virtue as surely transmitted as a tendency toward vice? We should expect the law to work impartially whether for good or for ill; yet, as a matter of fact, the most striking examples of heredity seem to be in the line of evil. There are special reasons for this. A process of decay is always more rapid than a process of growth. An apple rots more quickly than it ripens. The spread of poison in the blood is quicker than its possible eradication from the system. There is nothing to indicate that a perfectly pure and virtuous man would not as surely and readily transmit a tendency toward purity and virtue as some men do toward the opposites of these; but no man is perfectly pure and virtuous. All are more or less corrupted and perverted. A transmitted nature carries with it

the taints, the specks of decay, which have existed in the parents or been handed down from ancestors; and those degenerative tendencies will, in the nature of the case, work faster than the redeeming, constructive ones. A tainted nature, such as science, as well as religion, assures us that we all have, will reproduce itself and its seeds of death with it. That which is born of the spirit is spirit; but that which is born of spirit tainted by the corruptions of the flesh is still tainted. The best are only struggling upward. The president of a great university said he would give years of his life if he could forget the scenes and thoughts which came to him from his youth. Forces inside tend downward, and forces outside co-operate. Therefore the operation of this law in a redemptive process must be slower than its operation in a deteriorating process, and spiritual heredity will assert itself less quickly than sensual heredity. Moreover, it is not to be forgotten that it is rarely possible for virtuous conduct to produce radical organic improvement in the body, while bodily degeneration, and consequent structural changes in the reproductive cells, are among the most common effects of courses of vice. Furthermore, the time of reproduction in the human species is largely when the passions are hot, and

before the influences of religion have had time to complete their work. A man may have been a drunkard from his twentieth to his twenty-fifth year. Then, reforming, he lives an exemplary life. At thirty he marries, and becomes a father — a father with a pure will, but with a physical nature from which the poison of alcohol is not yet purged. His child may be born with a thirst for stimulants. Still the thirst is weaker than it would have been had he been born five years before. The tendency downward is not so strong, and the tendency upward is stronger. The child, however, partakes of the double nature of the parent — a struggling moral nature and a tainted physical nature. It may be that new circumstances have given an opportunity for latent germs of evil tendency, which started first in his grandfather, to manifest themselves in him. Beyond a doubt such experiences are common in the physical organism — why should they not be manifest also in a tainted moral nature pointing toward some long-forgotten vice?

I conclude, then, that the sweep of this law is the same in the spiritual as in the physical sphere. None the less, however, must the redemption of the world, as distinguished from that of individuals, be sought by the bringing into



life, in Christian homes, of a higher spiritual stock, who, in turn, shall produce their own kind, free from the bondage of the body.

Over against the advantage that evil seems to have over good, however, is to be set a more hopeful fact. It is, that evil always carries within itself the seeds of decay, but that virtue and truth have in themselves seeds of endurance and growth. This truth never had more forcible expression than in the Ten Commandments, which distinctly state that the consequences of sin run through three and four generations, while the results of righteousness endure to a thousand generations. Wrong-doing may work ruin more swiftly than virtue works blessedness, but the result of the latter is more lasting. A father may commit a crime and the taint of the evil may be in his blood, but it will be purged from it in time, while his virtues will continue their blessed influence long after the results of his evil have disappeared. This is one of the facts which tend to make men optimists. It shows that heredity is a potent factor in the regeneration, as it is also sometimes in the degeneration, of the world. It works for good under difficulty at present, owing to the deep-seated taint in human nature. It will achieve redemption far more speedily as that

taint grows less and less. Nature may be severe, but she is neither cruel nor malign. In the long run her processes always work blessing for the race. No child is condemned because of the sin of his parents, and though many suffer because of such sins, yet the successive generations are quickly taken in hand by nature, and sooner or later purified from hereditary taint — a redemptive process that has received too little attention from the writers of our theologies and theodicies.

## CHAPTER V

### ENVIRONMENT

MEN start out, then, in existence with a vital capital supplied by their ancestry, which is modified more or less by the law of diversity. From the moment that individual life begins, however, — not merely from birth, — another factor becomes the supremely important one; supremely important, not because it is necessarily dominant, but because it is the only one at that stage under human control. This factor, therefore, the factor of environment, compels the attention of every student of sociology and religion. Indeed, it may be doubted if the part played by it in civilization is not even greater than that played by heredity. Side by side with the latter is this other influence, at once modifying it and being modified by it, — the influence of the environment in which the human being is placed. The tendencies of every man are fixed before he sees the light; the actuality of every man — his very character, in fact — is always more or less determined by the conditions of his birth and life. Environment, then,

is "the sum of the influences and agencies which affect an organism from without."<sup>1</sup> It is the sum of all that is extrinsic to a human being, and which in any way touches or influences him from the beginning of his career.

Among the influences which have most to do with human growth are, the soil and climate, the food the man eats, the amount of work he is compelled to do, the degree of civilization at the time, the state of morals in society, and the examples and ideals which he most frequently sees. Other causes — some good, some evil, some mixed — also play their part in deflecting him from the course on which he originally started. Illustrations of the effects of environment in the lower orders of life, among animals and plants, are most abundant and beautiful, but they are not within the scope of this book; those desiring to pursue this line of investigation are referred to the works of the great modern naturalists, especially the English and German. We have to do with environment in its relation to the life of man as a moral being and a member of society; and concerning this there is little difference of opinion between the various schools of scientific thought. There is general agreement that, mighty as is the

<sup>1</sup> *Century Dictionary.*

agency of heredity, it can be, and usually is, modified, for good or for evil, by environment. The action of Jacob in putting rods before the eyes of Laban's cattle, that the strong ones might have offspring "ring-streaked," shows that the crafty patriarch understood the influence of surroundings on the life and physical appearance of animals.<sup>1</sup> And the care with which the laws of Moses dealt with the sanitary and hygienic condition of the people in the Exodus shows that the Hebrew lawgiver knew that there was a vital relation between the circumstances in which human beings live and their moral and spiritual character.

Climate is one of the most potent factors in the moulding of character. Differences in the nature of men are largely the result of the contest between the individual and the various elemental forces and influences, in which he is but partially successful, and by which "he becomes unnaturally or morbidly removed from the primitive type." All a man's circumstances help to determine his life and the character of his divergence from the original type. The effect of climate is evident and easy of observation. Those that live in malarial regions bear the marks of their residence in their bodies and send them

<sup>1</sup> Genesis xxx. 25-41.

down the generations. There are amazing differences between the Esquimau, gorging himself with whale-blubber, and the refined and subtle thinkers among the Brahmins in India. Italians and Africans carry within themselves something of the heat of southern and tropical suns. Germans and Swedes, like their climate, are cooler. There is gradually accomplished a physical change in those who live in the tropics. Heat makes exertion difficult; hence the intense and continued activity of northern people is seldom known in the south. If a dweller among the tropics removes to a northern zone, in due time his physical constitution, and with it his moral also, is modified. In other words, life adjusts itself to environment.

One of the most curious of the illustrations of the effect of climate upon bodily constitution is that of the Quechua Indians, of the lofty plains of Peru. From the constant inhalation of the air at a very high altitude their chests and lungs gradually became extraordinarily developed, the cells being larger and more numerous than among Europeans. "Mr. D. Forbes," says Darwin, "carefully measured many Aymarás, an allied race living at a height of between ten and fifteen thousand feet, and he informs me that

they differ conspicuously from the men of all other races seen by him in the circumference and length of their bodies. In his table of measurements, the stature of each man is taken at one thousand, and the other measurements are reduced to this standard. It is here seen that the extended arms of the Aymarás are shorter than those of Europeans, and much shorter than those of the negroes. The legs are likewise shorter.”<sup>1</sup> Those huge lungs developed at the expense of other parts led Mr. Darwin to conclude that there can be “no doubt but that residence during many generations at a great elevation tends, both directly and indirectly, to induce inherited modifications in the proportions of the body.”<sup>2</sup> It is well known that Europeans and Americans cannot long live in many parts of Africa where the natives thrive. Among all examples of climatic influence few are more impressive than the following, concerning those whose days are passed among salt marshes: “Visiting the village of Hiers,” says M. Melier, “we saw children of twelve years of age who appeared but six or eight, so puny and undeveloped were they. Their dirty gray colour is not only pale, but, as it were, tarnished. Meagre

<sup>1</sup> *Descent of Man*, Darwin, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 35.

in limb and swelled in feature, they have only the abdomen developed, and almost all have incurable congestions. For a long time the canton was unable to furnish the military contingent. The greater part of the young men were rejected either for defect of stature or on account of general feebleness. It often happened that amongst those drawn not one was found fit for service. It has occurred also that in certain years not one remained of the prescribed class; none had arrived at the age required; all were dead, for the most part in their infancy. . . . The aspect of the country, and of the race that inhabits it, carries deep sadness to the mind of the observer. It is a tomb, on the borders of which the inhabitants spend a weary existence, and seem daily to measure its depths. They are aged at thirty; broken and decrepit at fifty.”<sup>1</sup>

Such an environment must leave its impress on the body, and its effect be transmitted to offspring. Those living amidst it will find not only their physical constitution affected, but their higher nature also. They will necessarily see everything in a different way from those who live in the midst of health and beauty. God, life, duty, will all inevitably be coloured a dismal, deadly

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in *A Physician's Problems*, Elam, p. 100.



shade, peculiar to their conditions of life; and to expect such people to see things in the same light as we see them, or to hold them to the same accountability, is, to say the least, unreasonable.

Climate, however, is but one of many elements of environment. Illustrations of the influence of trades and modes of life on human development are familiar to all readers of Darwin's "Descent of Man." Watchmakers and engravers are proverbially near-sighted, while those who live much in the open air are long-sighted. "Short-sight and long-sight certainly tend to be inherited."<sup>1</sup> Europeans are inferior to savages in the strength and clearness of their sight, and this is probably due to the indoor life of the people, and to the transmission from generation to generation of the effect of the less frequent use of the eyes for observing objects at long distances. Blumenbach, as reported by Darwin, has observed that the nasal cavities in the skull of American Indians are unusually large, and connects this fact with their wonderful power of detecting objects by the sense of smell.<sup>2</sup> It is said that the Mongolians of Northern Asia have well-nigh perfect senses, and it has been inferred that "the great breadth of their skulls across the

<sup>1</sup> *Descent of Man*, Darwin, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 34.

zygomas" is the result of the perfection of their organs of sense.<sup>1</sup>

Then the whole life of man is influenced by the amount and quality of food which he receives. Cooks have much to do with the thinking and the morals of the world. The state of society, whether it is one of war or peace, also leaves its impress on the character. It is well known that the children born just after the French Revolution were of a peculiarly nervous temperament; and the number of insane patients in France for some years afterward was very great.

Environment may also put its impress on the individual before his birth. It may either modify or intensify heredity. The mother of Napoleon was a woman well prepared by nature for such a son. She accompanied her husband in his campaigns, riding with the troops on horseback, and encamping in a tent at night. Napoleon was born in the midst of war, and the life of the mother before his birth was passed in the midst of the soldiery. He was a true son of Mars. On the other hand, his son, whom he fondly hoped would perpetuate his name, was weak, indolent, and inefficient like his mother, Marie Louise. When some one said to the Emperor, "Sire, the educa-

<sup>1</sup> *Descent of Man*, Darwin, p. 34.

tion of your son should be watched over with great attention; he must be educated so that he may replace you," he replied, "Replace me! I could not replace myself; I am the child of circumstances." With equal truth he might have said, "I am the child of Letizia Ramolino, while my boy is the child of Marie Louise." The difference between Napoleon I. and Napoleon II. was the difference between their mothers, multiplied by the difference between their environments, both before and after birth.

Let us now apply this general law in the sphere of morals. We have seen how surroundings affect the physical nature. A consumptive in the East by the sea may become strong and well in Colorado; that is, a favourable environment may counteract heredity. A well man from Colorado may remove to the seaboard, and consumption be developed, a tendency to which he may transmit to his offspring; that is, a bad environment may develop a pernicious heredity. So, too, when a child of pure and noble parents is placed in the midst of vice, it is probable that he will be influenced by his surroundings, though less easily than one of vicious parentage. So, in general, those who live in the midst of virtue, refinement, and culture are themselves refined, loving books,

music, art, and pure companions; while those who grow to manhood in the midst of ignorance are usually content to be ignorant. On the other hand, remove a child of vice and illegitimacy to pure and refining influences; he will probably be influenced by the life about him, although the struggle with his passions will be severer and longer, and without the constant restraint of good environment there will be great danger of a relapse.

Some time ago one of our periodicals published the story of a young woman who had been attached to a missionary house in the tropics. Although she had been educated in the habits of civilization, after a time she returned to her own people, and was soon living again in the nudity and savagery that characterized her race. When she was with Europeans, she adopted civilized customs; when she returned to her people, she reverted to theirs. Her environment determined her habits.

The influence of heredity, however, should never be forgotten. It is sometimes said that if two children were exchanged in their cradles, a child of the slums being put in the place of a child of wealth and culture, the former would grow up cultivated and refined and the latter coarse and degraded. It is quite probable; yet, the conclu-

sion that the outcome was due to environment alone would not be inevitable until it was proved that the two children were true representatives of their respective classes. In the midst of the slums are not a few persons of natural refinement who have been carried down by sheer misfortune; and it is well known that many who are rich and intellectually cultivated are morally weak — and some of them vile. The child of the coarse rich will gravitate downward as naturally as a child born of the lower classes; and the child having good blood in his veins will naturally rise, even though born in the slums. The influence of environment is strong enough without having ascribed to it the effects of heredity also.

This allowance being made, one broad fact remains. A child born in a swarming tenement where pauperism and crime abound; where a dozen people sometimes live in a single room; where both parents are intemperate; where words and actions are alike vile; where gin palaces constantly invite; where there is only poor food to eat, and liquor is given even to infants, must be a totally different being in tendencies, in desires, and in ability, from a child of pure parents, born in a Christian home, where the surroundings make for righteousness, and where good food, pure air, and

abundance of sunlight are ministers of health. To class such differently nurtured children together, and hold them to the same standards of responsibility, is in accordance neither with common sense nor common morality.

I proceed now to inquire which is the stronger force in determining character, heredity or environment? If I understand Ribot, he adopts the views of Burdach, which he quotes as follows: "Heredity has actually more power over our mental constitution and our character than all external influences, physical or moral."<sup>1</sup> Again Ribot says: "We restrict education, as we think, within its just limits when we say that its power is never absolute, and that it exerts no efficacious action except upon mediocre natures."<sup>2</sup> Again: "We must ever bear in mind these facts, and be careful not to believe that education explains everything. We would not, however, in the least detract from its importance. Education, after centuries of effort, has made us what we are. Moreover, to bear sway over average minds is in itself a grand part to play; for though it is the higher minds that act, it is mediocre minds that react, and history teaches that the progress of humanity is as much the result of the reactions which communi-

<sup>1</sup> *Heredity*, Ribot, p. 346.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 349.

cate motion, as of the actions which first determine it.”<sup>1</sup> The idea of Ribot is that the thousands of years of peculiar environment of separate races has not made very radical changes in the nature of those races. It would appear from his conclusion that Carlyle was right when he said, “Civilization is only a covering underneath which the savage nature of man continually burns with an infernal fire.”

Be the case with men of genius as it may, my own observations—and this is a phase of the subject that any observing person can study—have led me to the firm conclusion that, with men in general, where there is no organic defect, as in insanity or idiocy, environment is the stronger force; but that where there is such defect, heredity is the dominating factor. Indeed, I think the testimony of all workers for the reform of the vicious and outcast is in substantial accord on this point. The moral instructor of the Massachusetts Reformatory told me that more than eighty per cent. of the inmates of that institution after discharge live honourable lives, at least to the extent that they are never again committed for crime. On the other hand, it is well known that a large proportion of those who are sent to the

<sup>1</sup> *Heredity*, Ribot, p. 351.

state prisons return. The difference between the two classes is not due, probably, in the slightest degree to differences of moral heritage, but is due entirely to the difference in nature between the Reformatory, which seeks by good surroundings, education, and moral influences to develop the latent manhood in the convict, and the average prison, which is merely a place of punishment. The experience of such organizations as the Children's Aid Society, which seeks to save children by placing them in new and better conditions, points to the same conclusion; it all is favourable to the theory that environment will modify heredity, and when given a fair chance has power to redeem it. It has been proved, for example, that the evils of illegitimacy may be largely counteracted by education and healthful association. Improvement in environment means the purification of heritage. Bad lineage does not necessarily doom a child, but it makes the chances almost infinite that unless the conditions of his life be changed, depravity will continue. It does not determine the destiny by itself alone, but it will do so if not counteracted. Usually improved circumstances result in a corresponding elevation of character and life. However vile a child's ancestry may be, if he is placed where every-



thing that he sees and hears becomes a motive to purity and honour, the good in him will be stimulated and will increase, the evil will be repressed, and habits of virtue and righteousness will be formed, — the fair promise of virtuous maturity. If this were not true, the good would reproduce the good, the tainted the tainted, and the vile the vile, to the end of time, and redemption there could be none, except, perchance, by the direct intervention of the Almighty. In my opinion all that makes life worth living for many, and all that saves from pessimism those who are possessed with enthusiasm for humanity, is the fact that heredity, when there is no incurable structural defect, may be modified by environment; that there is always something in a human being which can respond to education and religion, and which may be expected to respond to them when circumstances do not obstruct. Even Ribot, who seems not to appreciate the commanding position that, owing to the conflicting elements in heredity, environment holds, feels obliged to confess that it "has made us what we are." That may be an overstatement, for the last word on evolution and the primitive endowment of man has not yet been spoken; but it seems in dubitable that on this modifying and elevating power of environment depends very

largely the possibility of reform, of civilization, and of religion. If heredity cannot be overcome, philanthropic work is a futile grappling with fate. That it can be modified, and the evil in it conquered, is beyond a reasonable doubt. With even the worst ancestry the influence of good surroundings, the presence of high and fine ideals, and sometimes even hatred of the stream of tendency, may make what would otherwise have been a manifestation of evil, the white flower of beautiful and beneficent character. No one should despair because of evil in his blood. Such taints should be recognized, and their development guarded against; but no stream of heredity is either all good or all bad. If circumstances favour the evil, the evil will probably appear in character and conduct; if the environment favours the growth of the tendencies toward rectitude and purity, the evil will go out of sight and out of power to harm, and virtue will prevail. In every soul there are two fountains, one of sweet, and one of bitter waters; which of these shall prevail and flood the spirit depends on the outlet afforded to each, and if the individual develops in holiness, it depends also more and more on his own sovereign will.

The importance of reaching the forces of heredity as early as possible with right training is

evident. Delay means opportunity for evil environment to appeal to evil in the soul. The nearer to the moment of birth the influence of purity, healthfulness, and religion can be brought, the greater the probability that they will become predominant forces in determining character and conduct.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE PROBLEM OF THE WILL

THE question which underlies all morality is this — Is man really a responsible being, or is he the mere product of his ancestry and a combination of circumstances? Does he act automatically according to tendencies inherited or impressed upon him, or is there within each man something other than the ancestral and the external factors? The presumption certainly seems to be against the latter alternative. If heredity determines the physical features; if it shows itself in the temper, the temperament, and the intellectual individuality, what reason is there to suppose that the will maintains a lonely independence? Indeed, what is the will? Is it a faculty, or department, of the personality? or is it an individual possession? If it is the man choosing, then all that influences the man must influence the will. If he is born with a love of the beautiful, he will choose to be surrounded by things which will satisfy that taste. On the other hand, if his parentage is vicious, and the streams of heredity are bad, he will naturally, unless some

almost miraculous power interferes, choose the coarse and the evil. If the will is the man willing, it must be modified by all that modifies the personality. It seems at first as if we must grant that the will of each human being is determined before his birth, and that its choices are as sure as the movements of the stars. If, however, we say that the will is something independent of the other faculties, something outside the influence of physical causation, we are met instantly with the demand for evidence. It is not to be denied that, approaching this subject as we have through a study of the lower faculties, the presumption is against such an hypothesis. There are facts, however, to support the hypothesis, and to overthrow the presumption against it; for not infrequently men break from the lines in which they were born, and seem to be almost independent of their ancestry. Though they are the offspring of vicious and criminal generations, they rise to pure and even lofty character. Doubtless they have to fight heredity, but they have a power which enables them to fight it successfully. John Bunyan belonged to this class; Jerry McAuley, the thief who, reversing a long career of crime, went to his grave full of honour and usefulness, and most of the converts made by the missionaries, all

show that, whatever the power of vicious heritage, there was in these men a force sufficient for its resistance. The example of Marcus Aurelius is in point. He was a descendant of a long line of vicious ancestors, and yet his life was like a white flower in the midst of a world of pollution. The principle of atavism complicates our problem. Ribot cites an instance of a murderous disposition reappearing in a granddaughter who had a homicidal mania, although her parents were apparently free from any such taint.<sup>1</sup> If a man born of pure and honourable parentage is likely to be assailed with evil from remote generations which he cannot resist, what place is left for free will? In considering this question two broad facts are to be kept in mind.

(1) The relation of body and will cannot be determined by physiological or biological science, so far as can now be seen. I make this statement in the full recognition of the claims which have recently been made that the phenomena of the will may be explained by physiological experiments; for it is well known that in the midst of the most morbid physical conditions arise often the finest specimens of manly character.

(2) All such discussions as that of Edwards'

<sup>1</sup> *Heredity*, Ribot, p. 92.

“On the Will,” and the essays of the philosophers and theologians of a century ago, are more or less to one side of the question of to-day. The probable correctness of the theory of evolution presents problems which must be solved before the earlier speculations can be considered. The will must now be viewed in connection with factors introduced by physical science. Anything that ignores these has no claim on the thought of a nineteenth-century student. The ability to choose is a fact the explanation of which is not yet in sight. With the present data it is doubtful if anything more can be done than to collect and collate evidence bearing on the subject, and thus take some steps toward a rational explanation.

I. It is evident that choices, whether they be the whole man willing or the action of a separate faculty, while they may not be determined by heredity, nor formed by environment, must be more or less influenced by them. Perhaps there is no stronger or truer illustration of this statement than is found in “Elsie Venner,” which is probably only a leaf from a physician’s experience. That was a case of the influence of prenatal environment. The beautiful, untamable girl’s character was shaped, and her career determined, by an experience of her mother’s

— the bite of a serpent — before her child's birth. The daughter was, of course, utterly passive and irresponsible at the time; how far was she responsible as she grew up? How far was her conduct under her control? Was there any power within her that could say to those tendencies reaching back to the time before birth, "Thus far shalt thou come, and no farther"? As developed by Dr. Holmes, no room is left for an affirmative reply. Choices, no doubt, are usually according to the motives presented; but motives have power, not according to any inherent force, but according to the response awakened in the one upon whom they act. One is born of sensual parents, with a strong animal nature; another is almost free from animal tendencies. It needs no argument to show that while one will respond readily and naturally to the seductions of sensuality, the other will turn with little or no effort to the contemplation of intellectual or spiritual beauty. Each naturally goes to his own place. If desire, or aptitude, has anything to do with the determination of choices, then the probability is that men will choose according to their desires. We may go further, and say that, unless the prospect of some higher good is introduced, men will always



choose according to those desires that are determined either by heredity or by some experience that has overcome heredity.

Let us now consider some illustrations which show that choices are modified by heredity. The facts would probably not be doubted by many careful students of human life. The question whether acquired characteristics can be transmitted, touches only the particular kind of influence that may be exerted over one generation by its predecessors. If Dr. Weismann is right, and acquired traits are never transmitted, it is still true, as he and all biologists teach, that natural traits and tendencies are handed down, and that ancestral environment also reaches a controlling hand to future generations through its direct influence on the reproductive cells.

Be the true scientific doctrine in the abstract what it may, there is great unanimity in the belief that children of drunkards inherit a taste for liquor. They are born with diseased brain-cells. As a tendency to certain forms of disease runs in certain families, so tendencies toward the appetites and passions of parents appear in their offspring. Those tendencies may not be resistless, but they are real. When a child of drunken parents is tempted to take liquor, there will be all the allure-

ments faced by the child of temperate parents, plus a natural craving of which the latter knows nothing, and the choice of the former will inevitably be more or less influenced by his vital inheritance. True, he may have been so shocked and disgraced by what he has seen among those whom he loves, that he abhors the sight of that which has worked ruin for them. Even then, the case is not changed. The grave fact is that the will is so hedged around with influences and tendencies in such cases, that it is impossible for us to call it free. He who feels a burning thirst for liquor may be said to be in a sense free to choose as he thinks best, but what he will actually think best at that moment will be determined in all probability by his physical condition. Jonathan Edwards argued that the will is as the greatest apparent good. That contention, though it antedated by a long time the modern discoveries in heredity, is quite in harmony with them; for his famous dictum in the last analysis means that men always choose what seems best, which depends very much upon their physical state at the moment of choice, and that is very largely a matter of heredity.

The peculiar aptitudes of many for special studies are too well known to require more than mention. A young man, free to choose his profession

for himself, is yet born with a passion for music. Wherever he goes sweet sounds start whole symphonies in his soul, and discord is as painful as a bodily hurt. That youth may choose to be a lawyer or a merchant, but whatever choice he makes, he will make it with a chorus of entreating voices calling him toward music. In all likelihood he will become a musician, even though the advice of friends be against it, and all prospects of worldly promotion invite him elsewhere. What has decided his destiny? His own choice. Yes, — but what determined his choice? The fact, either that he was the son of musicians, or that he has inherited tastes which, by the principle of atavism, have skipped generations and reasserted themselves in him.

The tendency towards sensuality is perhaps the strongest of the innate tendencies. Sins against purity are committed usually under a kind of spell. The temptation has a hypnotic influence. Passion rises, and silently but swiftly pervades and benumbs the moral faculties; it hides the faces of beseeching friends; it dulls and deadens the conscience; it makes evil seem good, and, for the moment, obliterates the memory of purity and goodness. No power is so strong. Love is the greatest blessing in the world when it is pure, but

it is a fury when it is inflamed with evil desire. A man cherishes wife and child, church and home, with real affection, and yet in a moment his star has fallen, and he has committed an awful sin. He is perfectly sincere in saying that he did not mean to go astray, and that he hates his evil ways. What, then, is the explanation? It is, that in him were two men: one visible, frank, open, manly, desiring good things; another out of sight, and perhaps unknown, who is ever waiting for an opportunity to rush into the field of consciousness and manifest his vileness. Where did that unknown man come from? From where the individual originated; from the human life current. St. Paul knew that unseen man well; he knew what it was to desire one thing and do another. What I wish to make plain is, that this friend of ours who has sinned so grievously was not altogether a free man. In him by nature was much of the animal, more, perhaps, than in the average of men; or, perhaps, his will was constitutionally weak, and consequently less able to control the animal nature. Therefore his choices are, largely, the choices of the still more animal ancestors whose evil influence has not been altogether eliminated from his blood. It is hardly to be doubted that a large proportion of those who fall

into unchastity do so as the result of an impulse which is inherited, and which is as much a part of their being as the power of thought itself. Why does some woman you know outrage decency? Let me answer by asking, Do you know how her mother lived? When you know that, whether you blame her less or more, you will no longer wonder. A few boys were playing in a vacant lot in an eastern town. A quarrel arose, and soon they were throwing stones. One was hit, and ran home for his older brother. That young man, a manly, Christian fellow, came to where the little boys were, and, when one of them made what seemed to him an insulting remark, quick as thought knocked the little fellow down, injuring him severely. Afterward, the young man, deeply and really penitent, said, "I am so quick tempered." He was indeed, but where did he get his temper? Did he coolly go to a shop and purchase it? Such commodities are not on sale. The father and mother of the youth supply the explanation. Two hands really struck down the little boy: the visible hand of the youth, and the unseen hand which reached out of the past. The blame was laid on the former alone; but was he alone blameworthy? A slight study of human life tends to make most persons

charitable. If all real sin is in the will, sinners are less guilty than many imagine.

Thus far we have been dealing with the plain and simple facts of life concerning which there is scarcely a possibility of disagreement; with a class of facts that led Professor Huxley to say that even murderers do what they cannot avoid doing, and are no more worthy of punishment than those who do what, in accordance with traditional theories, are called virtuous acts. It is evident that our thought is moving steadily toward a problem which philosophers hesitate to approach, and which theologians often gladly ignore, namely, the problem of the origin and the contents of the personality. Is each soul an emanation, fresh and unpolluted, from a divine fountain of being? If so, the grave fact confronts us that the divine in humanity is limited and easily tainted; and we naturally ask how environment could so swiftly and surely debase that which is from God? Or, is the spiritual nature derived, like the body, from parents and ancestors? What then? Why, then, the laws of inheritance hold sway in the realm of the spirit; men are what they were born. They are bundles of tendencies handed down from the past, and all by nature love what they were born to love, and do what

they were born to do. This is precisely the conclusion of materialism. It is not strange that those who are exclusive students of physical science are usually fatalists. There is no freedom if man is simply a product of his ancestry and his environment. Hence we find Dr. Maudsley saying: "There is a destiny made for a man by his ancestors, and no one can elude, were he able to attempt it, the tyranny of his organization." Again he says: "The wicked are not wicked by deliberate choice of the advantages of wickedness, which are a delusion, or of the pleasures of wickedness, which are a snare, but by an inclination of their natures which makes the evil good to them, and the good evil; that they choose the gratification of a present indulgence in spite of the chance or certainty of future punishment and suffering, is often a proof, not only of a natural affinity for evil, but of a deficient understanding and a feeble will." It is difficult to see how this conclusion can be evaded. It is not a question of what should be, but of what is. The intellect and the will may be crippled as easily as the limbs. Where a man is born with a weak will and strong animal nature, his tendency will be toward animalism; but where, on the other hand, he is born with

a strong will and noble instincts, each choice will place him higher in the scale of manhood. This statement has the force of a demonstration: choices are always more or less influenced by heredity. Dr. Maudsley says again: "Crime is not in all cases a simple affair of yielding to an evil impulse or a vicious passion which might be checked were ordinary control exercised; it is clearly sometimes the result of an actual neurosis which has close relations of nature and descent to other neuroses; and this neurosis is the physical result of physiological laws of production and evolution. Why should we think of man as possessed of a fixed moral and will power any more than of a fixed intellectual power?" The force of this reasoning is all but irresistible.

II. It is only when we turn away from these facts which, when the approach is made from the side of physical science, seem the nearest and most imperative, that we realize that there is another realm whose phenomena are somewhat less distinct, perhaps, but no less certain and commanding,—phenomena which modify conclusions that would otherwise be inevitable.

Some choices are clearly independent of, and even in opposition to, both what is known of the



individual's hereditary bias and what would be expected from his environment. These lead us into a new world, and to the study of a new set of forces. By a distinct and evident act of choice, when all known hereditary influence would keep them where they are, men frequently repudiate their old associations, and without the slightest compulsion choose a new environment. I know a coloured woman whose heritage is vicious, and even criminal; furthermore, all the circumstances in which she lived in childhood were such as tended to the development of passion; but notwithstanding blood and environment, she has turned from her old surroundings and her old friends, and has made a new life for herself. Almost single-handed, so far as can be seen, she has created for herself new and finer conditions. Some may call this an example of atavism. Yes, perhaps, to some degree; but atavism in a negress can scarcely be very potent for spiritual development: the ancestry carries a strong animalism.

Another case, in many respects still more remarkable, is that of a woman whose home was utterly distasteful to her; there was not the least love between herself and her husband. For years the condition seemed to be growing worse, and the disruption of the home seemed not improb-

able; at least she had no encouragement to think that there would be any improvement in it. Suddenly a wonderful change came over that household. She faced the fact that if she did not overcome the pernicious conditions, no one would. So far as could be seen, not one human influence touched her that had not been upon her for many years. By a simple act of will she decided that a new domestic life must begin; and it did. A more superb act of will I have never known. This could scarcely have been atavism, for long before that time her physical constitution had matured; and it was not environment, for that was strongly against the course which she adopted. Here is a signal fact well worthy of scientific study, a fact which those who were most perfectly acquainted with it saw to be unrelated to any physical or social cause. Maudsley insists that the will is determined by causes rather than by motives; in this case no new cause for the new action is discoverable. It was an act of will, due to motives, but not to any physical or social cause.

Whatever unbelievers in Christianity may assert concerning other things, they would not deny that great changes are wrought in character and conduct by what is called conversion. The supernatural cause would doubtless be denied, but the

change in the individual would not be disputed. I am not attempting to account for these changes, but only to show that there are facts outside the physical series as unquestionable, and probably as numerous, as those within it, which have a claim on the attention of all who seek a scientific explanation of the life of man. Illustrations by the thousand could be given of those whose heredity was bad enough to bind them to evil as with chains of steel; whose actual indulgence in vicious courses had been long continued; and whose environment was full of gross and selfish influences, who yet without cause (using cause as a force in the physical series) were truly converted. If it be thought that motives more or less selfish, such as desire for outward prosperity, account for the change in some, this explanation utterly fails in the case of those who surrender all that ministers to selfishness, and devote themselves to undoing the mischief of their previous lives. When the phenomena of conversion in thousands of instances are studied scientifically, what is discovered? Events without a physical cause; an absolute revolution in character and life, due neither to any discoverable element of heredity, nor to any difference in environment. Due to what, then? Either to a sovereign act of will,

or to a change of spiritual environment which Christians call the presence of the Holy Ghost,—probably to both. I once read a paper on heredity to one who is now in the front rank of his profession—a man of fine and noble character. As point after point was made, an aspect of solemnity crept over the face of the hearer. Before the reading had ceased, he was called out of the room, and taking the chair he had occupied I saw written on a scrap of paper on the table these words, “That is true, and my heredity is all pure devil.” Afterward I found that what he had written was probably true. Yet he determined that the devil should be chained, and chained he has been; with full many a tendency toward base living, the man walks the earth everywhere useful and deservedly honoured. A Christian would doubtless call this an example of the Spirit’s work in that man, and quite justly; but even the Spirit of God does little without the consent of the individual. Every converted man is primarily what he has made himself, by his own choice, as a pure act of will. If the Spirit of God compels any to virtue, then freedom in them is a fiction as truly as if their character were due to irresistible heredity or to any other compulsion.

Another illustration is that of a person whose life has been spent in dissipation,—both the result and the confirmation of an inherited tendency to drunkenness. His life for fifty years is that of an inebriate. Now, on the theory that the material organization is absolute master, we can expect nothing but that he will go on irretrievably to a drunkard's death. Suddenly, however, he alters his course. He does it, no doubt, in response to motives, but motives which are not physical and cannot be stated in physical terms. His case, moreover, is not isolated; it is one of a large number, some of them very conspicuous; cases of men who have changed the course of their lives in the face of the furious storms of evil tendency that come sweeping down the generations and gather energy with every added year. Of such there are two explanations, and two only. One is, that ~~the~~ power of God has manifested itself, and that something has been done for that man by a power outside of himself. But those who believe that, would never doubt that the power of God moved along the lines of the man's own will. And, philosophically, such an intervention is a matter of inference entirely, not of observation. The other explanation is that the real man within the physical organism has as-

serted himself to the overthrow of the dominion of bodily appetites. Many will reject the first explanation; they will refuse to acknowledge divine intervention. Such are driven to acknowledge the existence of free will, — a power within and beneath the physical nature, which is able to assert itself, and take the seat of authority and control; driven to it under pain of believing that one without freedom, whose course has been absolutely fixed by heredity and environment, has changed that course without help; that is, that the boulder flying down the Matterhorn suddenly stops, and of itself begins to roll upward. The Christian explanation certainly seems the rational one; namely, that the choice has been made by the will, while help both to make and to execute the choice has come from above.

Let us now review the ground already traversed. A study of physical facts *alone* makes it appear that no act of choice is unrelated to physical conditions inside and outside the man willing. Logically, therefore, no man is solely blamable for his vicious conduct, or alone praiseworthy for the elevation of his character. A thousand hands, instead of one, strike the blow which makes a man a murderer. He is not the only criminal. A long line of ancestors, and society itself, are

partners in the crime. In a certain real sense men do what they must do, for they have absolutely no option as to what forces they shall inherit; and hardly more voice in determining what influences shall mould them in the plastic period of life. On the other hand, quite opposite facts are equally evident. Men actually do antagonize and overcome their vital inheritance, defy their environment, and, without dependence upon either, choose to live as if they were the children of a virtuous ancestry and subject only to refined conditions. These truths are apparently contradictory, and yet one is as evident as the other. Two boys are the children of drunken parents; their home is one room of a tenement in which a dozen other persons eat and sleep; their school is the street. All that bad blood and evil conditions can do for them is done. Some day the elder in a fit of drunken fury strikes a murderous blow. He is arrested, arraigned, tried, condemned, executed; he alone, though at the bar of God he has many accomplices. Equally, and possibly still more culpable, are the society which makes it possible for such degraded creatures to be born; the State, which allows saloons on every corner, and permits such wretched tenements as the childhood home of these boys; and the men who own

those buildings, anxious rather for rent than for the welfare of human beings. The other boy, however, son of the same drunken parents and brought up amidst the same vileness, is no longer there. His evil heritage has been overcome, and his circumstances changed; he is a gentleman of wealth, of culture, of real and unaffected goodness. What has made the difference? Not society, for the surroundings of the lads were alike bad. The younger may have received from his ancestry certain good tendencies that his brother did not; but so far as can be traced the legacy has been the same. What shall we think about this remarkable and impressive contrast? I know no answer except this: in every man there is an untainted power, something which passes from generation to generation untouched by change, and that in this ultimate essence of personality rests the power of choice, which may be shut in by evil conditions and tied to a thousand evil tendencies, but which is in its nature free, and is rarely, if ever, entirely denied expression. At least it may be said that no fact in the physical series militates against the doctrine of human freedom which may not immediately be met and fully balanced by a fact in the spiritual series.



For many years I have studied this problem of freedom in its relation to the physical organism. Abstract speculations concerning it are of little value. The question is one of science, physical and mental science; and that leads to the following conclusion: a study of physical science alone necessitates the belief that there is no such thing as freedom, and that our faith in its reality is, as Herbert Spencer says, "an inveterate illusion;" that man is no more free than a leaf in a tornado or a feather in Niagara. But it is unscientific to stop with a study of physical facts. The spiritual realm is as real and as evident as the physical, and investigation of the latter results in the conviction that in a certain sense man is free, though not so free as to be unmodified by the physical sphere in and through which he must live.

III. We have now reached this point: the evidence which indicates that freedom is a fiction is balanced by facts on the other side which indicate that it is a reality. Is there no other evidence that can be brought in to turn the scale one way or the other? There remains one unequivocal witness in favour of freedom whose deliverance for most thinkers will ever have decisive force, namely, consciousness. How do we know that we are free? Consciousness bears witness to free-

dom. But what is consciousness, and why is it to be trusted? Consciousness is an ultimate fact. It cannot be analyzed; its contents may be partially enumerated, but they cannot be accounted for. It is like perception through the senses, or the apprehension of distinctions of thought. Who can tell why certain impressions on the retina of the eye give him sensations of colour and form? Who can tell why he thinks? Consciousness is like conscience. Who can tell why he feels that he ought to do right and ought not to do wrong? Now the soul's sense of freedom is not only a direct perception of fact; it is something more than the result of a single intuition; it is rather the connected product of a thousand intuitions, and so is woven into the very texture of consciousness and from it cannot be separated. All men are conscious that they are free; none can either vindicate or explain that consciousness. In my judgment the discussion as to the validity of the argument from consciousness—whether its testimony is to be accepted—is the very heart of the problem of freedom. If consciousness is a reliable witness the case is proved, even if the problem is not fully solved. Against this citadel therefore Dr. Henry Maudsley, in his book entitled "Body and Will," directs his heaviest ordnance. He

closes Chapter II. as follows: "At this point, then, I hope to have said enough to establish my second proposition, and having first proved to the metaphysician that consciousness does not tell him that he has such a will as he imagines, to have now proved that it has not the authority to tell him that his will is undetermined. He has based upon its declaration a superstructure which it is unable to bear. Be the doctrine of an undetermined entity true or not, consciousness is not competent to decide the question by an immediate intuition."<sup>1</sup> It does not seem to me that Dr. Maudsley proves his assertions. At first, indeed, it appears as if even consciousness itself must be modified by the physical constitution; as if it had various degrees of intensity and validity; but, on second thought, that is not so evident. For instance, a man knows that he exists; consciousness tells him so; and the vividness of that knowledge is not in any way dependent on either heredity, or environment, or bodily condition. I think—consciousness tells me that; I will—consciousness tells me that; and that knowledge is at first hand, and entirely untouched by the subsequent inquiry as to whether what I think and what I will are determined by causes having exis-

<sup>1</sup> *Body and Will*, Maudsley, p. 36.

tence outside myself. If, now, I know that I am, that I think, that I will, then I know that concerning the fundamental questions consciousness is a reliable witness. But if consciousness tells me that I will, it at the same instant assures me that I am free; I believe in my freedom on the same authority that I believe in my existence. It may seem to be abandoning the field of science to fall back in this discussion on the testimony of consciousness, but, however much we may try to escape from it, consciousness always asserts itself, and never utters one uncertain sound concerning fundamental questions. I recognize the force of all that Dr. Maudsley says: "A state of consciousness that is at all definite, whether of internal or external origin, cannot certainly be either the subjective or the objective thing in itself: it is a relation of self and not-self, and implicates the one as necessarily as the other term. *Cogito, ergo sum*, 'I think, therefore I am,' has a ring of transcendental authority, until we interpolate after 'I' the quietly suppressed, but none the less surreptitiously understood, 'who am,' and let it read, as it should read, thus, — 'I (who am) think, therefore I am'; after which it does not appear to carry us beyond the simple and subjectively irreducible fact of consciousness, beneath which, it must not be for-

gotten, there is in all cases the more fundamental fact of an organism that is *one*." <sup>1</sup> It is not clear how the unity of the organism can affect the fact of consciousness. A man's organism, whatever it may be, does not affect the fact that he sees *outward objects*; and consciousness is the eye which sees within. It does bear clear and positive evidence to freedom. I am speaking of normal states. There are, of course, diseases of the mind, and abnormal states which are hardly as yet clearly developed diseases. Of these I am not now speaking. Consciousness is ultimate; to challenge its deliverances when they are uniform in all climes and all ages is to launch out on the shoreless, harbourless ocean of utter scepticism. Now, scarcely any deliverance of consciousness is more uniform and universal — *semper, ubique, ab omnibus* — than that of freedom. We — and all men — choose spontaneously, without ever asking whether we have the power of choice, any more than we ask if we have sight when attention is directed toward a specific object. The value of this testimony is recognized in all human institutions. Society is organized on the presumption of freedom. Every law on the statute-books of the world presumes that it may be both obeyed and violated, and

<sup>1</sup> *Body and Will*, Maudsley, p. 37.

equally that each individual in a normal condition may choose for himself either to obey or disobey. All penal institutions presuppose the power of choice misused. Every invitation of religion is an indication of belief that men are able to rise superior to their innate tendencies and their circumstances, and choose for themselves the best things. And society in general has virtually unquestioning faith in the principle. When wrong has been done, the common judgment of men, after all due allowance has been made for palliating circumstances, holds transgressors responsible for their choices. Human institutions are no doubt imperfect, but they do not in their inmost and essential nature bear witness to falsehood. Consciousness, in spite of all voices that attempt to smother it, utters its unceasing assertion of freedom.

What, now, may we say to the inevitable inquiry concerning the nature of the will? I reply in a passage quoted from Ribot, which perhaps comes as near as we shall soon get to an answer. It is as follows:—

“Wundt, in a very remarkable and important work, full of facts and ideas, which unites to the experimental and positive method of English psychology a certain German boldness without rashness, puts the question of free will under a

different form. We have already seen that he protests against conclusions drawn from statistics, showing that in human acts there is a variable element which statistical science may rightly enough overlook, but which the psychologist must endeavour to reassert; that, moreover, if statistics disclose to us the external causes of voluntary activity, they leave us in absolute ignorance of its internal causes. These internal causes constitute what Wundt very well denominates the personal factor (*der persönliche Factor*).

“External factors, he says, we denominate motives, but not causes of will. ‘Between motive and cause there exists an essential difference. A cause necessarily produces its effect; not so a motive. It is true that a cause may be neutralized by another cause, or transformed into its effect, but in this transformation we can always track the effect of the prior cause and even measure it. A motive, on the other hand, can only either determine or not determine the will; in the latter case, we have no means of knowing its effect. The uncertainty of this connection between the motive and the will is based solely on the existence of the personal factor.’

“What, then, is this personal factor which thus mysteriously breaks in on the series of causes and

effects? It is 'the internal essence of the personality, the character.' There we must look for the root of will. 'Character is the sole immediate cause of voluntary activity. Motives are always only indirect causes. Betwixt motives and the causality of character there is this great difference, that motives either are or may readily become conscious, whereas this causality is ever absolutely unconscious.' Hence character—personality—must forever remain an enigma, so far as its inmost nature is concerned; it is the indeterminable *Ding an sich* of Kant. 'The motives which determine the will are a part of the universal concatenation of causes; but the personal factor, wherewith will commences, does not enter into this concatenation. Whether this inmost essence of personality, upon which, in the last resort, rests all the difference between individuals, is itself subject to causality, we can never decide on the ground of direct experience.

“When it is asserted that the character of man is a product of air and light, of education and of destiny, of food and climate, and that it is necessarily predetermined by these influences, like every natural phenomenon, the conclusion is absolutely undemonstrable. Education and destiny presuppose a character which determines



them: that is here taken to be an effect which is partly a cause. But the facts of psychical heredity make it very highly probable that, could we reach the initial point of the individual life, we should there find an independent germ of personality (*Selbständiger*) which cannot be determined from without, inasmuch as it precedes all external determination.'

"We readily accept this doctrine of Wundt. It possesses the advantage of showing, on the one hand, that free will, considered in its essence, is a noumenon; and on the other hand, that on the ground of experience the fatalistic and the ordinary view are not irreconcilable; but, inasmuch as the ultimate roots of the will repose in the unconscious, we may suspect such a reconciliation, but we cannot establish it. We will abide by this conclusion. We have elsewhere endeavoured to show—and we will not repeat our argument—that psychology, even experimental psychology, must admit a certain element which comes before us as a fact; this we call the *ego*, the person, the character: no other word will designate it properly, but of it we can only say that it is that which in us is inmost, and which distinguishes and differentiates us from what is not ourselves; this it is by which our ideas, our sentiments, our sensations, our voli-

tions, are given to us as ours, and not as the phenomena of something outside ourselves. And we put the question, whether the instinct of self-preservation, which is so strong in animals, may not be this individual principle, cleaving stubbornly to existence, and struggling to maintain its hold on life?

“If now we study the part played by personality, not now in psychology, but in history, the problem occurs in the same terms, and seems resolvable in the same way. The individual is subject to the laws of nature, both physical and moral, and is governed by them. But beyond the almost boundless field of determinism we have had a glimpse of the possibility, and even the necessity, of an autonomy, a spontaneity. So, too, in history, where the action of natural laws is great, where, indeed, it is nearly everything, we must also assign its due part to personality, as represented especially by great men. ‘The expedition of Alexander and the poetry of Homer are both due to individuals. But had Alexander never lived it is probable that the course of history would have been other than it has been; and if Homer had not lived perhaps the religion and the manners of the Greeks would have taken another form. . . . Individual will, therefore, exerts a great influence, . . . yet this influence is but a momen-

tary cause. Homer changed the manners of the Greeks only because the Greeks made his poetic creations their own; and Alexander could never have made his mark so deeply in history were it not that his will had the same ground as the general will.'

"Both history and psychology, then, appear to lead us to the conclusion that determinism does not suffice to explain everything. But if we push our inquiries still further, we are met by a fresh difficulty. With regard to this personality—whose true nature we despair of knowing, because it rests in the unfathomable depths of the unconscious—do we at least know whence it is, what is its origin?"<sup>1</sup>

This question, Ribot declares, leads us to an enigma which he will not attempt to solve. The fact of freedom leads to the fact of personality, and the individual personality leads at last to the source of all personality. The most that we can say is that we know that we are free, but that our freedom is modified by heredity and environment, and by the fountain of personality from which we have sprung, but of which we know little.

<sup>1</sup> *Heredity*, Ribot, pp. 341, 344.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE PROBLEM OF THE HOME

THE fact of heredity is not at all a modern discovery. It has been recognized by laws and customs from the earliest ages; and in most times it has been honoured in that concrete manifestation of it,—the family. Hereditary rights, of which the world has heard so much, imply in a certain sense continuance of individual existence. The son of a king succeeds to the throne without regard to his fitness, but solely because of his relation to his father. In the son the family is presumed to continue its reign.

Hence the common term, “the reigning family.” The right which the father won by force is passed on by inheritance, which is simply the parent living again in his child. If a man dies without a will, the State passes the property on to his widow and his children, the latter receiving about two-thirds of it. The laws of the State therefore still favour the old family idea of society, that the individual does not altogether cease to exist at death.

The solidarity of the race, which rests on the

fact that men compose one great family and are sharers in a common vital heritage, is a doctrine that few deny. Socialism rests on it, as do all systems of government, from the autocracy of Russia to the republic of America. The honour shown to the family in the past is, in part at least, justified by the influence of families on the development of events. The de' Medicis, Bourbons, Hohenzollerns, Stuarts, Napoleons, and many others have from generation to generation not only exhibited the same traits, but acted an important part in the world's development. Proverbs seldom lie. "Blood will tell" is one of the oldest and most familiar of these universal witness-bearers.

In this chapter we are to consider the relation of Heredity to the Home, or the problems of the family, — problems that are among the most pressing and practical of our time. Before there can be a home, there must be marriage. Promiscuous mingling of the sexes is the destruction of the family; and yet it is neither the only nor perhaps the most common cause of domestic demoralization. The men and women who, in one direction, have performed such good service in the cause of Divorce Reform often approach the subject on the side of *a priori* theory rather than on the side of actual human nature and the causes

which limit it, and too often pervert it. Apparently their idea is that divorce is an effect of lax laws concerning the marriage relation, and that men and women can be made faithful by legislative act. A more careful study would show that divorces are many, not so much because there is an open door of escape from the marriage relation, as because so many are married in form who are never joined in spirit.

Thousands whom God has forever separated are joined in matrimony by human ceremonies. The bonds of genuine love are very rarely broken; bonds of passion, bonds of convenience, bonds of caprice, will be broken in thousands of cases, whatever be the sanctions the State puts upon them. It may be best for society to make almost indissoluble the bonds of those who are formally married, but it should not be forgotten that by so doing illicit relations will be vastly multiplied; and that where only human laws stand in the way, some avenue of escape from unbearable domestic relations is sure to be found and justified. The case of George Eliot is an illustration. The first wife of George Henry Lewes had, it is said, been guilty of breach of her vows which had been condoned. Consequently Mr. Lewes had no case in the courts.

There was only a mere formal union existing between that man and that woman. In process of time Mrs. Lewes became insane; but still, by human law, her husband was prevented from making a home for himself, although by an act of her own his wife had violated the law, both human and divine. At last she became incurably insane. Then Mr. Lewes and Miss Evans determined to defy custom and public opinion, and be man and wife. They were strong enough to face the opposition. What they did openly, thousands do quietly by a change of residence, or by living the double life which is easily possible in the cities. The family as an institution rests on marriage; and real marriage—that which is something more than a contrivance for the perpetuation of the race—depends on the union of two souls. That union of souls is as essential to marriage as a physical union is the fact that is too often overlooked. In order that this essential union may be truly consummated, there must be between a man and a woman something which baffles analysis, a kind of mutual attraction which calls for companionship and makes association a delight. This something can be defined negatively better than positively. All of us know persons whose characters are beyond criticism, who

occupy high social positions, who have culture and refinement, and yet who are supremely distasteful to us. If absent, they are never missed; if present, they are an annoyance. All that can be said is that they and we are not congenial. There is such a thing as natural repulsion, which is possibly a physical quality. There is absolutely no explanation of this phenomenon; but it exists. If two persons with such antipathies are brought together, and tied together by a million ceremonies, there will never be a home. It cannot be truly said that God hath joined them together, even though Church and State have combined to sanction the union. A sense of honour or religious principle or repugnance to evil may restrain the parties from other alliances; but there will never be anything but the form, the outer shell of true wedlock. Hence the question, who may marry, deserves far more careful treatment than it has usually received. If any subject has claims on the thought of the ablest, most scientific, and most spiritual intellects, it is this subject of marriage, and who should be allowed to assume its solemn obligations. On this point I have a few suggestions to make. Those who are not in the truest sense companionable, and who, after suitable intercourse, do



not find each other's presence thoroughly agreeable, should not, under any circumstances, be joined together for life. The example of the royal families of Europe is responsible for many ill-assorted unions. Royalty asks about social equality, seldom about character and harmony of spirit. Two conditions must be met, or there will be no security for enjoyable or helpful wedded life. There should be, first of all, this subtle, personal attraction which makes each essential, or at least agreeable, to the other; and, second, such an identity of interests, tastes, and faculties as will make the continuance of the companionship possible. The more difficult question is, of course, how may these be secured? As a slight contribution to the understanding of this subject I venture to offer a few propositions, from which there will probably be little dissent:—

(1) Homes are designed for the perpetuation and improvement of the race, physically, intellectually, and morally.

(2) Homes should be for health, rather than for the perpetuation of disease.

(3) Homes should be for moral as well as physical health.

(4) Homes should conduce to the growth and happiness of both parents and children.

If these propositions are true, it is clear that those who are in the line of succession to ancestral disease should think twice, nay, many times, before marrying. A woman who is inclined to yield her hand to the son of an insane or a consumptive parent, must face the fact that unless she can create conditions unfavourable to the development of the disease, it is very likely to manifest itself in one or more of her own children. Often this fact will start questions terribly hard to answer. A young man in whose family insanity has appeared repeatedly, must decide whether he will take the chance of handing the fearful disease down as a heritage to his children. It may be right to take the risk, for changed circumstances often reduce it greatly. Moreover, there may be reason to believe that the disease has so far run its course as no longer to be dangerous. But the question is one to be met, and not ignored; the question whether, under the circumstances, it would not be better for all concerned if he were to say, "I must do my part in eliminating this evil from humanity: that means to stifle my dearest longings; but in so doing I shall only be following in the steps of Him who pleased not Himself, but bore our diseases." This is a crucial conclusion to come to, and hard, indeed, are

the circumstances that drive one to it; but should a man or a woman with every prospect of handing down a deadly disease, and perhaps adding to its power, simply for a few months or years of personal satisfaction, open the door for that disease to work havoc in a new generation? Our responsibility for those who are to come after us cannot be evaded. This principle should not, of course, be carried to extremes, for disease is a part of the common human heritage; but those parents who are wise and Christian will not allow it to be ignored by their children.

What is true of tendency to disease is true also of tendency to vice. As we have seen, the evil of one generation is almost sure to reproduce itself in the succeeding, unless in some way the tendency toward it is checked or turned aside, as often it may be, if not in the first generation, then in the second. Often people say, "I do not see how it is that my son should have a tendency to vice. I do all I can for him. Neither of his parents has a taste for liquor, but he drinks for the love of it." How about his grandparents? The principle of atavism is not to be forgotten.

The tendencies toward intemperance are not resistless; they may be kept from growth; but they are real, and must not be ignored. Hence

parents must face this question, Are we willing to have our child wed one of intemperate parentage, however acceptable personally? A question of grave import; for the morbid craving may yet be excited in the one who now seems to be without it, and may reappear in full power in the children. If this seems cruel and unjust, none the less should it be made prominent, and kept prominent.

All suffer more or less for the wickedness or weakness of others, and this fact is perhaps no more cruel than many that seem less so, but, whether cruel or not, it should be faced. It is certainly no more cruel for a young woman to find herself compelled by conscience to deny herself a home, than for a married woman to be compelled to suffer for her husband's wickedness. Much sorrow in this world would be saved if there were less unwillingness to see things as they are. One of the things needing to be thus seen is that some persons ought never to become parents. Years ago I met a woman who was unusually beautiful and accomplished. Her hand was sought again and again by those who admired her exceptional gifts and graces; yet she never married. Her reason, given to a friend through whom it reached me, was this: "My grandfather

was intemperate; my father died intemperate; I have a brother who is a drunkard; the love of liquor is in the blood, and I will never be a party to perpetuating this terrible tendency." Not all who have intemperate relations are shut up, morally, to this Spartan choice; but she, in her circumstances, did exactly right, and this world would be far happier if women and men in general did but share her noble spirit.

From the propositions already laid down it follows also, and quite as certainly, that careful attention should be given to the probabilities of continued mutual congeniality of the two persons involved. The son of a dear friend of mine is far more likely to be permanently congenial to my daughter, than the son of one who is distasteful to me. There is a grave risk that the latter will in time affect her with a sense of personal antagonism. These seem trivial things, almost beneath attention; but the Romeos and Juliets have existence chiefly in plays and novels, while the Montagues and Capulets are perpetuating strife in every community. Parents are under obligations, far too frequently neglected, to seek as companions for their children those whom they have reason to believe will be companionable and attractive throughout life. With the greatest care

there may indeed still be failure, but it will not be failure due to neglect. No doubt, in matrimony, as in the kitchen, "Too many cooks spoil the broth." Children often really know more than their parents in matters of the heart. It is folly, of course, to make rigid rules concerning what in its nature is not amenable to rules; but still these principles as *principles* are of fundamental importance, much more important than legislation concerning divorce. The real problem is not, how those who are joined in name, but are as separate as the poles in heart, can be compelled to keep up the mockery of a union, but, how the union can be made so real and vital that the suggestion of a divorce would be regarded as an insult. To this end marriage should not be left as a theme for sensational preachers to use as a means for filling empty churches. Neither should it be classed with the insoluble problems. We should not be content to do nothing, because love will brook no rules; but, as those who have to deal with life and immortal destinies, we should study facts in the light of the latest and most thorough science, and do all that is possible to help the young to realize that marriage is for health, for morality, and for ever-increasing happiness in the most beautiful of relationships. If it

is not possible to point out clearly how these ends may certainly be secured, at least much good will be done in showing how certain courses naturally tend toward physical and moral death.

There is another side to this subject of the home; it is that of the training of children. About that are to be said many things which will come more properly in the next chapter on *The Problems of Education*. Some things, however, belong here, as they relate especially to children in the home.

If all children were alike, the problem of training a family would be comparatively easy; the process which had succeeded with one could be repeated with the others. But no two children are precisely alike. Each is an individual, and therefore essentially unique. I was once at dinner with a friend, whose daughters were at the table. A glance showed that they were not alike, though they were twins. One was blonde; the other brunette. One was quick; the other slow and shrewd. It was very evident that, should their parents adopt exactly the same methods with those children, one would certainly fail to receive the discipline and culture which she needed. We frequently hear the remark, "This child is unlike all others in my family." Wherever that is true, the difference

must be considered in the training, or parental discipline will be a failure. In other words, parents cannot do their duty by their children unless they carefully study individual peculiarities. These peculiarities, moreover, should be traced to their source in parents or ancestry. A girl is morose and given to melancholy. Let the parents examine themselves, and see if they have not bequeathed the unhappy disposition to her. Probably if free from it now, one or the other of them possessed it earlier in life. Let such a parent, instead of being impatient with his daughter, go back to his own feelings at the same age, and ask what, in the light of subsequent experience, would have been the best discipline for him then? One boy has a temper like a flame of fire; where did he get it? It is rarely hard to tell. Another has a tendency to secret vice or open wickedness; did not those who have brought him into the world in their youth pursue courses which account for his tendencies? Such inquiries complicate necessarily the problem of responsibility. Each human being is free, and therefore responsible, in a measure; and yet no child has any voice in saying where he shall be born, what blood shall course in his veins, what tendencies shall impel, or what aspirations thrill him. These two facts are, there-



fore, to be kept always to the front. The responsibility of each individual should be emphasized when the child is dealt with; and yet, when courses of training are being decided upon, the child should be regarded not simply as an individual, but as an *offspring*, another link in the age-long chain of human life. The more the underlying unity of parent and child is realized, the better it will be for both. The parent should remember that the vice which he reproves in his child is in a sense his also; his even though he turned from it years ago. Dr. Bushnell, in his "Christian Nurture," has wisely said, that it is better to confer with children concerning our weaknesses and wrong-doings, than to condemn them for theirs; for, in condemning them, we condemn ourselves in them. For example, a child is sullen and reserved; is it the result of wilfulness or of nature? If wilfulness, it should be reproved; but if it is a natural defect, inquire where it came from. It will probably be found to have come through the parents. In that case, instead of reproof, let there be conference somewhat as follows: "My child, I can understand how you feel; I used to feel as you do, and I do now at times; but I am trying very hard to put away these evils, and you must try to do

it too. Come, let us work together. I do not blame you for your feelings, for I know you got them from me, as I got them from my father. And, now, let us see if we can't conquer our infirmity."

Such a conference would have a better effect than a score of reproofs, and, moreover, it would be but simple justice. If the objectionable trait comes by inheritance, common sense must determine what is the wisest thing to say.

Parents should always be just to their children. The latter are not responsible for their existence, nor for their tendencies, nor for the circumstances in which they live. Perception of these facts, recognition of the law of heredity, will lead parents to be patient, and save them from much injustice; many things otherwise hopelessly obscure in their children's characters it will explain; it will enable them, by recalling what helped and hindered them in earlier days, to decide what will be most helpful to their children, and make possible an adjustment of treatment to nature, so that the worst elements may be more surely eliminated, and the best given opportunity and stimulus for growth; and it will enable parents more wisely to advise their children concerning

the grave matter of marriage, and the beginning of a home.

Study of the law of heredity will by no means solve all social problems; but it does shed light on the pathway of man, and make more distinct the course of right human conduct in some most important matters. It is not claimed, however, that because the law itself has as yet been studied by parents all too little, that therefore the facts of heredity have been altogether ignored by them. Not at all. "The love of God is broader than the measure of man's mind," and He has so ordered things that parental instinct — that brooding, constant affection for offspring which finds its culmination in humanity — often blindly, but surely, chooses the best methods of training, and by its fervour and constancy accomplishes what clearer sight, and even perfect science, with less ardent affection could not accomplish.

The home has many enemies, some open, more of them covert. The tendency which results from the possession of wealth to have no settled place of abode, to migrate from one hotel to another, making impossible the sweet domesticity of simpler life; the gregariousness of huge apartment houses instead of single dwellings; the factory

life of the manufacturing towns; and, perhaps most of all, the influx of a subtle paganism which quietly ignores and shirks responsibility, — all these make imperative a careful study of facts relating to the home, which is the foundation of all national prosperity and of pure and enduring civilization. After all has been said, the best guarantee of the perpetuity of pure and faithful home life is found in mutual love, founded on knowledge, on companionableness, and on that perfect adaptation of one soul to another which makes life in common a beautiful and enduring harmony. This end cannot be secured by artificial means; but it may be promoted by leading parents and young people to a wise and thorough study of certain great truths of life, truths which it has been the object of this chapter to bring before the reader.

Love, therefore, is the word of power, and the final word regarding the home. Indeed love, human and divine, is the foundation and central pillar of the home. However much help we may gain from the study of heredity and environment, that study leaves us at last where all inquiry must end — in the consciousness that after man has done his utmost, if his ideals are

ever realized and he and his children become either useful or happy, they all must be taken in hand by the love of God, and made subjects of that regenerating grace which can no more be explained than the source and the destination of the wind, but the results of which are more sure and splendid than the autumn harvests.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE PROBLEM OF EDUCATION

NOTHING in modern life is more significant and prophetic than the widespread and constantly increasing interest in education which is seen in all the civilized countries of Europe and America, and in many of the semi-civilized nations of Asia. This revival of interest in education is coincident with the now general acceptance of evolution by scientific thinkers. Evolution is compelling men to rewrite their psychologies, their treatises on ethics, and even their theological creeds; and it would be strange indeed if it did not assert its authority over education. To some extent it has probably done so; and yet its executive agents, heredity and environment, are still given scant honour in this great department where they are nearly omnipotent.

We have seen that heredity is not often an absolutely irresistible force. That which is potential does not inevitably manifest itself. Moreover, heredity is constantly modified by environment. In a vacuum, rock would remain rock

forever; but heat, moisture, frost, pelting rain, and driving wind gradually destroy, not the rock itself, but the form in which it existed. Now, every child is the product of the generations before him. He is not himself alone, but a being packed with potencies derived from no one knows how many or what personalities that have lived before him. The problem of education is, by means of environment, to modify, and as far as possible destroy, the evil and bring the good into expression and power. Nor is this all; for tendencies to good, when improperly balanced, are more or less mischievous. Education, therefore, has to do with the elimination of tendencies toward deterioration and the proper development and balancing of tendencies toward good. The word *education* is fossil history. It implies heredity, for it indicates something to be drawn out; and as that something could not originate with the child, it must have been transmitted. The word presupposes powers which have come from others and which are to be trained. So of the word *culture*. Where does culture begin? It should begin with birth. The age of impression is quite as important as the age of reason. But culture implies something to cultivate. That something is not implanted by

teachers, but is always inborn. This is clearly recognized by the three authors who in our time have written most helpfully on this subject. Emerson says: "A man is the prisoner of his power." Powers of individuals are poorly balanced. "A topical memory makes him an almanac; a talent for debate, a disputant; skill to get money makes him a miser, that is, a beggar. Culture reduces these inflammations by invoking the aid of other powers against the dominant talent, and by appealing to the rank of powers." "Culture," he thinks, "cannot begin too early. . . . I find, too, that the chance for appreciation is much increased by being the son of an appreciator, and that these boys who now grow up are caught not only years too late, but two or three births too late, to make the best scholars of." He says also that the end of culture is "to train away all impediment and mixture and leave nothing but pure power."<sup>1</sup>

On the same subject Matthew Arnold quotes Montesquieu as follows: "The first motive which ought to impel us to study is the desire to augment the excellence of our nature, and to render an intelligent being yet more intelligent."<sup>2</sup> Princi-

<sup>1</sup> *Essay on Culture*, Emerson.

<sup>2</sup> *Culture and Anarchy*, Arnold, p. 6.



pal Shairp's idea of the end to be reached is not different. He quotes approvingly the words of Leighton: "The only sufficient object for a man must be something which adds to and perfects his nature."<sup>1</sup> The difference between Emerson and Arnold on the one side, and Shairp and his school on the other, is not in the idea of what education is to do, but in the means to be used. They all agree that education is the process by which inherent powers are to reach their highest and finest growths. It has been wisely said that "to develop childhood to virtue, power, and due freedom is the supreme end of education, to which everything else must be subordinated as means." A secondary object is the acquisition of knowledge, but even this is subsidiary. Knowledge is not always desirable for its own sake. It is valuable as a means. Study which leaves the manhood narrow and contracted, and fills the head only as gold fills a miser's purse, is not worth the effort required for its acquisition. But how generally the practice belies the theory. In most schools there is almost total neglect of what ought to be the fundamental principle in education. On the other hand, instead of adapting the training to the actual needs of the child, in-

<sup>1</sup> *Culture and Religion*, Shairp, p. 99.

stead of seeking to eliminate the evil and prevent any single power from growing abnormally at the expense of the others, our systems of education commonly ignore the constitutional differences in children, treating them all alike, as if they had been subject to the same hereditary and environing influences; instead of making their business the bringing out, developing to the full, and making harmonious whatever is best, these systems make it exactly the reverse,—a process of implanting, regardless, too, of the nature of the soil, and often of sheer cramming.

All schemes of culture should begin with the recognition that each child is different from every other; that the lines of difference run far back, and therefore are not superficial, and that, in order to secure the highest efficiency, systems of education should be adapted to the individuals to be reached. Every child possesses characteristics which are the results of forces running through generations, for which it is not responsible, and which can be changed only by the most carefully planned and wisely adjusted discipline. Then, there are in most children special modifications of natural traits due to circumstances, tendencies that have been weakened here, and given new impulse there, which are sometimes quickly dis-

cerned, and sometimes lie deep. Two illustrations occur to me. A few years ago, when addressing the children in the Newark City Home at Verona, N. J., my attention was attracted to two boys occupying a seat directly in front of me. One was thin and pale, his fingers were long and slim, his eyes blue, his hair light, his cheeks sunken. There was little of the animal in him, little of anything, apparently, but sensitiveness. His seat-mate was his opposite in every respect. His hair was black and stood on end as if electric, his eyes burned like coals, his mouth and chin resembled those of a bull-dog, his face was florid; he was evidently full of animal nature and passion. Those two boys were what they were by nature. They had probably come from the same sphere in society. They were products of different lines of descent. Could the best results in them possibly be reached by identical processes of education? Consider, now, a case in a very different social grade. In a certain school was a young lady, a daughter of New England parents of fine culture, and well qualified to direct her study and stimulate her aspirations. The advantages of sympathy, congenial taste, and opportunity had been theirs, and they in turn were handing these real blessings to their child. In the

same community and the same school was the daughter of a labourer. Her home gave her no help whatever; ignorance and wickedness were her environment; and she had especially strong tendencies toward degeneration. But in the community were better influences that had kindled within her ambitions and aspirations. Here are typical cases: one girl with blood and home in her favour; the other with neither, but still with possibilities which may be developed. The two classes come to our public and private schools, and are often treated precisely alike. They are given the same books; the same subjects are presumed to interest; the same ability is presupposed; the same tasks are required; and the same standards are imposed. If there is any such thing as a science of education, do we catch sight of it in this system? In ten years those two young women may conceivably occupy the same relative positions; they may be equally cultured and respectable; but it will never be by the use of the same methods.

If, now, it be granted that heredity and environment differentiate the pupils in our schools so that no two, even from the same family, are exactly alike, and so that they come to the teacher's hands each with his own peculiar powers and

faculties to be developed, the problem of education becomes complicated and difficult.

By the study of what men are we learn of what they are capable, and it is only by study of the child that we shall solve the problem of his proper education. Says Dr. Stanley Hall: "There is one thing in nature, and one alone, fit to inspire all true men and women with more awe and reverence than Kant's starry heavens, and that is, the soul and body of the healthy young child. Heredity has freighted it with all the results of parental well and ill doing, and filled it with reverberations from the past more vast than science can explore; and on its right development depends the entire future of civilization two or three decades hence. Simple as childhood seems, there is nothing harder to know; and responsive as it is to every influence about it, nothing is harder to guide. To develop childhood to virtue, power, and due freedom is the supreme end of education, to which everything else must be subordinated as means. Just as to command inanimate nature we must constantly study, love, and obey her, so to control child-nature we must first and perhaps still more piously study, love, and obey it. The best of us have far more to learn from children than we can ever hope to

teach them ; and what we succeed in teaching, at least beyond the merest rudiments, will always be proportionate to the knowledge we have the wit to get from and about them." <sup>1</sup>

So, too, a child who has never had home discipline, or anything to awaken aspiration, needs a special form of training ; his education is not complete until he has learned obedience and his eyes have been opened to higher things. The child who is all imagination should, by proper methods, be brought to understand that he is human ; and I know no better way to teach a boy that he is not to live by imagination alone than to set him to the study of mathematics. On the other hand, the pupil who is commonplace and prosaic should have his life illuminated and expanded by familiarity with imaginative literature, especially poetry.

Room for spontaneity should be left in all systems of education. Genius flowers in most unexpected places. Not always do children of fine and quick aptitudes come from homes of culture. Log-cabins produced Lincoln and Garfield. It is the teacher with his eyes on the child-life, rather than on so many pages of arithmetic or geography, who will be able to detect the unique intellect

<sup>1</sup> *North American Review*, February, 1885.

as soon as it appears, and he will adapt his methods accordingly.

When this ideal is contrasted with the systems in common, if not universal use, what do we find? I hope I shall not be misunderstood as blaming teachers for what belongs at the door of the system in which they are compelled to work. Is it not true that little if any attention is given to the study of child-life? In most of our schools is not the supreme duty to go through certain text-books in the time allotted? So much Cæsar must be read, so many pages of history and of arithmetic must be completed. Why? Is the end of education to cram a child with Latin, history, and arithmetic? Is it not better that one example should be thoroughly and completely understood than that forty should be worked mechanically, and perhaps accidentally? What sense is there in a rigid requirement that a certain number of pages shall be traversed, if discipline and the balancing of faculties is the end of education? What knowledge of child-life, what adaptation to peculiarities, is displayed in such methods? A well-known writer on this subject once said in private conversation: "I look back to many of the schools I attended in my own childhood with unlimited disgust. I was not taught. I was put

into a procession and marched through so many years of school-life, and then let out. I never liked mathematics, but to this day I believe the aversion could have been overcome by a few hours' patient, careful training, with no step taken until the reason for it was understood. Furthermore, if the study was worthy of pursuit, then, simply because of my natural antipathy, it should have been taught with more thoroughness and patience than those studies in which I rejoiced."

But let us put the blame of this condition of things where it belongs. These views were once stated to a distinguished educator. He replied: "I agree with you perfectly, but what can I do? It is my duty to examine teachers, but my hands are so tied that I can do nothing." "Is it not often true that a teacher who may be an expert in reading children, and in adapting to them the instruction they most need, could not pass your examinations?" He replied: "Undoubtedly, and I am disgusted with the whole system." I once asked a company of several teachers, how many had ever had their attention called to the duty of discriminating among their pupils as to natural powers and faculties? All but one replied that it was a neglected topic, and that one said he had heard a few lectures on the subject in a



normal school in Pennsylvania. In other words, while the most important part of education is the development and balancing of what is within the child, until recently little has been offered to teachers to fit them for this part of the work. What would be thought of a medical college that devoted all its attention to *materia medica*, and taught none of the principles of diagnosis? True education studies the child first and most; it regards him as a product. How can faculties and tendencies be developed and balanced when no attention is given to what they are? And how, furthermore, can they be studied thoroughly so long as the fact is ignored that each child is little more than a stream of tendencies from the past coming into manifestation in the individual to be instructed?

It must not be supposed that we have no teachers who rise to their high privilege. Probably there are in most of the larger schools some who realize this ideal of the teacher, but they do so in general rather because of natural gifts than because of the system under which they have been trained.

“One of the most hopeful things in education is the dawn of better and more objective ways of studying the mind and its growth. The old-fash-

ioned philosophies, on which so many present methods of teaching are based, which are still well entrenched in most of our normal schools, seem imposing with their vast generalization, but are too introspective for youth, are formal, and, where most absolute, least harmonious among themselves. They have done great good, and it is not needful here to point out their grave defects. But better and more modern methods of research into the phenomena and laws of the soul, more consonant with the demands of modern, and especially American life and thought, as specialized and co-operative as science, slowly doing over again the work of the great thinkers of the past century, and without losing their positive result, removing their limitations, enriching and applying their insights — these are now slowly but surely working out a true natural history of man's nascent faculties. Here is the heart of the pedagogy of to-day and of to-morrow, where the science and philosophy of education join friendly hands with the practical teacher, and here he who would speak with authority, and be heard in the new departure already ripening, must study with patience and love the psychology of the growing, playing, learning child and youth. Thus alone we can, in the language of the 'Laches,'

make the education of our children our own education.”<sup>1</sup>

The serious practical difficulty in the way of such teaching cannot be disregarded. Political managers usually care nothing for methods of education which put no money into their pockets and win no votes for their party. Penny-wise and pound-foolish taxpayers refuse the appropriations which are necessary to make possible the best methods in education. ‘But no reform is easy. It is misconstrued, maligned, opposed with all arts, until it wins, and then its opposers profess always to have been its advocates. Progress will halt in every direction when difficulty is sufficient ground for despair. There is an inherent difficulty, however, as well as a political one. It lies in the fact that it seems scarcely possible in the public schools to recognize the individuality of the pupils. It will be said, and truly, that our systems of education are directed not toward distinguishing but toward common characteristics; and properly so, since that in which all are alike is more and greater than that in which they differ. There is indeed in this fact a difficulty which is real, and neither fictitious nor trifling. It does not appear how the thronged public schools could be so con-

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Stanley Hall, *North American Review*, February, 1885.

ducted that the eccentricities of individuals should be met. In private schools the difficulty is not so great, though it does not altogether disappear. The only practical scheme which suggests itself is the proper training of those to whom are committed the responsibilities of teaching. In order that this pedagogic ideal may be realized, knowledge of human nature must always be placed above acquaintance with books. In the preparation of the teacher, and in the examinations through which he passes, this requirement should be always given the first place. Since what concerns the training of teachers for their office applies largely to parents also, I pass to that part of my theme.

Herbert Spencer has written wisely on this subject. "If by some strange chance not a vestige of us descended to the remote future save a pile of our school-books, or some college examination papers, we may imagine how puzzled an antiquary of the period would be on finding in them no indication that the learners were ever likely to be parents (or teachers). 'This must have been the curriculum for their celibates,' we may fancy him concluding. 'I perceive here an elaborate preparation for many things; especially for reading the books of extinct nations and of

co-existing nations (from which, indeed, it seems clear that these people had very little worth reading in their own tongue), but I find no reference whatever to the bringing up of children. They could not have been so absurd as to omit all training for this gravest of responsibilities. Evidently, then, this was the school course for one of their monastic orders.'"<sup>1</sup> The irony of this passage is well deserved. No system of education gives the slightest attention to training our youth for the discharge of what will sometime be their most important and sacred obligation. If the training of parents is thus neglected, so that it is common for them to have little idea of what is in their own children, and to be unable to adapt their teaching to the latter's needs, it is not surprising that teachers are not better prepared for their office. Few ever attempt what is not expected of them. What Mr. Spencer says about the young mother applies equally to the teacher of young children: "But a few years ago she was at school, where her memory was crammed with words and names and dates, and her reflective faculties scarcely in the slightest degree exercised; where not one idea was given her respecting the methods of dealing with the

<sup>1</sup> *Education*, Herbert Spencer, p. 55.

opening mind of childhood; and where her discipline did not in the least fit her for thinking out methods of her own. . . . And now see her with an unfolding human character committed to her charge; see her profoundly ignorant of the phenomena with which she has to deal. . . . She knows nothing about the nature of the emotions, their order of evolution, their functions, or where use ends and abuse begins.”<sup>1</sup> One sentence more from Mr. Spencer: “Some acquaintance with the first principles of physiology and the elementary truths of psychology is indispensable for the right bringing up of children.”<sup>2</sup>

Before education can be what it should and may be, there must be introduced into the curriculum that which may perhaps be called the study of human nature; children and young people should be trained to see what is in man, just as they are trained to find rare plants in the field and moss agates in the mountains. More careful nurture in the home will swiftly follow, and that in turn will not tolerate systems of culture in which all pupils are treated as if they were manufactured products cast in a single mould. In the building of a palace granite is used for foundation, marble for walls and statues,

<sup>1</sup> *Education*, Herbert Spencer, p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 63, 64.

precious stones and fair colours for ornamentation and decoration. All inorganic things are not presumed to be exactly alike. Much less is there monotony among human souls. Shelley and Kant were no more alike than a lark and a dray-horse, yet in England they would have been put into the same educational hopper. Mrs. Browning and Adam Smith were at opposite intellectual poles, yet in our public schools they would be compelled to submit to the same discipline. Better no training than that which effaces individuality.

I emphasize, then, the fact that each child is at first a combination of streams of tendency from past generations, with a mysterious element of personality developing in course of time, to which appeal can be made. If left to himself, he is likely to go whithersoever those streams from the past may tend. But the tendencies may be modified by training; the evil may be allowed no congenial air in which to grow, and be at length practically eliminated, while the good may be immeasurably strengthened by a new and better environment. Precisely this is the function of education. It should bring to bear on child-life such influences as will cause imperfection and bias to disappear, and lead to the

fullest possible development tendencies to the true, the beautiful, and the good. To reach this high ideal it must be intelligent; it must work according to a plan; its instruments must know pupils better even than books; must always adapt methods to personalities; and must be fully persuaded that the culture of an immortal spirit is as great a mission as the exploration of the stellar universe. The practical difficulty in this adaptation of training can be largely overcome by making parents and teachers acquainted with child-life. This involves a knowledge, not only of the pupils, but of their ancestry. A teacher will be able to do better work for his scholars if he knows something of their fathers and grandfathers. Blood always tells. Properly understood, pedigree of human beings is a more worthy study than chemistry or astronomy. Education should evolve that which is best in its object. Jean Paul says: "It is only mediocrity which supplants that of others by its own." The Master said: "I come not to destroy, but to fulfil." The best teacher never seeks to efface an individuality, but by effacing himself seeks to draw out to full and beautiful proportions the noblest and best in every child committed to his care.



## CHAPTER IX

### THE PROBLEM OF PAUPERISM

IN Mexico and in Persia a shaft of wood and a stick make a plough, and in the greater part of the earth the dole of money is about all there is of charity. Even in Europe and America efforts at reform have heretofore seldom advanced beyond attempts to cure individual suffering and sin. Now, however, certain neglected factors in the problem are beginning to receive more attention, and though the progress toward a solution is as yet small, the trend of things is in the right direction. "How is it possible to relieve want and destitution without serious moral harm to the recipients, injury to the community, and, in the end, increasing the amount of suffering?" This inquiry Mr. Francis Peek placed at the beginning of a paper read at one of the Charity Organization Conferences in London, in 1879. It is the inquiry which puzzles all who seek to ameliorate the condition of the poor. An attempt to discuss the question in a single chapter would be sure evidence of never having studied it.

Therefore, at present, I shall consider only certain phases of the subject; namely, pauperism as related to heredity and environment. I will not speak of those only temporarily in financial distress,—always a large class; nor yet of those who are able to earn a decent living, but who have few luxuries, and only a limited number of comforts. The condition of such needs improvement; but, judging from recent events in this country and in Europe, they are able to work out their own salvation, and are doing so surely and swiftly. Neither will I pause to speak of the insane, or the children of virtuous parents who are left without help. None of these should be forgotten, but they cannot be considered here.

Pauperism denotes a condition. That condition has been defined as “the state of voluntary want,”—a very inadequate definition. All who are voluntarily in want are paupers, but not all paupers are such voluntarily. Some choose pauperism; to them it is preferable to labour. Others are born into pauperism, and such would often gladly rise out of it, but cannot. They remain paupers from lack of faculty rather than from choice. A weight is upon them,—the weight of the sins of past generations. It crushes like

a mountain. Then there are those who, from earliest childhood, have had surroundings which were vicious and wretched. These are often physically, morally, intellectually diseased. They are children of the outcast; they scarcely can be said to have had parents, never a home; they were simply born and left. How large the number of these is may easily be imagined after an examination of the conditions of life in large cities. Members of this class seldom dream that there is anything higher for them. Their environment so hardens them to filth and perversion that they do not know what it is to aspire. These two large classes—those who are paupers by heredity, and those who are such by environment—are the hardest to reach, and the most misunderstood and neglected.

What are the causes of pauperism—the worst form of poverty? The answer has been already suggested.

(1) HEREDITY.—Paupers are largely the children of paupers. This is most evident in the older countries. We know that not only do characteristics of body and mind run in families, but that diseases do the same; not only does talent follow family lines, but so do criminal propensities; and, moreover, so do those physical and

moral characteristics which tend toward pauperism. Mr. Dugdale's studies in this field are well known. With most minute care he has, by examinations running through six generations, found pauperism hereditary; and as the result of an inductive study he makes the statement that the heredity of the tendency to pauperism is quite as indisputable as that to crime or disease. This, of course, is only the natural presumption from the general law of heredity. If, through many generations, the Bourbon family is distinguished by the Bourbon nose, and the Bach family by talent for music, we should expect to find the descendants of Margaret Juke both criminals and paupers. It may be doubted whether pauperism is not more a disease than a crime. Laziness is easily denounced; it is not so easily understood. It results largely from lack of vitality. Where there is abundant vitality the individual either ceases to be a drone or becomes a criminal. Hence Mr. Dugdale says: "Crime, as compared to pauperism, indicates vigour." But what does lack of vitality signify? Plainly, defective parentage. As men are born with physical deformity, so are they born with mental and moral deformity. A child of intemperance comes into the world diseased. So of the off-

spring of the licentious. The parents have been debilitated thereby, and their weakness is transmitted to the children. Intemperance and licentiousness often go together, and paupers are born of such wedlock. Mr. Dugdale says again: "Hereditary pauperism seems to be more fixed than hereditary crime; for very much of crime is the misdirection of faculty, and is amenable to discipline, while very much of pauperism is due to the absence of vital power, the lines of pauperism being, in many cases, identical with the lines of organic disease of mind or body, as insanity, consumption, syphilis, which cause, from generation to generation, the successive extinction of capacity till death supervenes."<sup>1</sup> I have found nothing on this subject so concise and comprehensive as Mr. Dugdale's "Tentative Inductions on Pauperism," which I quote as follows:<sup>2</sup>—

"1. Pauperism is an indication of weakness of some kind, either youth, disease, old age, injury; or, for women, childbirth.

"2. It is divisible into hereditary and induced pauperism.

"3. Hereditary pauperism rests chiefly upon disease in some form, tends to terminate in ex-

<sup>1</sup> *The Fukes*, Dugdale, p. 50.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 37, 38.

tion, and may be called the sociological aspect of physical degeneration.

“4. The debility and diseases which enter most largely in its production are the result of sexual licentiousness.

“5. Pauperism in adult age, especially in the meridian of life, indicates a hereditary tendency which may or may not be modified by the environment.

“6. Pauperism follows men more frequently than women, indicating a decided tendency to hereditary pauperism.

“7. The different degrees of adult pauperism, from out-door relief to almshouse charity, indicate in the main different gradations of waning vitality. In this light the whole question is opened up, whether indolence, which the dogmatic aphorism says ‘is the root of all evil,’ is not, after all, a mark of undervitalization, and an effect which acts only as a secondary cause.

“8. Induced pauperism results from bad administration of the law, or temporary weakness or disability in the recipient.

“9. The pauperism of childhood is an accident of life rather than a hereditary characteristic.

"10. The youngest child has a tendency to become the pauper of the family.

"11. Youngest children are more likely than the older ones to become the inmates of the poorhouse through the misconduct or misfortune of parents.

"12. Such younger children, who remain inmates of the almshouse long enough to form associations that live in the memory and habits that continue in the conduct, have a greater tendency to revert spontaneously to that condition whenever any emergency of life overtakes them, and domesticate there more readily than older children whose greater strength has kept them out during youth.

"13. Induced pauperism may lead to the establishment of the hereditary form."

Mr. Dugdale's studies confirm my own less thorough investigations. Pauperism is primarily caused by lack of vitality, or transmitted weakness. That lack of vitality carries with it tendencies to thriftless habits and animal vices which almost invariably manifest themselves in character and conduct. The pauper is not only the slave of poverty, but also the natural prey of licentiousness and intemperance.

Though statistics show that the children of

paupers usually become paupers, they do not show by any means that all pauperism, or even the largest part of it, is to be accounted for in this way.

(2) ENVIRONMENT. — A vicious environment is an even more potent agent in producing pauperism. Debilitated physical conditions make exertion distasteful, and sometimes impossible. A vitiated vital condition makes many men insensible to moral motives. In others repeated failure in the attempts to rise to better things has resulted in despair, and despair is inert, except toward evil. Let me quote a passage from "The Bitter Cry of Outcast London:" "Every room in these rotten and reeking tenement houses contains a family, often two. In one cellar a sanitary inspector reports finding a father, mother, three children, and four pigs! . . . Here are seven people living in one underground kitchen, and a little dead child lying in the same room. Elsewhere is a poor widow, her three children, and a child who had been dead thirteen days. Her husband, who was a cabman, had shortly before committed suicide. . . . In another room nine brothers and sisters, from twenty-nine years of age downward, live, eat, and sleep together. Here is a mother who turns her children into



the street in the early evening because she lets her room for immoral purposes until long after midnight, when the poor little wretches creep back again, if they have not found some miserable shelter elsewhere." What must be the effect where such is the social environment of a lifetime? How idle to expect to uplift thousands upon thousands of such people by a few soup-houses, a few visitors, and here and there mission chapels! What are these among so many? Several years ago the almshouses of New York were carefully inspected, and nearly ten thousand of their inmates personally interviewed. Few were found who had ever owned any property. Thirty-two per cent. were wholly illiterate, and only thirty per cent. had received a fair common-school education. Eighty-five per cent. of the men had been intemperate, and forty-two per cent. among the women. Fifty-five per cent. had intemperate fathers, and over eighty-two per cent. intemperate mothers. Overcrowding, intemperance, and the social evil act and react on the pauper, and produce a progeny of weakness, vice, and crime.

Dr. A. J. F. Behrends, in "Socialism and Christianity," says that the primary and purely personal causes of pauperism are "idleness and

improvidence." Later in the same lecture he says: "Illiteracy, intemperance, overcrowding, and the looseness of the marriage tie,—these are the four social causes of pauperism." The latter statement is undoubtedly true, but the former is open to exception. It does not go to the root of the matter. Defective parentage, caused by disease, intemperance, sexual excesses, and the exhaustion of vitality through overwork, is the primary and personal cause of pauperism. "Idleness and improvidence" naturally, and almost inevitably, follow, and tend to reproduce themselves according to the same law by which they exist.

Among the elements that go to make an environment conducive to pauperism are the following:—

(a) *The tendency of the population to congregate in cities.*—The mountains and valleys and even the prairies have streams running to the cities. Most of those who go to the towns are not skilled labourers; they are without trades, and are impelled thither by desire for excitement. Their services are not wanted. Their capital, if they have any, is soon spent. If they have not sense and spirit enough to return home, they are soon on the street begging, perhaps stealing. If they could be induced to go back to the country

there would be hope for them, — their only hope, indeed, for this world.

(b) *Overcrowding*. — Overcrowding, partially consequent on the rush to the cities, partially the result of the greed of the landlords, partially due to the fact that labourers must be near the places of work, is a chief cause of evil environment. What tongue or pen can describe its distressing and disgusting features? Read the testimonies of Lord Shaftesbury and of Mr. H. C. Meyer, an American engineer, before the Royal Commission in London in 1884, on the Housing of the Working Classes, published in the “Blue Book” of the following year. They show that most of the poor are rarely paupers at first. They must be near their work, and are therefore compelled to take such accommodations as are available. Few such families in the densely populated districts can afford more than one room; and concerning life in a single room a part of Lord Shaftesbury’s testimony — most of which is too terrible to repeat — is as follows: “The effect of the one-room system is physically and morally beyond all description. In the first place, the one-room system always leads, so far as I have seen, to the one-bed system. If you go into these single rooms you may sometimes find two beds,

but you generally find one bed occupied by the whole family. . . . It is impossible to say how fatal the result of that is. In the first place, it is totally destructive of all benefit from education. It is a benefit to the children to be absent during the day at school, but when they return to their houses, in one hour they unlearn almost everything they have acquired during the day. . . . The one-room system may go on very well while there are a husband and wife and young children, but when the children have reached the age of eight or ten, and have to sleep in the same room as their parents, or with others, from that hour the consequences are most fearful both to their morals and to their health. In the one-room system, where the inmates are many, you cannot introduce a sufficient amount of air. How remedy all this? You must either insist upon a man taking two rooms, or else you must separate the children from the adults. Either case seems to be an impossible supposition."

Let us now consider conditions not yet fully obsolete in this country. In 1879 the Tenement House Act was passed. Testifying before the same London Commission, Mr. H. C. Meyer, of New York, said: "Prior to that act about ninety per cent. of the city lot could be covered. The

authorities could not well reach old dwellings that were built for other purposes and that were subsequently converted into tenement houses; such buildings always had a large proportion of dark inside rooms. The division of land in our city is very unfortunate. The blocks are four hundred feet long by two hundred feet deep; the streets are sixty feet wide, and ninety per cent. of each one-hundred-foot lot could be covered. The buildings were usually put up five stories high, and the landlord usually tried to provide for four families on a floor. You can imagine in our climate, from May until the last of September, the condition of the occupants of a large proportion of the inside rooms, with for two months the temperature averaging over eighty degrees." Indeed, no city suffers more from overcrowding than New York. The tenth ward has a density of 243,000 to the square mile. A space of less than thirty acres in the fourth ward shelters 17,611 persons, nearly 600 to a plot two hundred feet square. Sixteen families in a single twenty-five-foot dwelling is a common arrangement. One hundred souls in a single tenement of that size is not unusual, and in some cases this number is doubled. It is said that there are 94,000 families in Berlin who live with a single room to a family,

and that 25,000 of these families burrow in cellars. In such conditions homes are impossible. Vice and pauperism naturally spring from such soil. The districts most overcrowded contain the greatest number and the vilest of dram-shops and the most unblushing licentiousness. When it is remembered that those who live in such circumstances are not strong, either physically, mentally, or morally, the certainty of pauperism is inevitable.

Lord Shaftesbury said they had found that workmen lost, on an average, about twenty days each year from causes directly related to overcrowded and unsanitary dwellings. He was asked if he had seen the pamphlet called: "Is it the Sty that makes the Pig, or the Pig the Sty?" His answer was: "I am certain that a great many people who are in that condition have been made so by the condition of the houses in which they live." He then gives the genesis of a pauper family. "A young artisan in the prime of life, an intelligent, active young man, capable of making his forty or fifty shillings a week, comes up to London; he must have lodgings near his work; he is obliged to take, he and his wife, the first house that he can find. . . . In a very short time, of course,

his health is broken down ; he himself succumbs. The wife falls into despair ; in vain she tries to keep her house clean ; her children increase upon her, and at last they become reckless, and with recklessness comes drinking, immorality, and all the consequences of utter despair.”<sup>1</sup>

Overcrowding means vitiated air, proximity to vice, consequent temptation, and usually indulgence in evil. Such conditions induce a weakened state, morally and physically. When the body is weak, ambition dead, and the gate that looks toward hope closed and barred, the man is already on the verge of despair, and pauperism is then almost inevitable. The victims of such conditions are not responsible for them. Their pauperism is not voluntary want. The greed of employers and property owners on the one hand, and the failure of the public in matters of sanitation, education, and the like, on the other, are primarily responsible. Only society has the power to change them, and on society therefore rests the duty of making them impossible. An undertaker, who was also a house-owner, was besought by Octavia Hill to improve his tenements, on the ground that they would be more profitable to him. He replied :

<sup>1</sup> “Housing of the Working Classes,” *Blue Book*, p. 5.

“O, mum, it’s not the rents I depend on for my profits, it’s the funerals!” Such a brute exists, and carries on his work, because those who have the ability and the wisdom do not lift up hands and weapons of law and drive him from the face of the earth. Somebody is responsible for pauperism and its attendant wretchedness and crime; but it is quite as often the man who sits in the ceiled house, and the woman who dresses in lace and diamonds, as the tramp who begs or the thief who steals.

One need not be a socialist to see that there is no way to get rid of a destructive and vicious environment until the State makes overcrowding impossible, compels those who build houses for rental to make them comfortable, healthful, decent, and even supplies such tenements itself where capitalists refuse to do so.

(c) *Intemperance*. — This source and element of vicious environment will be treated of at length in the next chapter. It is unnecessary to speak of it here. There is no evil of our time more prolific of pauperism.

(d) *The esprit de corps of the pauper class*. — Strange to say, this is an important element of evil and demoralizing environment, and is as evident in the ranks of pauperism and crime as it



was in Napoleon's armies. It does not apply to the temporarily poor, those who have not lost remembrance of better things, but to paupers as distinguished from the poor. They argue that society owes them a living, and they exult in getting it without work. The chief of this clan is the fellow who induces society to do the most for him with the least trouble to himself. His example is a vicious inspiration. Children born amidst such an environment are subject, during their formative years, to the influence of degrading ideals, and stimulated by examples of clever baseness. Hence it comes that the *esprit de corps* of pauperism is one of the most fruitful causes of its increase.

(e) *Disregard of the marriage relation.* — This prepares a fruitful soil for pauperism. When children are born outside of wedlock, or to those for whom wedlock has no sanctity, the responsibilities of parents are lightly esteemed. Under such conditions thousands of street waifs come into being. The father commonly does not know of their existence, the mother is engrossed with the struggle for existence and the indulgence of her vices, and the child is set adrift to become a pauper and, all too often, a criminal. How large this class is, the crowded Maisenhaus in Vienna

and the Foundling Hospital in London give a faint indication.

(f) *Indiscriminate giving.*—When to other contributory causes of pauperism is added the indiscriminate giving of the charitable, it ceases to be a wonder that there are so many paupers, and only seems strange that there are not more. Mrs. Josephine Shaw Lowell, of the Charity Organization Society of New York, in a paper read before a club of that city, charged the Christian churches with direct responsibility for a large part of pauperism. Indiscriminate giving leads paupers to reckon on the doles of the benevolent as a regular source of revenue irrespective of merit or genuine need. “The committee appointed in Bristol, England, a few years ago, to inquire into the condition of the poor, reports: ‘No remedy can be found for the pauperism and mendicancy of Bristol till a higher tone exists in regard to the sin of inconsiderate dispensation to the poor.’ ‘Careless almsgiving,’ says Mr. William Low, ‘produces, directly, such vices as imposture, improvidence, drunkenness, servility, religious pretence.’” Twenty years ago one in every eighteen in London was a pauper. Charity organization followed upon knowledge of this fact; and, as a result, pauperism, at

the end of seventeen years, had been reduced from forty-two to twenty-two in every thousand. Sooner or later nearly every pastor finds that his church is aiding those who use piety as a cloak for laziness. The rector of a large parish in New York discovered that at one time his church contributed largely to the support of two maiden ladies supposed to be poor but worthy, who, on investigation, were found to be owners of the large tenement in which they lived. There are organized gangs of paupers in all great cities who make begging a business. Some "work" the churches; others, the Sunday-schools; still others go from house to house. They are adroit, persistent, and innocent in manner; and they continue their line of business because it pays. It would not pay were it not for misplaced charity. There is truth in the French epigram, "Charity creates one-half of the misery she relieves, but cannot relieve one-half of the misery she creates."

This study of the factors of the problem of pauperism has been necessary before intelligent suggestions could be offered concerning its solution. In all attempted solutions there should be constant reference to the removal of the causes of the evil. Occasional gifts to the poor con-

stitute but a mere local treatment of symptoms. They are like the rubbing of a superficial bodily irritation when the seat of the difficulty is within; though there is a temporary soothing of the trouble, the inflammation is really increased. So the more one relieves pauperism by indiscriminate giving, the more it is aggravated. The real questions to be considered are two: (1) How may an industrious and virtuous stock be substituted for that which breeds paupers? (2) How may the conditions of living be so improved that the pauper class shall no longer be recruited from the ranks of the frugal and industrious? Speaking again in general terms, the reply is, that there is one and the same answer for both questions. Without ignoring the possibilities of appeal to the personality of the very poor, the chief way in which a hard-working and frugal stock can be secured is by a change in the existing environment; and the way offering the greatest promise that the pauper class will no more be augmented from other classes, is that of securing such conditions as shall make men unwilling, even for selfish reasons, to sink to lower levels.

Let us now note a few principles which are well established by scientific investigation.

(1) "Where the organization is structurally modified, as in idiocy and insanity, or organically weak, as in many diseases, the heredity is the preponderating factor in determining the career; but it is, even then, capable of marked modification for better or worse by the character of the environment. In other words, capacity, physical and mental, is limited and determined mainly by heredity."<sup>1</sup>

(2) "Where the conduct depends on the knowledge of moral obligation (excluding insanity and idiocy), the environment has more influence than the heredity. . . . The use to which capacity shall be put is largely governed by the impersonal training or agency of environment."<sup>2</sup>

(3) The correction for vicious heredity is change of environment.

(4) "Environment tends to produce habits which may become hereditary, especially so in pauperism and licentiousness."<sup>3</sup>

"If these conclusions are correct, then the whole question of the control of crime and pauperism becomes possible, within wide limits, if the necessary training can be made to reach over two or three generations. From the above considerations the logical induction seems to be

<sup>1</sup> *The Jukes*, Dugdale, p. 65.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

that environment is the ultimate controlling factor in determining careers, placing heredity as an organized result of invariable environment.”<sup>1</sup>

These principles are fundamental. Heredity may be changed by environment. The lungs of the ancient Peruvians became expanded—structurally changed—because of the rarefied air they breathed. The white child of the tropics delights in heat which would enervate a dweller in northern lands, and yet their ancestors sprang from the same racial stock. Change in environment has caused change in organism. The principle holds also in the moral sphere.

We have, then, an answer to the question, What can be done to diminish pauperism? We must change the environment of the poor. Those who accept the words of St. Paul, “We, then, that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak,” as expressing a universal principle, must devote themselves to the creation of new and more healthy conditions in which those below them can live and improve. Not, however, by individual effort alone; organized society, that is, the State, must also do its part.

What can the State do? It can make it impossible for individuals or corporations to monop-

<sup>1</sup> *The Jukes*, Dugdale, p. 66.

olize the land. This evil is only beginning to show itself in the United States; but in Europe it exists on a vast scale. The State can so protect citizens in their right to the land that no one shall be denied a home who desires one of his own and is able to pay for it; and none who are willing to devote themselves to agriculture shall be kept from it while land is lying idle.

The State should not allow the erection for residence of buildings unfit to be abodes for human beings. It may be a question whether the State should assume the functions of a landlord, though I can see no more reason why it should carry our mail than why it should build our houses. It will hardly be questioned, however, that building laws can be passed and enforced, compelling landlords to erect only such dwellings as shall make homes possible, and subjecting all that are erected to periodic and rigid inspection. Overcrowding should be made as criminal as stealing. Laws forbid overcrowding on the sea; why not on the land? This evil is persistent and vital, but it can be eradicated. If any doubt, let them read the account of the changed condition of Whitechapel since the English Building Acts were enforced.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *New Review*, October, 1889.

The State can do something by passing uniform marriage and divorce laws, and compelling proper provision for many children who would otherwise grow up in neglect.

It can also diminish, and, with the advance of public sentiment, finally abolish, the saloon, and thus remove a most prolific source of pauperism.

The State can attach to the postal service a system of Penny Savings Banks, so that there shall be before all people, even little children, a constant incentive to industry and frugality. The people will trust the nation when they would not trust individuals. And it should be as universal as the postal system, so that not only in cities but also in towns and country districts there may be an opportunity of investing small sums.

We thus see that it is within the power of the State to make monopoly in land impossible; to compel the erection of dwellings which shall put a premium on decent living and good behaviour, the dwellings to be rented at prices which the poor can pay; to pass uniform marriage laws; to abolish the saloon; and to establish Postal Penny Savings Banks, in all these ways creating a better environment for the people. And it can do one thing more,—it can make pauperism criminal. Certain localities do this now, but there would be



no serious encroachment on the rights of the individual if general laws to this effect were enacted.

What can churches do toward the creation of conditions which shall do away with pauperism? They can utterly refuse aid to any but those who on full investigation are proved to be deserving. This would cut off the support of thousands who find it easy to impose on the kind-hearted, and whose sole ground of confidence is that their statements will never be investigated. So far as practicable, churches should work through charity organization societies, to which all cases requiring help should be referred for investigation. But churches are jealous, and object to intrusion. A Church Exchange has been suggested in which, on stated occasions, the officers having charge of the beneficence of the churches, Roman Catholic and Protestant, should meet and compare notes, and thus learn whether they have not members in common who in one ward believe in Apostolic Succession, in Close Communion in another, in High Calvinism in a third, their chameleon creeds being due entirely to their insatiable appetite for doles. A Church Exchange would be feasible in villages and small cities, but perhaps the charity organization plan is better for large cities.

But, more than all else, churches can effect

much by rising to an appreciation of the fact that the gospel is for the whole life of man. Jesus Christ came to save men in this world as well as in the world to come. Whatever ennobles and beautifies humanity; whatever makes possible a worthy life for man as a child of God here and now, belongs to the mission of the Church, and should be recognized and publicly confessed by it as belonging to that mission. Nor is that all; for the best effect, this large and generous conception of Christianity should be preached in churches whose doors and pews are free to all, —so free that a tramp may feel at liberty to be there, even though he sleeps. There are churches and churches. Some content themselves with sustaining the worship of the sanctuary for the elect who are able to pay for pews; others, though they keep the pew system, make their places of worship the religious centres and homes of the community, and organize to move in solid phalanx on the ranks of vice and degradation. The Congregational Union of London might well be studied by all churches. It works systematically. It provides for the poor, preaching, bright and cheerful entertainments, and work for those who are willing to work; it puts boots on children, and sends them to school; it pro-

vides five o'clock breakfasts on Sunday morning, where men are fed before being asked to listen to sermons; it searches for the deserving who are willing to emigrate and sends them to the colonies; it allows no heedless giving, but strives in all ways to open the door of hope before those who live in darkness and despair. The Secretary of this Union issued "The Bitter Cry of Outcast London," that exceedingly bitter cry which has echoed around the world. It was significant, showing that the Church was far in advance of Parliament in its appreciation of the social condition and needs of England.

Thus in various ways churches can do much toward creating an environment which shall minimize pauperism. They can refuse to countenance almsgiving except on fullest investigation; they can give up their prejudices and sectarian rivalries, and organize a Church Exchange by which only the deserving shall be helped; they can work through the charity organization societies; and, better than all, they can realize that Christ came to save men, body and soul; they can preach this generous gospel, and can give themselves to a wider, more intelligent, and more Christlike ministration which will uplift men, restore them to manhood, and thus

help them toward, if not into, the kingdom of God.

What can individuals do to create an environment which shall gradually exterminate pauperism ?

They can learn that giving to beggars is giving to multiply beggars. They can remember that even paupers are children of God for whom Christ died, and therefore worthy of best and most thoughtful efforts for improvement. The current philosophy says, The fittest will survive : let the rest die. The religion of Christ says, That maxim as applied to men is just only as regards their characteristics, of which indeed only the fittest should survive. It does not and cannot apply to the men themselves, since all men, being children of God, are supremely fit. The very fact that a human being is sick, weak, poor, an outcast and a vagabond, is the strongest possible appeal for effort toward his salvation. Let individuals look upon humanity from the point of view of Christ, and they will not be long in finding ways in which environment can be bettered and caused to make for righteousness.

A gentleman of wealth started the Polytechnic Institute on Regent Street in London. It educates to industry and high ideals about fifteen

hundred young people each year. Paupers are seldom, if ever, found among those who have studied there. A number of Oxford and Cambridge students live and work in the University and Public School Settlements and the Mansfield House, East and South London. There young men from the universities go, not technically to be missionaries, though in a missionary spirit, but to improve the conditions of life at Whitechapel. Toynbee Hall, the Oxford House, Mansfield House in the East, and Browning Hall in the South,—the worst districts of London,—show what certain individuals are doing to solve the problem of pauperism. They live among the people, go among them, and try to elevate their local affairs. They are on the poor-boards and the school-boards;—the head of Mansfield House is an alderman;—they assist the police in the suppression of vice, and the like, and thus are themselves trained for larger and better work in the future. What these young men and women are doing in England is being done by others equally consecrated in this country, in Andover House, Boston; in Hull House, Chicago; in the Whittier House, Jersey City; in the University and College Settlements in New York and in many other cities.

The hero and heroine of "All Sorts and Conditions of Men" are believed to be well known, and their work to have been the inspiration of Mr. Besant's book. He described an ideal Palace of Delight which a few years ago had no existence. To-day it is a veritable reality. In 1887 it was opened by the Queen,—a vast institution with industrial classes, art classes, a cooking school, a hall seating two or three thousand people, where the best music in the kingdom is to be heard as frequently as at the West End; an art gallery, in which at least once has been seen the finest collection of modern paintings to be found in Great Britain. And this music, this art, these libraries and reading-rooms, these places for amusement and improvement, are to be enjoyed by any dweller in the heart of East London for a merely nominal admission. Crowds go there. Life is made nobler and sweeter. Young men and maidens drawn from music-halls and saloons see something worth thinking and talking about. Boys and girls with some natural gifts are sought out and trained to arts and industries. In addition to these, travel classes are formed, and men, women, and children are taken to the country for excursions in which recreation and instruction are combined. And, still better, the poor

and friendless are brought near to pure and noble spirits, who show them that none have any greater privilege than being permitted to uplift those who suffer and those who sin.

But perhaps the most helpful of all agencies started by individuals in this crusade against pauperism was the experiment of Octavia Hill. It is no longer an experiment, but an assured and magnificent success. It occurred to her to go into the heart of London's poorest districts, take old buildings and make them clean and well-equipped dwellings, and as soon as possible replace them with new ones. She laid her plan before John Ruskin, and he furnished most, if not all, of the money for the venture. Miss Hill carried her scheme into effect in person. She not only transformed old rookeries, making them comfortable and healthful, but took up her residence in one of them, kept the stairs and halls as clean as her own rooms, filled the vacant places with flowers, became the friend and helper of the women and children, set an example of careful housekeeping which was a constant inspiration, and then insisted that her rents should be paid. She demonstrated that, however it may be among animals, among human beings the "sty" has much to do with making the pig. In other words, she proved

that people who have decent homes and a chance to see beautiful things are usually influenced by these things. Her example has already been followed, to some extent, in Europe and America, and it is likely that by following and extending it in the future most will be done toward solving our problem.

These are hints to the Christian worker, and most suggestive phenomena to the Christian student. Similar and more familiar phenomena are to be found in the work of the Children's Aid Society of New York, and in the model tenements which have been erected in some of our cities. They all illustrate the principle to which attention is here directed,—that environment affects character. Our only hope that the problem of pauperism will ever be solved is in the fact that new and higher conditions always do much for the improvement of human nature, however degraded it may have become.

At the same time the inscrutable element of personality must never be overlooked, even in the lowest. Individual responsibility is an ultimate reality. We begin life where others put us, but after that we choose for ourselves. Heredity furnishes each man his capital, but compels none in its use. However much is done for the eleva-



tion of the pauper and lowest classes, all efforts must fail unless they succeed in awakening their consciousness of responsibility and consequent ability. This fact gives dignity and importance to personal appeals which have no other object than the reinforcing of weak wills. To accomplish this supreme result no force is more potent than friendship, and the efforts of those who in public and private, but always in a spirit of love, impress upon the weak the fact that they possess responsibility, and that others are interested in them and waiting in right ways to help.

At the close of this discussion I record my conviction that no permanent work for humanity will ever be accomplished without heeding the following fundamental Christian truth.

All men — paupers, thieves, murderers — are children of God, and therefore worth saving; they are destined for an endless existence, and therefore the most heroic and self-sacrificing effort in their behalf becomes a privilege and an honour.

Finally, efforts for the amelioration of humanity require time for successful result. The baleful effects of evil inheritance—which are like streams running through many generations—are not easily overcome. In character, as in disease, more than one generation is needed to eradicate

evil tendencies. But, as the physical constitution is changed for the better if kept long enough in pure air and bright sunshine, so the lowest and most degraded humanity becomes ennobled and beautified if taken out of its surroundings of idleness, vice, and crime, and kept in the tonic air of pure example and loving associations, and beneath the bright and tender sky of the eternal Father's love.

## CHAPTER X

### THE PROBLEM OF VICE AND CRIME

WE have seen that while the tendencies of a man are fixed at his birth, yet what he is actually is determined by an "infinite number of influences which have a powerful effect upon his ultimate constitution for good or evil;" and we have considered briefly the bearing of these truths upon the problem of pauperism. It remains to be said that a large part of intemperance, also, and of licentiousness and crime, is produced by heredity and induced by environment; and that consequently all intelligent and successful effort for the removal of these evils must begin with a study of the relation of these agencies to the facts.

*Heredity, Environment, and Intemperance.*—In a previous chapter the general fact that a tendency to intemperance is very often inherited has been pointed out; it is my purpose here to add the testimony of a few specialists too honoured to allow of a suggestion of partisanship, and then to consider the relation of the fact to the problem of reform.

Dr. T. D. Crothers, of Walnut Lodge, Hartford, in a paper on "Inebriety and Heredity" (1886), makes the following statements: "Alcoholic heredity, or the transmission of a special tendency to use spirits or any narcotic, to excess, is much more common than is supposed. . . . In the line of direct heredity—or those inebriates whose parents or grandparents used spirits to excess—we find that about one in every three cases can be traced to inebriate ancestors." "Quite a large proportion of these parents are moderate, or only occasional excessive users of spirits. If the father is a moderate drinker, and the mother a nervous, consumptive woman, or one with a weak, nervous organization, inebriety very often follows in the children. If both parents use wine or beer on the table continuously, temperate, sober children will be the exception. If the mother uses various forms of alcoholic drinks as medicines, or narcotic drugs for real or imaginary purposes, the inebriety of the children is very common. Many cases have been noted of mothers using wine, beer, or some form of alcoholic drinks, for lung trouble, or other affections, and the children born during this period have been inebriates, while others born before and after this drink-period have been temperate."

In the group of heredities called indirect, Dr.

Crothers finds the cause of about one-fourth of all inebriety.

But the influence on succeeding generations of evil habit—or its equivalent in the form of disease—goes farther than the formation of a tendency to alcoholism. Of the group called by Dr. Crothers “complex border-land cases,” or those where ancestors have been victims of diseases which tend toward the drink-habit, or to conditions which favour it, he says, not only that “fully one-fourth of all inebriates are of this class,” but also that, “in these cases there seems to be in certain families a regular cycle of degenerative diseases. Thus in one generation great eccentricity, genius, and a high order of emotional development. . . . In the next generation insane, inebriates, feeble-minded, or idiots. In the third generation paupers, criminals, tramps, epileptics, idiots, insane, consumptives, and inebriates. In the fourth generation they die out, or may swing back to great genius, pioneers and heroes, or leaders of extreme movements.” The study of a large number of inebriates shows both mental and physical legacies of evil from parents. “Bad-shaped heads and bodies, retarded or excessive growth, club feet, cleft palate, defective eyesight, great grossness of organization, or extreme frailty of develop-

ment, are common among children of this class. Mental heredity is equally clear. Mental instability and mental feebleness are common. From this mental heritage result: (1) diminution of longevity; (2) the race with the evil entail must die out; (3) where this heredity is retarded, or accelerated, by union with different currents of heredity, strange compounds result, as, for example, if to alcoholic-heredity is united a heritage of insanity, idiocy and all grades of criminals, paupers, and mixed insanities follow."

Ribot says: "The passion known as dipsomania, or alcoholism, is so frequently transmitted that all are agreed in considering its heredity as the rule. Not, however, that the passion for drink is always transmitted in that identical form, for it often degenerates into mania, idiocy, and hallucination. Conversely, insanity in the parents may become alcoholism in the descendants. This continued metamorphosis plainly shows how near passion comes to insanity, how closely the successive generations are connected, and, consequently, what a weight of responsibility rests on each individual."<sup>1</sup> Dr. Morel, of Paris, had "an opportunity of proving the hereditary effects of alcoholism in the 'children of the Commune.' He inquired into the mental state of one hundred and fifty

<sup>1</sup> *Heredity*, Ribot, p. 85.

children, ranging from ten to seventeen years of age, most of whom had been taken with arms in their hands behind the barricades. 'This examination,' he says, 'has confirmed me in my previous convictions as to the baneful effects produced by alcohol, not only in the individuals who use this detestable drink to excess, but also in their descendants. On their depraved physiognomy is impressed the threefold stamp of physical, intellectual, and moral degeneracy.'"<sup>1</sup> Dr. Elam, after describing the effects of inebriety on the individual using alcohol, says: "All this, fearful as it is, would be comparatively of trifling importance, did the punishment descend only on the individual concerned, and terminate there. Unfortunately this is not so, for there is no phase of humanity in which hereditary influence is so marked and characteristic as in this. The children unquestionably do suffer for or from the sins of the parent, even unto untold generations. And thus the evil spreads from the individual to the family, from family to community and to the population at large, which is endangered in its highest interests by the presence and contact of a '*morbid variety*' in its midst."<sup>2</sup> Erasmus Dar-

<sup>1</sup> *Heredity*, Ribot, p. 87.

<sup>2</sup> *A Physician's Problems*, Elam, pp. 108, 109.

win, in his "Botanical Garden" (1781), says: "It is remarkable that all the diseases from drinking spirituous or fermented liquors are liable to become hereditary, even to the third generation, gradually increasing, if the cause be continued, till the family becomes extinct."<sup>1</sup>

Intemperance is both a vice and a disease. As a disease, it results from many causes, chief among which is heredity, though environment also plays its part. Dr. Crothers accounts for by far the largest part — at least three-fourths — of all inebriety either by direct or indirect heredity.

As a vice, the chief agent in promoting it is environment. The wonder is that so few are intemperate rather than so many. The pernicious environment is very complex and difficult of analysis. Example does much; discontent and wretchedness do more.

Many are miserable as a consequence of drink, more drink because they are miserable. Misery as a cause of inebriety is a department of inquiry that the professional reformer seldom touches. Unhappy marriages are responsible for much intemperance.

"I myself must mix with action  
Lest I wither by despair,"

<sup>1</sup> *Foundation of Death*, Gustafson, p. 174.



explains not only much of the mad activity of our time, but a large part of its dissipation also. An environment of suffering, with little trust in Providence, or faith that happiness in the sequel works with righteousness, results in attempts to drown consciousness in alcohol, or to dull it with opiates. Moderate drinking does not always or usually, among the better classes, end in drunkenness. Its evil appears more in the second generation than in the first; but failure in business, unhappy domestic life, ill-health long continued, change the cry in "Locksley Hall" to

"I must drown myself in liquor  
Lest I wither by despair."

Intemperance is of course a potent cause of misery; but the reverse is equally true, — misery is the cause of intemperance. What strong and perennial fountains, then, of the thirst for strong drink must the slums of our great cities be, where tens and even hundreds of thousands of people live amidst conditions which forbid aspiration and even decency, and invite despondency and despair! Often the saloon is under the same roof, and the sight and fumes of liquor constantly present; while the food is so coarse that anything which promises to help digest it, is welcome. Add to this that most of the restraint which

comes from the approval of the good is absent, and the wonder is that so many live decent lives. The poor drinking-water is a contributory cause of intemperance. Where vile water is supplied to the people, a large proportion of them will prefer beer, which is usually made with water from artesian wells, to water that comes in pipes saturated by the filth of sewers. In many cities any very considerable temperance reform is impossible until a good water supply is secured.

Tenement-house education, too, is an ever-active influence for evil. Children grow where the social atmosphere is vile, the words they hear are vicious, and liquor is the common drink. A child born and reared in such circumstances is almost past praying for, unless he is taken out of them and placed where purity and virtue can have a fair chance with him. A large number of those who become drunkards are young men who live in cities and towns, in boarding-houses. A young man works all day. Evening comes; where shall he go? He has no fire in his room, and is not wanted at his lodgings. He naturally craves society; where shall he get it? In the street? The streets of any large city at night are full of temptations. He thinks he will try the Young Men's Christian Association. That is for mem-

bers. He thinks he can at least go into the reading-room; but there he often finds a sign saying, "Any persons not members must apply at the desk for permission to enter." He goes out. Shall he go to a church? The churches are closed, and as cold and gloomy as prisons. Not so the saloon; that is always open. There he finds music and papers, rational and decent amusement, and a lot of genial fellows; and the devil manipulates all. I have walked the streets of large cities, trying to find some place in which I could pass the evening pleasantly; and the only doors open to me, with my resources, were those of the theatre, the saloon, and what is equally persistent and more infamous. The wonder is that men in such circumstances are as decent as they are. Some of them are sons of drunkards, and are now amidst conditions that tend to develop all that is bad in them. The exigencies of daily life place them where the odds are against sobriety and decency. Heredity has too often furnished a nature more or less vitiated; environment now surrounds it with fascinating allurements, and intemperance follows as naturally as a harvest from the sowing of seed.

*Heredity, Environment, and Crime.*—The hereditary nature of the criminal propensity is un-

questionable. By this is not meant simply that criminals are children of criminals, but also that they inherit such traits of physical and psychological constitution as naturally lead to crime. Ribot says: "The heredity of the tendency to thieving is so generally admitted that it would be superfluous to bring together here facts which abound in every record of judicial proceedings." He cites as an illustration the genealogy of the Chrétien family from Dr. Despine's "Psychologie Naturelle."

"The father had three sons: Pierre, Thomas, and Jean-Baptiste. 1. Pierre had a son, Jean-François, who was condemned for life to hard labour for robbery and murder. 2. Thomas had two sons: (1) François, condemned to hard labour for murder, and (2) Martin, condemned to death for murder. Martin's son died in Cayenne, whither he had been transported for robbery. 3. Jean-Baptiste had a son, Jean-François, whose wife was Marie Tauré (belonging to a family of incendiaries). This Jean-François had seven children: (1) Jean-François, found guilty of several robberies, died in prison; (2) Benoist, fell off a roof which he had scaled, and was killed; (3) X——, nicknamed Clain, found guilty of several robberies, died at the age of twenty-five;

(4) Marie-Reine, died in prison, whither she had been sent for theft; (5) Marie-Rose, same fate, same deeds; (6) Victor, now in jail for theft; (7) Victorine, married one Lemaire; their son was condemned to death for murder and robbery." Ribot adds: "We have given this instance because it cuts short all explanations drawn from the influence of education and example. Doubtless it is difficult in many cases to determine what is due to education, and what to nature; and the children of thieves are not very likely to be trained to honesty by their parents; but still nature is always the stronger agency."<sup>1</sup>

The studies of Mr. Dugdale among State-prison convicts in New York State reveal some startling facts. They show the part played, both by heredity and environment, in the production of criminals. Two hundred and thirty-three cases were examined, and the examination so far verified as to be considered reliable. Of this number, 23.03 per cent were of neurotic stock. By neurotic stock is meant "those who are descended from, related to by blood, or are themselves either idiotic, insane, epileptic, paralytic, or other-

<sup>1</sup> Ribot, *Heredity*, p. 91.

wise nervously disordered." Forty and seventy-seven hundredths per cent. were orphans; 46.78 per cent. had been neglected in childhood; 75.63 per cent. were habitual criminals; 22.74 per cent. were House of Refuge boys; 17.16 per cent. were of criminal families; 22.31 per cent. were of pauper stock; 42.49 per cent. were of intemperate family; 35.05 per cent. were habitual drunkards; and 79.41 per cent. were without trade. Of the two hundred and thirty-three examined, the figures show that nearly one in every four was born of nervously disordered parentage. Mr. Dugdale says: "This close relationship between nervous disorders and crime runs parallel with the experience of England, where 'the ratio of insane to sane criminals is thirty-four times as great as the ratio of lunatics to the whole population of England; or, if we take half the population to represent the adults which supply the convict prisons we shall have the criminal lunatics in excess in the high proportion of seventeen to one.'"<sup>1</sup> "It has been said that 'whatever is physiologically right is morally right,' and here we have a confirmation of that saying by its converse, that whatever is physiologically un-

<sup>1</sup> *The Jukes*, Dugdale, revised edition, p. 86.

sound is morally rotten; for we find that murder, rape, and arson—crimes which arouse our abhorrence and indignation the most, for which the law awards the most severe penalties, and which all men in all nations are agreed to look upon as unpardonable—are perpetrated by a class of men whose probable capacity for self-government is twice and a half less than that of criminals who prey upon property, and whose probable mental unsoundness is thirty-four times greater than that of the average community.”<sup>1</sup>

About forty-three per cent. of the criminals examined were of intemperate family, as were fifty-one per cent. of the House of Refuge boys. We find that 79.41 per cent. never learned a trade, and presumptively were in the condition of those for whom Satan finds mischief.

Failure to learn a trade is chargeable usually to the parents, and doubtless the indifference to, or aversion for, sustained industry indicated by that failure was a part of their legacy to their children. A terrible fact is the large number of House of Refuge boys found in the prisons,—nearly twenty-three per cent. of all the convicts examined. Of that number ninety-eight per cent.

<sup>1</sup> *The Jukes*, Dugdale, revised edition, p. 87.

were habitual criminals. These figures go far to support Mr. Dugdale's statement that Houses of Refuge are the "nurseries, not the reformatories, of crime."<sup>1</sup> Concerning diseases among criminals, Dr. Bruce Thompson says: "In all my experience I have never seen such an accumulation of morbid appearances as I witness in the post-mortem examinations of the prisoners who die here. Scarcely one of them can be said to die of one disease, for almost every organ of the body is more or less diseased; and the wonder to me is that life could have been supported in such a diseased frame. Their moral nature seems equally diseased with their physical frame; and whilst their mode of life in prison reanimates their physical health, I doubt whether their minds are equally benefited, if improved at all. On a close acquaintance with criminals, of eighteen years' standing, I consider that nine in ten are of inferior intellect, but that all are excessively cunning."<sup>2</sup>

But figures and testimonies are scarcely needed to prove that a criminal ancestry, especially when reinforced by criminal environment, will surely lead to crime and degeneration. To

<sup>1</sup> *The Jukes*, Dugdale, revised edition, p. vii.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in *The Jukes*, Dugdale, p. 95.



expect otherwise would be to look for the reversal of the law that what is sown will be reaped. Ancestry determines tendency; actuality is usually a product of heritage and surrounding. When both are criminal, the probabilities are overwhelming that the offspring will be criminal.

Before there can be progress toward the removal of intemperance or crime, there must be a careful study of the causes of these evils. Diagnosis in social disease, as in physical, should precede resort to remedies. Until recently, there has been almost total neglect of what have been abundantly shown to be important factors in the problem of reform. "Lend a Hand" contains the following: "Dr. Holmes has said, 'The patient may almost always be saved, if the doctor is called in time, but he should be called two or three hundred years before the patient is born.' It is not quite convenient for the new charity of to-day to root out the seeds of the pauper disease found in the seventeenth and the sixteenth centuries, but it does the next best thing; it seeks to cure the pauperism of the twentieth and succeeding centuries by shutting up the pauper-factories of to-day." The history of society's dealing with the classes mentioned in this paper is mournful read-

ing. Even well-meant attempts at philanthropy have been so poorly administered that they have often increased rather than diminished the evils at which they were directed.

Temperance-workers have wasted their energies in agitation for laws impossible to execute in large cities, and have left the intemperate in unimproved conditions of temptation and tendency. The only attempt of which I have heard at a careful study of the relation of heredity to inebriety by such reforms is the Bureau of Heredity of the W. C. T. U., and this is of recent date. Temperance agitators have almost uniformly ignored the duty of providing something better for those from whom an evil indulgence is taken. Inquiries concerning how the masses live; concerning sanitary conditions, and their relation to the virtue and vice of the people; concerning the causes of pauperism and crime, have seldom been started by professional agitators. Law-makers have done perhaps less. Those who were elected because they were the tools of criminal-makers have devoted their hours of idleness to ignoring the questions which were to be decided by their votes.

Others have gone on year after year making laws concerning tramps, and tramps have multi-

plied in spite of the laws. Laws have as yet not touched the heart of the problems which are pressing upon us. Social theorists have done little more.

Single-tax men would bring the millennium by putting all taxes on land; and labour-reformers would bring a better day by a revolution in the social order. Whatever the wisdom or folly of these schemes, they have as yet scarcely touched the stern conditions of increasing degeneration. Until the movement of heredity is changed, physical and moral deterioration will move side by side in ever-expanding streams. In the long run no reform can prevail which does not look toward the creation of a sober, clean, and law-abiding stock. If a temperance revival were to result in all the inmates of a tenement house of adult years signing the pledge, and even if the further marvel should come to pass that they keep it, that would be no sure ground for supposing that the children born during the years of their parents' inebriety will continue temperate. If, on the other hand, the region where those people lived is changed; if they are accustomed to virtue and decency, and have before them examples of true manhood and womanhood, and are enabled so to live that home is a blessed fact and not a farce,

it will make comparatively little difference whether or not the pledge is taken. In other words, redemption of the environment is the indispensable condition of redemption of the inhabitants. Organisms respond to their environment. Men are like their surroundings. If reform, in any of the departments considered in this chapter, is ever permanent, it will be as a result of such influences brought to bear on society as shall make a new and better environment, and consequently a better stock.

The practical question then arises as to how these ends may be realized. Not by any treatment of the vicious and criminal classes which fails to recognize, and to hold them to a recognition of, freedom and responsibility. No doubt the study of heredity makes faith in freedom difficult. All that is added to the one seems to be subtracted from the other. This, we have seen, is not the whole truth, however. Freedom is real; and men must be continually confronted with it and its attendant responsibility.

Until they are born again, if men think they are not accountable, they will follow their selfish inclinations; and if society teaches that they are driven by forces over which they have no control, they will, by and by, turn those forces on society to its

ruin. There is no hope for the man who has no faith in his possibilities and his responsibility. If the inner testimony to freedom is discredited, the last bulwark against chaos is broken down. All forms of philosophical thought which teach that man is but a fortuitous grouping of atoms, or which allow that even heredity can fetter the will without deranging the mind, so far as they prevail, sap the foundations of improvement.

Environment may be bettered, but environment without consciousness of freedom and responsibility will not long have influence over a man of depraved heredity. It is precisely because it is presumed that there is something in all men, however degraded, which can respond to better things, that better things are, or should be, provided. A hog in a palace would be a hog to its death. The splendour would make no impression on his nature. But a "Bridge-boy," a character so well known in London, in the same place would be transformed. There is something in him to which appeal can be made. Neither heredity nor environment destroys responsibility. If drunkards were treated as criminals, there would be a surprising manifestation of power to resist temptation.

But inebriates and criminals are very often unfortunates as well as wrong-doers; they are in

large proportion diseased, and should be treated pathologically as well as judicially. This work can be successful only when based on a true diagnosis, that is, an accurate knowledge of the trouble and its causes. The intemperance which results from misery will be cured but in small measure without a removal of the misery. If this is not done, and alcohol is prohibited, it will either be obtained surreptitiously or some other means of vicious indulgence will take its place, and the last estate, perchance, be worse than the first. As a last resort, wretchedness will turn to suicide. Intemperance caused by domestic infelicity will be diminished, not so much by "Maine laws" and "moral suasion," as by such education, and perhaps restraint, as shall make ill-assorted marriages less frequent.

Mendicancy is largely the natural result of intemperance and licentiousness. Laws against tramps may change the form of the evil,—perhaps to a more dangerous form,—but until parents, and their children after them, are made to realize that the body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, this scourge in some form is likely to continue.

So long as houses of refuge and prisons are schools of crime, it is vain to expect any large improvement in police reports.

One fault in the past has been that reform has resided too largely in the abstract. Specific remedies for specific evils should be the rule. Reformatory effort should be directed, as it has signally failed to be directed in the past, toward the production of pure and inspiring environment, to the end that coming generations, if not our own, may reap the benefit in manlier men and more womanly women.

Reform along the lines indicated in this paper has already begun. The model dwelling-houses in London and in New York are hints of what is possible in improving one part of the environment of the lowest classes. The Children's Aid Society, already mentioned, with its nearly one hundred thousand children transported from city wickedness to the comparative moral healthfulness of the country, is a success which some day will be still better appreciated than it is now. Temperance workers at last are beginning to realize that the best way to get rid of the tendency to inebriety is to crowd it out with something good. The most hopeful movement in the temperance world to-day, among the lower classes, is found in the English coffee-houses and Te-to-tums. The late Dr. Dale, of Birmingham, in 1884 told me that the chief of police informed him that

crime had diminished one-half in that city since the coffee-houses and boys' schools were opened. Standing within a short distance of the Seven Dials, in London, in the same year, I asked a policeman whether crime had increased or decreased in his precinct in recent years. "In ten years it has decreased fully one-half," was the reply. "What has wrought the change?" "The coffee-houses and the boys' clubs." In other words, even in the slums of "the toy-shop of Europe," and in the very heart of London's wretchedness, a few wise, strong, patient, liberal men and women have worked this change in the criminal records by opening a few coffee-houses, schools, and improved dwellings.

Efforts in these directions should be multiplied. Movements like the University Colony in East London and the University Extension System of Lectures should be started in all our cities, and the scholarship and refinement of Harvard and Yale and Princeton brought into helpful sympathy with the Bowery and Water Street.

Already we have our Andover House, our Hull House, our Whittier House, our University and College Settlements, our University Lectures, our Fresh-air Funds, our Association of East Side Workers. These are a beginning; but they must



be multiplied a hundredfold before the tide of vice and crime will ebb materially.

Wise reform will not fail to recognize the force of heredity whether for the continuance and multiplication of human ills, or for their diminution. It will do but little good to work for individuals here and there. Such conditions must be created as will redeem the human life-stream itself. It may be that the greatness of this task will stagger the thought and shake the courage of some. It is scarcely to be denied that the study of human nature as conditioned by heredity and environment is depressing in its initial stages. It makes humanity seem like clay in the hands of an inexorable and remorseless potter; but it will save an immense waste of time, effort, and means, and, by and by, the depression will change to hope, as it is seen that the same law that necessitates degeneration under certain conditions, under other conditions works regeneration; and the hope will change to inspiration when it is realized that even the means which are in the feeblest hands may make beneficent, and full of blessing, that which before has seemed only a curse.

One fact, at least, can scarcely be questioned any longer: reform must be along positive rather than negative lines. The intemperate must be

given something better than liquor; the pauper something that will stimulate, without exhausting, his feeble vitality; the criminal some nobler object for his ambition and his energies than that which he is now seeking.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE PROBLEM OF SIN AND THE RACE

IN one of George W. Cable's stories of old Creole days in New Orleans occurs the description of a sermon, from which I make the following extract: "My friends," he said, — this was near the beginning, — "the angry words of God's Book are very merciful — they are meant to drive us home; but the tender words, my friends, they are sometimes terrible! Notice these, the tenderest words of the tenderest prayer that ever came from the lips of a blessed martyr — the dying words of the holy St. Stephen: 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.' Is there nothing dreadful in that? Read it thus: 'Lord, lay not this sin to *their* charge.' Not to the charge of those who stoned them? To whose charge then? Go ask the holy St. Paul. Three years afterward, praying in the temple at Jerusalem, he answered that question: 'I stood by and consented.' He answered for himself only; but the day must come when all that wicked council that sent St. Stephen away to be stoned, and all that city of

Jerusalem, must hold up the hand and say: 'We, also, Lord; we stood by.' Ah! friends, under the simpler meaning of that dying saint's prayer for the pardon of his murderers is hidden the terrible truth *that we shall all have a share in one another's sins.*"

Again he says: "Ah! if it were merely my own sins that I had to answer for, I might hold up my head before the rest of mankind; but no, no, my friends, we cannot look each other in the face, for each has helped the other to sin. Oh, where is there any room in this world of common disgrace for pride? Even if we had no common hope, a common despair ought to bind us together and forever silence the voice of scorn."

This extract from an imaginary sermon is a vivid illustration of the familiar truth: No man liveth to himself. We share in one another's sins. In a certain real sense there is no crime committed by an individual in which all the rest of the community are not participants. Nothing seems more absurd at first thought than to say that pure and noble men have part in murders, adulteries, and robberies. They make laws to prevent such crimes. Nothing could be more repulsive than complicity with what they hate; and yet, far more than most dream, men in general are partners in the transgressor's guilt.

No man is entirely a new creation. Each comes into the world marked by the peculiarities of his time, his condition, and his parents. Each man is the product of his ancestry, modified or intensified by his surroundings. The time and circumstances of his birth, and all his natural faculties, are determined before he was born. Each individual has the tools given to him with which he must do his work. He cannot choose for himself what shall be the size of his brain, what shall be his temperament, what things he shall like or dislike, whether he shall be quick-tempered or phlegmatic, whether he shall be artistic or prosaic.

Each has to take what is given,—his vital heritage, whatever its shortcomings, whatever its bias,—and do the best he can with it. Inheritance reaches far back and to many people; and by it come tendencies to certain sins. As tendencies to rheumatism and epilepsy run in families, so also in clearly defined lines do tendencies to intemperance, pauperism, and various crimes. It has been proved that most of those whom we ostracize as tramps are physically diseased, not enough to destroy responsibility, but enough to make exertion more burdensome to them than to others.

Specialists are agreed in declaring that inebriety, though the result of vice, is a disease, with clearly defined symptoms, and that it is often the result of inherited tendencies. Every one knows that a man who inherits a taste for liquor is in far greater peril than the children of the temperate. A distinguished clergyman once said that he did not dare to taste wine, because he had a natural taste for liquor, handed down by a long line of cider-drinking ancestors. Men are born with tendencies to certain forms of sin which make it easy to yield to temptation and hard to resist. Now, he who transmits to a descendant a tendency which makes sin easy is a partner with that descendant in his guilt.

With the introduction of the factor of environment, of the action of which I shall speak presently, the subject becomes complicated. Men are not only what heredity has made them, but the very fibre of their natures is affected by their surroundings; and the impressions thus made, be they invigorating or debilitating, uplifting or degrading, are transmitted to their offspring. Hence, if in our time we help to produce conditions which make it easy for a man to do wrong, and he yields to the temptation, and by his fall his nature is changed so that his children come

into being diseased morally and physically, then, when the child does wrong not only is he to be blamed, but the father who did wrong before him, and those who made circumstances which led the father into sin. Thus the line of responsibility runs backward, and stops — who can tell where? If each person came into existence perfectly wise, with a strong will, and with no tendencies toward either good or evil; and if each could choose just when and where he would first see the light, and who would train him, even then it could not be said that every man is responsible for himself alone, and no man for another; but all would be far more nearly independent than at present. If a young man born of respectable and sober parents comes into a city environment, is thrown into the company of the intemperate and vile, and after a while, though formerly averse to evil, becomes vicious, that young man is blameworthy for yielding, but he shares his guilt with his tempters and with those who suffered the conditions to exist which made his fall, if not imperative, at least probable. If, now, in the course of years, he continues in evil ways, and has a family of his own, they will see the light not in the clear day of his childhood, but with their eyes dimmed and their powers weakened by his vices.

Those children, with weaker wills, and stronger tendencies than he had originally to intemperance and other vices, have to face the same temptations. Manifestly they will fall far more easily, unless new and spiritually healthful forces supervene. When one of them in intoxication is borne from the gin palace, who are to be held culpable for his downfall? He himself, because he did not use the will he had. His parents, because they indulged in courses which brought him into the world morally and physically infirm; those also, certainly, who first led his parents into wrong; and those, too, who consent that the deadly forces of degeneration shall continue to work. Thus disregard of physical and moral law, the consequences of which are hardly seen at first, in following generations blossoms into vice and violence. The unity of the race is terribly real. Diseases that no facts in the individual life can account for point gaunt fingers of blame from one generation to another. Not a murderer is hung, not a daughter starts on the downward way, but a great company, like those who were present at the stoning of Stephen, stand by consenting to the ruin. This is what gives point to the appeals of those who plead for purity, for temperance, for the observance of the laws of health;



for no misstep and no crime, unless counteracted, fails in some way to send its blight down the generations.

Society is responsible for a vicious, sin-generating environment in other ways, however, than that of consent. The sins of the individual belong also to society, because public sentiment is the ordinary arbiter of what constitutes right and wrong. In one set of circumstances the heroic virtues, such as courage, endurance, and the like, are honoured. A man is helped to be brave and honourable by the conversation he hears and the books within his reach. If public sentiment brands a coward as infamous, few will turn from the face of an enemy. Not many are heroes in their own strength alone. Heroism is a cord of many strands; in it are woven individual will, tendencies from the past, the influence of example, and the consciousness of how others will regard actions. A noble character is the result of many causes. It is stimulated by applause, and encouraged by lofty ideals. If a man is situated where little value is placed on life, where the appeal to the sword or pistol is instantaneous and legitimate, he who shoots another is not a lonely criminal. He is an exponent of the criminality in which he lives. A person born in the

splendid court of Louis XIV. could not in the nature of the case have the same thought about purity and love as one trained under the influence of fine domestic and social ideals. To go astray then was the rule, and society shared the guilt of the wrong-doers.

I do not excuse those who in the free exercise of their wills — and all have some freedom — have chosen to do wrong; but surely, in such circumstances, no man is solitary in his guilt. If it is the custom of society to excuse moral delinquencies, then those who are morally weak will find that custom behind them pushing them toward the evil from which they naturally shrink. All who help to make the sentiment that speaks lightly of evil participate in the guilt of those who fall. He who leads the suicide to the precipice shares the guilt of his self-destruction. Mr. Cable, in the imaginary sermon from which I have quoted, uses the following illustration: "I once knew a man who was carefully taught from infancy to manhood this single only principle of life—defiance. Not justice, not righteousness, not even gain, but defiance, defiance to God, defiance to man, defiance to nature, defiance to reason, defiance and defiance and defiance. This man became a smuggler, and at last a pirate in the Gulf

of Mexico. (Lord, lay not that sin to his charge alone.) But a strange thing followed.

“Being in command of men of a sort that required to be kept at the austere distance, he now found himself separated from the human world, and thrown into solemn companionship with the sea, with the air, with the storm, with the calm, the heavens by day, the heavens by night. My friends, that was the first time in his life he ever found himself in really good company. . . . That man, looking out night after night upon the grand and holy spectacle of the starry deep above and the watery deep below, was sure to find himself sooner or later mastered by the conviction that the great Author of this majestic creation keeps account of it; and one night there came to him, like a spirit walking on the sea, the awful silent question: My account with God, how does it stand? Ah, friends, this is a question which the book of nature does not answer. Did I say the book of nature is a catechism? Yes. But after it answers the first question with God, nothing but questions follow. And so one day this man gave a ship full of merchandise for one little book which answered these questions. God help him to understand it! And God help you, Monsieur, and you, Madame, sitting here in your

smuggled clothes, to beat upon the breast with me, and cry, 'I, too, Lord, I, too, stood by and consented.'"<sup>1</sup>

The priest in the story wished to show that those who made smuggling lucrative were guilty with the pirate, and he was right.

And it is equally true that all who help in any way to make dishonesty profitable, and the law of chastity to be held in light esteem, are making it easier for frail ones to fall. The safety of the weak is in a strong public sentiment which brands iniquity as infamous, and calls crimes by their right names. Those who help to make the public sentiment, if that sentiment condones sin, are partners in guilt with those who transgress the moral order.

The strong should bear the infirmities of the weak. There are multitudes who do little thinking for themselves; to whom what society allows is right, and what it condemns is wrong. It may be said that each should use his own judgment and will. Suppose he does, but uses them where the prevailing ideals are false and examples are evil and misleading, is there no allowance to be made for his errors? Those are culpable

<sup>1</sup> *Old Creole Days*, Cable, Vol. I. p. 22.

who fail to exercise their own powers conscientiously, but not more so than those who see more clearly and act more decidedly, and yet fail to hold up high, true standards and show worthy examples. With the increase of civilization and wealth in our land there is a growing tendency to tolerate evil if it is garbed in fine clothes. But vice in high places, even more than in the lower strata of society, stimulates vice. Exaltation is no excuse for wickedness. By as much as a man has great ability, lofty position, or any gift which can lead or mislead others, he is under bonds to be good and do good. The example of a lecherous prince blinds the eyes of those who have no very clear conviction as to the essential glory of chastity. If gambling is common among the rich, the poor will take to it without compunction. If an author haloes illicit relations with the touch of genius, the young who are dazzled by his greatness will copy the vices he fails to condemn more than the virtues he holds up for admiration.

It is through this force of influence that some of the most eminent personages in history have wrought immeasurable evil. If the rich dress as well as they can afford, the poor will dress

better than they can afford. If the millionaire sips his wine, the hod-carrier will insist on his whiskey. It may be said that the fact that one does what in itself is not harmful to him, is no reason why he should be classed as a partner in blame with those who do what is harmful for them. If all were equally strong that might be true, but there are many gradations in humanity, and the higher attract the lower as naturally as the moon the tides. No man can keep his influence to himself. Public opinion determines what people try to do. If it honours only those things which are safe and healthful, no one in following it will be led to evil; if it popularizes what one-half the world can enjoy only at its peril, then those who make the public sentiment are responsible for the peril in which half the world finds itself.

One whom I was once trying to lift to a higher and better life answered my appeal with this single, sad sentence, in which seemed condensed the plaint of many sighs and the falling of many tears, "Oh, I am so weak!" which meant, not only that, but also this unuttered but still evident thought, "and there are so many to take advantage of my weakness." If the temperate allow places where allurements to evil are

constantly open to the weak, if they do not do all they can to make it impossible for any to get pleasure or gain by the degradation of their fellow-men, their very neglect is in part the cause of the moral ruin of all who enter those gates of death, and they are in a real sense partners in guilt with those who fall. If by our carelessness or love of ease we allow vice to flaunt itself and crime to go unpunished, so that others are ruined, we cannot escape our measure of condemnation. If our influence is not all in favour of high moral standards, we help to destroy morality. If we honour those who are vile, we help others on the downward path. If the cultured palliate vice in those who are eminent, they practically say that moral character is not imperative. The mass of men are not astute enough to understand why vice should be condoned in Burns and Goethe and condemned in carpenters and clerks. Influence is a very subtle but a very real force. It is like a stream of pure water. If kept pure, it carries health and blessing everywhere. If fouled, it breeds disease and death; and all who contaminate it even in the slightest, or who do not use their ability to preserve its purity, are more or less responsible for its deadly effects.

I have thus tried to show how the race sins in the individual. Men transmit tendencies to evil to their descendants; those tendencies result in open sin, and those who start the evil are not free from the blood of those who fall. Public sentiment looks leniently on crimes, and speaks sneeringly of virtues, and thus the weak, who seldom make fine discriminations, are encouraged in vicious courses.

Those who give the heredity, and those who make the sentiment, are sometimes more culpable than those whose overt acts of wrong they abhor; for they sin against greater light and with larger ability to resist.

Nothing in this chapter must be understood as denying the ability of any to choose the good when once it is presented.

The problem of inheritance *versus* free will is full of mystery, but of one thing we are sure, and on it we must rest, — we all may choose the right. Every one has some freedom; none are utterly driven to sin; all who have done wrong are conscious of their wrong; none are altogether able to excuse their guilt. But the crimes of some are not so black as they seem to us at first; while, on the other hand, large classes of respectable people are not so guiltless as they seem, are



silent partners, in fact, in works of destruction. This view of life is not popular. Especially do those who preach a religion of culture fail to recognize it.

The tendency of the higher education, where the responsibility of service is not emphasized, is to separate classes; to cause the educated to withdraw themselves from unpleasant and discouraging conditions. It is much more delightful to converse with congenial friends than to do the work requisite for honest politics, to labour for the enactment of wise laws, and to insist on their execution; but if, by the withdrawal of the cultured classes from the responsibilities of citizens, evil conditions become common, then those who thus escape from turmoil and strife become accessories to the crimes they might have prevented. He who sees a ship going on the rocks and sounds no warning is scarcely less guilty than he who turns its prow toward the breakers. A saloon is allowed to work ruin, because men who might cause its removal never try to do so: a young man is enticed into that place and induced to drink; under the influence of that drink he kills a comrade. Who is the murderer? The man who fired the shot. Certainly, but also his tempters, and, in a degree, those who might have

closed that place of temptation, and have neglected to do so.

The solidarity of the race is a terrible but evident reality. All are of one blood. If the common life is polluted by the vice of any single individual, then the lot of all others is harder; and their tendencies to evil are stronger. But if, on the other hand, any man rises to a loftier and purer manhood than his parents or his neighbours, he does his part not only in purifying himself but also in ameliorating society and improving the race.

These facts should make all lenient in their judgments of their fellow-men, and especially careful about punishment. Who should be punished, the one that applied the fuse, or the one that laid the train?

No man liveth to himself. The individual's sin is his own, and yet it belongs to the race also. Equally the virtue of the individual is not his own alone; it also is a product into which have gone the toils, tears, sacrifices, prayers of millions who never heard his name.

This study brings to light one thought which in our time is having wide recognition, and that is, that Jesus Christ is a social, as well as an individual, Saviour. His mission is to states and

institutions as truly as to individuals. Hence He organized a kingdom, that is, a new social order; and that kingdom is advanced by the conversion of men, but also by the gradual raising of ideals, by the improving of social customs, by the transforming of states.

Our Master has relations to individuals; but the race belongs to Him also, and He is influencing it, lifting it to better things, and slowly but surely creating a new, unselfish, and redeemed society.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE PROBLEM OF FAITH

THE object of this chapter is to consider the relation of natural causes to some subjects in the sphere of religion. It is taken for granted in many quarters that a man can determine his religious faith as easily as, with a table of luxuries before him, he can decide what he will eat and drink. A more careful study of human life, however, shows that it is strictly true that no act is unrelated, not even that of recognition of the truth; but that every act, every volition, every thought, has connection in one way or another with the whole man. A long line of associated facts requiring consideration lies behind every rational concept and every act of faith. In the last analysis, a man's religious faith is an expression of what he is; as Emerson says, he "bears beliefs as a tree bears apples."<sup>1</sup> The common thought has been exactly the reverse. We have been accustomed to say that a man is what his faith is. That is, indeed, one aspect of the truth, but the other aspect,

<sup>1</sup> *Essay on Worship.*

that what a man is will determine what his faith will be, is quite as real. The statements of the Scriptures are in harmony with this teaching. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." The other text, as a man "thinketh in his heart, so is he," cannot be quoted in reply, for the real meaning of it is that the internal state, not the outward seeming, is the real thing about every man. Before we can answer the question, What should a man believe? we must be able to answer the other question, What can he and what must he believe? Few truths can be considered purely in the abstract; the personal factor is always present, giving colour to the truth according to the nature of him who views it. The difference may not be great, but as there is something individual in each man, so there is always something individual in his way of seeing and interpreting the truths presented to him. It is inevitable, therefore, that to a considerable degree a man's theological beliefs should be according to his intellectual and moral heritage and the circumstances in which he lives. As the will is the man willing, so belief is the man believing. This is not to deny that truth has an objective existence, but to affirm that objective truth will be perceived by the individual in proportion to the clearness of his spiritual sight and the

quickness of his mental operations, and also according as intellect or emotion be predominant in his constitution. Therefore we are brought to the conviction that:—

Heredity and environment have much to do in determining the moral and theological bias of every man. Within limits, both a man's creed and his character are influenced by his ancestry and by his surroundings. This influence is not absolute determinism, and does not preclude responsibility; but there is no reason to regard the moral life as any less related to the past, or any less susceptible to atmospheres of good or evil, than the physical life. It is as true that men think like their fathers as that they look like them. It is as unnatural for some to be religious as it is natural for others. Every year a man lives, every year his ancestors lived, and the conditions amidst which his life and theirs have been spent, reach into and colour his religion, both as to creed and as to ideals. All cannot think alike. Until all have the same faculties with exactly the same development, and live in exactly the same circumstances, it is folly to expect uniformity in religious opinions,—a truth of which the Hapsburgs of Austria and Spain and the Stuarts of England had no conception, to the world's bitter sorrow. The

Bible to one man is plain, literal, and prosaic. Every word means just what it says. When it is read, that is all there is of it. To another it flames with spiritual suggestion; its sublime prophecies, the choral melody of the Psalms, the awful splendours of Job and Ezekiel, and the great visions of the Apocalypse, are doors into a world of which the literal sense is only a symbol. The two men are not blamable for seeing differently. One never threw away an imagination, and the other never had one. They interpret the same objective revelation according to the nature of their respective individualities. Instead of expecting all to see alike, to give to each word an equal emphasis, and to do fealty to precisely the same ideal, — never the same to two persons, — the duty of each to live according to the highest light he can get should be asserted and enforced. Standards will differ. Those are not nearest alike who profess their faith in the same words, but those who with equal earnestness and prayer strive to realize in the outward world the truth as it is disclosed to them. The spirit of a man is more than his intellectual conclusions. "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know," said the Master. Views of truth and beauty will vary with individuals. That should be expected. Because there are

wide differences in forms of expression and interpretation, it no more follows that one is all wrong and another all right, or that there is no real truth, than, because one thinks the moon to be the size of a half-dollar and another thinks it the size of a half-bushel, it follows therefore that there is no moon. Opinions concerning religion differ as do the people who hold them. This is only transferring to the religious sphere what all recognize in every other sphere. The effect of the recognition of this fact will be greater emphasis upon the spirit and character of man than upon his intellectual beliefs. The motto of the rising church will be, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness." Truth itself is a unit; but the truth that each man holds is only a fraction, and a fraction modified by ancestors and circumstances. Inability to interpret doctrines in the same terms should be expected; but failure to search for truth and to be loyal to it should be regarded as the sin against the Holy Ghost. Not, What does a man believe? but, What is his attitude toward the Spirit of Truth? is the all-important question. In other words, the teachable mind and the loyal spirit are the surest signs of spiritual life, and these are within the reach of every man's volition.

The doctrine of salvation by Jesus Christ is the



central doctrine of the Christian revelation. It distinguishes Jesus from all other masters. The study of heredity gives an altogether new significance to the word *salvation*. Its primary idea is of one who has lost his way, finding it again; of one sick, restored to health; of one in peril, being given a way of escape. But we do not proceed far in this study before we realize that that from which men need salvation is a state or condition into which they are born. The tendencies to evil which burn in the veins are not chosen; they are not taken in at some specific time; they are discovered, and the discovery is usually an awful and humiliating surprise. Most are sometime rudely shocked by finding themselves the abode of passions of whose existence they had heretofore been ignorant. This condition is not sin, since sin implies guilt, and no one is blamable for anything which he does not choose, and which at first, at least, he would repudiate with loathing. Different thinkers have given different names to this state, such as sin, depravity, evil, imperfect development. It has been ascribed to the effect of a wrong choice on the part of the first human ancestor, and it has been regarded as a necessary stage in the evolution of humanity. The differences between philosophers and theologians concerning innate tendency

to wrong-doing are only superficial. They agree in the fact; they differ in the name by which that fact is defined. Original sin, however much the term may have been abused, and false as is its first suggestion, is a terrible and persistent reality. Now salvation, to be a thing desired, must be deliverance from the state out of which evil acts grow. That this state or condition is something which is transmitted, few who have studied human life or history would question. Theories about it may differ, but the sad reality remains that all men in all ages have tendencies which sooner or later result in acts that violate the moral reason and are condemned by conscience. Salvation, if it is worth having, must, therefore, be more than remission of penalty, deserved or undeserved; it must be nothing less than the purification of a stream of inheritance. It reaches far beyond the outward act, and has to do with the fountains of being. No man is really saved who is merely forgiven; or, as the late Dr. Dale was wont to say, so forgiven that conscience and the eternal law of righteousness are satisfied. When our Lord said, "I am come that ye might have life," He spoke the word which better than any other defined His mission. To be conscious that one is forgiven, and yet that at the same time he is so polluted

that he cannot beget a child without handing on to that child a nature which will be as bad as if his father had never been forgiven, is not salvation in any real sense. What we need is not only pardon, but such a clarification of the fountains of being as will make us the parents of those whose tendencies shall be upward; and nothing less is worthy the name of salvation. It was said of the Master, "His name shall be called Jesus, because He shall save the people from their sins;" but the people are not saved from their sins when there are within them streams of tendency waiting only an opportunity of sweeping away all noble aspirations and holy volitions. There is a profound significance in the phrase "new birth," or "birth from above." It indicates that the whole personality is so changed that that which was foul has become pure, and that which formerly begat evil, now by a law equally binding produces a progeny with a movement toward holiness. When we speak of what we need, an attempt to put evident facts into Biblical forms is unnecessary. Salvation can mean no less than deliverance from tendencies toward evil and voluntary wrongdoing; it means also deliverance from the necessity of transmitting to others a polluted nature. If it be said that that is contrary to facts, the only reply

must be, that nothing less than this is salvation worthy of the name. If Jesus Christ does not supply this new life, He is no true Saviour. A fruitful field for theological investigation would be an inductive study of the transmissibility of the spiritual life which is in Jesus Christ. Is it true that those who truly accept and obey Him are so regenerated that their children are born in His likeness, as those who live without His life are born simply into the likeness of the first man? This is a question which can be answered wisely only with facts; facts so carefully gathered and classified as to leave no question concerning their value. What an inductive study of this subject would reveal is not now known, but there can be no doubt but that the study of heredity has made it plain that that only is salvation which imparts a new and dominant life, putting in the place of in-born tendencies toward sin, new and predominant tendencies toward holiness. These tendencies may coexist, but the tendencies toward evil will no longer occupy the places of power in the personality. Nothing is more terrible than the thought that we bring into being immortal spirits who by an eternal and changeless law are possessed of a nature which will surely lead to wrong, and that whatever relief may come to us individually the

same corrupted nature must be remorselessly transmitted. What man who faces these facts could dare to become a parent! When the word is given its deepest and truest significance, there is disclosed this superlative truth,—salvation must be not only deliverance from the guilt of sin and the power of sin, but also escape from the operation of the law by which a corrupt nature is inherited and of necessity propagated in those who come after us. Nothing less is worth the acceptance; nothing more could be desired. Salvation is deliverance from the law of heredity, so far as it concerns the possession and the necessary transmission of an evil nature. It is the substitution of a pure stock for one that was vitiated and weak. What less than this could St. Paul have had in mind when he wrote, “Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting . . . for the redemption of the body”; or, “The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God?”

Salvation as deliverance from corrupt heredity is not often made prominent, but it requires plain though delicate treatment. The majority of mankind probably come into existence by accident. Beings so born, and endowed with more potencies toward evil than virtue, need nothing so

much as emancipation from the bondage of their parentage. Precisely that seems to be assured through the new birth. The subject of salvation is not here discussed as a Scriptural doctrine; it has relations to what may be called corporate depravity, and those only have occupied our thought. Thus much is forced upon us by a study of human nature. But I cannot forbear one remark suggested by what has already been said. The follower of Christ ought to get more out of his faith than most Christians do. Those who accept the new life from Christ, we believe, are not only actually made new creatures, but are in a new and spiritual succession whose legacy to the future is the very life which they have received from Christ. This is what earnest souls have desired. While I have not intended to treat this subject theologically, perhaps it may not be out of place to call attention to the fact that all Scripture doctrines have an ampler significance the moment they are studied in terms of life. In order to learn what salvation really means, the reading of no sacred book is necessary, but rather a careful examination of the human condition. The depraved human condition, under an inexorable law of reproduction, is one fact; escape from that condition and from the neces-

sity of reproducing evil, to a holy and truly spiritual state, and the privilege of handing that nature on to future generations, is what we mean by salvation, and the proclamation of this truth is the gospel.

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is fundamental in Christianity as that of salvation is central and distinguishing. It means that God is present and efficient in the life of the individual and of the race; that He is the ultimate personality, and that He touches and influences spirits, as the light touches and colours flowers. The law of heredity presents a series of facts which at first seem to leave no place for action on human beings by a personality from the outside; but heredity does not preclude the freedom of men, and therefore we must assume that it does not exclude the free direct action of the Almighty. God moving human spirits according to His own will is God the Holy Spirit. This is one fact. The inquiry of those who accept Christian teaching therefore is: How may the ministry of the Spirit be reconciled with the fact that men receive from those who have gone before them their natural endowments of ability and tendency? Every individual is apparently under inflexible laws, and in the end is what heredity and environment make him; and

yet he is supposed to be responsive to the ministry of the Spirit of God. How may these apparent contradictions be reconciled? This inquiry brings us to another which has not yet been fully answered, — What constitutes human environment? Is it composed only of what we call nature, and of men in their individual and corporate relations? Or, is there, besides these, what may be termed an environment of spirit? The influences which mould the life of man are not all material: the most potent are not light and shade, heat and moisture, but others more impalpable which come from the spirits which men are, and by which all are surrounded. Materialists alone would limit the social environment to material organisms; all others believe that in it are beings whose force is the most potent that has to do with the growth and modification of human personality. Not bodies, but spirits, constitute the social environment. The Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit means not only that each man is surrounded by human spirits, but also that his days are passed in the presence of the absolute, the universal Spirit immanent in the universe. When we speak of environment, we include not only the physical conformation of the country, the brightness or dulness of the skies, the climate, the houses in



which we live, the people among whom we dwell, the institutions of which we are a part, but also the factor, most constant of all, from which none ever escape, — God, the Spirit, whose touch, softer than light, never for a moment is absent from the human spirit. Our inquiry concerns not the relation of a remote sovereign to subjects in a remorseless series of physical causation, but rather the influence of environment on heredity. In preceding chapters it has been already sufficiently emphasized that in the making of man environment is the stronger force. If a child with vile inheritance can be placed where the predominant influences make for moral and spiritual health, the probabilities are that he will grow into virtue and manly strength. If the atmosphere favours intellectual culture, even the most stupid will probably respond to its inspirations. Whatever tendencies may be in the blood, if the environment is spiritual the growth should be toward spirituality. With some it will be slow; with others, swift; with all it should be sure.

But if the Spirit of God is constant and universal, how do any fail to show the transforming influences of divine environment? That inquiry leads back to the question of freedom. Enough here to say that there is no real contradiction.

Light fills the spaces, while a man from ignorance may remain in a cave, or from choice dwell in darkness. The Divine Spirit is everywhere operative, but some, not knowing it, may continue in filth and animalism, and others, fascinated by the flesh, may choose only what will gratify appetite. The Spirit of God is the divine factor in the environment of every human being. If a man chooses, he may resist all improving influences; and if he wills to do so, he can conquer all the vicious tendencies inherited from past generations. Both the human and divine elements in environment may be resisted, and both may be gladly welcomed. That a flower of necessity receives colour from the light, while a man may respond to his environment or not as he chooses, is among the problems which remain to be solved. But the mystery is not so great as at first appears, because the divine is not the sole factor in any man's environment. In proportion as the environment of a man is exclusively good, the probabilities are multiplied that he will be good, whatever his inborn tendencies. Therefore, the real problem which faces all who are engaged in such studies as the present is, how may all human beings be brought under the constant and exclusive influence of a spiritual environment? The best

way to secure what is commonly desired — a baptism of the Holy Spirit — is to put ourselves where the prevailing influences will be spiritual. If the example of the early Christians on the day of Pentecost be cited as illustrating the reverse, I must remind my readers that the Holy Ghost fell on those who were separated temporarily from the world, and who were all together in one place with one mind and one heart, seeking a common blessing. But no general conclusion can be drawn from exceptional illustrations. The Scripture represents the Spirit of God as universal, constant, and for all; and when I am asked, as I have been, How do you reconcile the ministry of the Spirit with the evident facts concerning heredity and environment? I reply, the Spirit is a part of all environment; a power as constant and pervasive as solar energy; therefore the chief privilege of all who have that knowledge, and have yielded to that sway, is to endeavour to help others to see and to respond to the Being who never has to be sought, and who besets all men behind and before. A consideration of questions in dispute in theology is unnecessary now. Whether the Holy Spirit is a person or only a power; whether He is present in the church as not in the world, and whether, since the day of Pentecost He has been efficient

as never before, we need not ask. The vital question for us is, Is there any place left for divine activity when man is explained to be the product of his birth and the circumstances in which he grows? That question I have tried to answer. God is the largest part of every man's environment, and if there were no power of resistance every man would as naturally grow toward holiness as flowers toward light. But holiness implies freedom, and freedom the possibility of resistance, and so, though no man can ever go beyond the reach of the Spirit of God, every man may resist the influences which are intended to make him holy as God is holy.

There remains yet one other aspect of this subject. The Author of nature is not affected by our theories concerning natural causes. Natural causes are only methods for the manifestation of divine energy. Every natural cause is God acting. But the phrase "natural causes" seems to exclude His free action. That free action we have been accustomed to call supernatural, but all causes are, in a measure, supernatural. This is the inquiry, Is there any place left for the interposition of God in the affairs of human life? I reply, there is nothing in the fact that men are the children of their parents,

or that they are modified by their circumstances, to justify the supposition that God, who is a Spirit, may not at any time and in any way interpose new forces in the midst of those which are supposed to be the only normal ones impelling growth. Given a God who is absolutely free, no law can obstruct His activity—not even the eternal law of righteousness, since that is but the shadow of His holiness. Whether the action of these laws ever has been interrupted is a question of fact, not one for speculation. To suppose that the Divine Spirit could not interpose at His own pleasure would be to deny to Him the freedom asserted for man. Further into this question we need not enter. Enough to be assured that no human being will ever be outside the reach of that Holy Spirit of God, who in the beginning brooded on the face of the waters, and whose ministry of sympathy, comfort, conviction of sin, and interpretation of truth will never fail from among men. The hope of the future lies in the realization by individuals that none are ever for a moment forsaken by God, and that the ministry of His Spirit is constant, impartial, pervasive, and never-failing. As fast as men have the vision of God, and are made to appreciate that He is their Sun, the source of

their life, the power to which they may be joined, the goal toward which they are pressing, the transforming power of the divine in their spiritual environment proves more than a match for all the streams of evil inheritance, however far they have come from the past.

The facts heretofore considered suggest a needed modification in the manner of presenting the doctrines of sin, responsibility, and penalty. Science now testifies positively to two tremendous facts. On the one hand, it shows the all but prevailing influence of inherited tendencies; on the other, the inevitable and remorseless result of the violation of law. The problem of individual human destiny, studied in the light of nature alone, is very complicated, and its outcome is heavily shadowed. Heredity impels men strongly and persistently to violation of law, and, when they yield to their impulses, a law of retribution takes them in hand and does not let them go until they have paid the uttermost farthing. "Nature," says Professor Huxley, "always checkmates without haste and without remorse, never overlooking a mistake, or making the slightest allowance for ignorance." The reign of law makes the consequences of violation of law (which is sin) apparently hopeless. It is a dark

picture which science paints for us. Human beings are not what they make themselves, but what they are made. Then they are doomed to long-drawn suffering and death, because they are what they could not help being. This, as has been said, is Calvinism with God left out; and it is the whole story of human life to all who deny the reality of spiritual religion; for with them death, for the individual, ends all. Christianity paints the same picture, but with different colours. It places the brightness of possible escape, and of heavenly endowment and environment, over against this Dantean hell of death in life. The law of retribution is not denied or minimized; but a Power is brought to view that is able to deliver in spite of it. Salvation — all that is implied in the great word *grace* — is in the heart of the Christian faith; but it is salvation for those who accept the terms of salvation, terms strictly in accord with the laws revealed by science. I have said that the law of retribution is not denied; it is time, however, in view of the discoveries of science, that it was defined anew. Retribution is not something arbitrary, but the final result of the choice of the individual; wrong-doing and suffering are inseparably bound together, yet surely the degree to which the

choice was predetermined, and the wrong-doing shared or caused by others, must be taken into account by the Judge of all. And by us, wrong-doers of very different kinds — those who make mistakes and those who deliberately transgress — should not be classed together indiscriminately, either in guilt or in punishment. “It is very singular,” says Dr. Holmes, “that we recognize all the bodily defects that unfit a man for military service, and all the intellectual ones that limit his range of thought; but always talk at him as though all his moral powers were perfect. . . . Some persons talk about the human will as if it stood on a high lookout with plenty of light, and elbow room reaching to the horizon. Doctors are constantly noticing how it is tied up and darkened by inferior organization, by disease, and all sorts of crowding interferences; until they get to look upon Hottentots and Indians — and many of their own race too — as a kind of self-conscious blood-clocks, with very limited power of self-determination; and they find it as hard to hold a child accountable in any moral point of view for inherited bad temper, or tendency to drunkenness, as they would to blame him for inheriting gout or asthma.”<sup>1</sup> Dr. Elam

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in *A Physician's Problems*, Elam, p. 59.



says: "The man who inherits from his parents an impulsive or easily tempted nature and an inert will and judgment, and commits a crime under the influence of strong emotion, can no more be placed in the same category of responsibility with a man of more favourable constitution and temperament, than can a man who steals a loaf under the pangs of starvation, with the merchant who commits a forgery to afford him the means of prolonging a guilty career."<sup>1</sup> All are not alike. The greatest sin is sin against the greatest light and with the greatest ability to resist. He who is weakened and diseased because of the vices of his ancestors reaches the period of accountability with his hands tied. Those who look beyond a universe of forces and laws to a Father whose heart loves all His children must not forget that He bears our griefs and carries our sorrows, and in all our afflictions is afflicted, and that what is inherited, instead of adding to a man's condemnation, if justice and love are not lies, is counted in his favour. Neglect to make allowance for the facts of heredity, and the classing of all transgressors in one common herd, as if all the good belonged above a certain invisible line and all the wicked below it, has

<sup>1</sup> *A Physician's Problems*, Elam, p. 59.

helped to bring the doctrine of retribution into disfavour with many who are ready to say with Whittier:—

“The wrong that pains my soul below  
I dare not throne above;  
I know not of His hate,—I know  
His goodness and His love.”

The fact of retribution is evident and awful enough. It ought to be guarded against the imputation of injustice. It is unjust and unreasonable to count evil-doers who have had a good moral heritage and a good environment no more guilty than those whose minds and hearts are stained and poisoned, and whose wills are weakened, by the vice of many generations. This is not the place for a full discussion of this subject. There is room, however, for the question, whether there is anything Christian, and, indeed, anything but hideous caricature in the way the doctrines of original sin, total depravity, and endless retribution have sometimes been preached, as though the hapless individual, through no action and so no responsibility on his part, were damned into an earthly existence only to be damned a second time into another still more horrible. This unfortunate, and as we believe most untrue, presentation of a great and beneficent truth is responsible for

much unbelief among intelligent classes. What is called irreligion is often only a revolt against gross misrepresentation of a good and gracious God. Much has been said about the responsibility of man to God; it is time that emphasis was placed on the responsibility of God to man. This is not said that wrong-doing may be justified, but that our Father may not be misrepresented. Every man who is true to his own intellectual processes and to his highest intuitions must acknowledge that the more heavily a man is weighed down with evil tendencies when he comes into conscious existence, the more allowance ought to be made for his acts of wrong-doing. If a man's nature is totally depraved from his birth, it is irreverence and impiety to presume that the Deity holds him to the same accountability as the one who has possession of untainted and unweakened powers. Into the vexed question of the penalties of the future I do not enter, except to say that, in that realm of which so little is known, the agency of heredity and environment in the case of every human being will have full allowance. To teach the contrary is to ask thinking men to disregard their reason and stultify their moral intuitions.

Considered by itself, a study of the subject of

heredity leads quickly to pessimism; but, with a proper understanding of it, it may lead to faith, and become an aid in apologetics. Its testimony, strong and unequivocal, is that the progress of the race depends on faith in spiritual things. If there is no revelation from God, and no possibility of knowing God; if there is no soul in man apart from some vital principle of his body; if there is no reasonable basis for belief in life after death, then there is no conceivable motive strong enough to induce men to make a stand against the malign tendencies in their blood or the debasing influences of their environment. It is indeed possible to change the course of heredity, but to do so requires resolution, self-denial, and watchfulness; and, if death ends all, why struggle? If into that sleep no dreams can come, then I, for one, am ready to justify suicide, and to declare that the greatest fools are those who deny themselves any pleasures that will not in this life give them pain.

The future of humanity depends on the question whether there can be brought to bear upon the human will any motive strong enough to induce a man to fight inherited evil, and to put forth efforts to improve the circumstances in which his children and neighbours must live.

That question carries with it the problem of mankind, and that question Christianity meets with the gospel as its full and satisfactory answer. The Christian answer vindicates its claim to be the true one, by what it can do and is doing for men. It unites the three strongest motives that can appeal to a human being. It teaches that men are more than cogs in a machine, or even than individuals in a family; it presents Love pleading with a being able to respond to love and sorely needing it; and it brings to bear the mighty incentive of the endless life to stimulate a true self-love, and also to act as a cause of fear. The appeal is to love, self-love, and to fear. Greater inducements to resist evil tendencies and unfavourable conditions cannot be conceived. These three motives Christianity puts before all men. Most that has been done for man and by man in the way of culture, in the development of charities, in the improvement of the social order, in the inspiration of lofty ideals, has been in response to this appeal. No evidence of the divine origin of Christianity is more convincing than this: it furnishes motives strong enough to inspire the individual and the race to constant effort toward better things. Evolution prophesies a golden age for the race; it has nothing to offer to the indi-

vidual. Perfection which rises on personal annihilation may be a satisfactory theory as applied to the brute creation, but as applied to the troubled world of mankind it is a stone offered to the hungry. Christianity makes progress possible by supplying adequate motives for progress, namely, God, the Father and Lover of all; the possible salvation of all; and the certainty of endless existence, which alone makes God and salvation worth having. If these doctrines are facts, then efforts to uplift humanity are natural, inevitable, and full of promise; if they are not facts, but merely projections of bright fancies, illusions that men have conjured up wherewith to cheat themselves, then, let the poor starve, the quicker the better; let the weak go down, that the strong may have room; let the struggle for existence, with its occasional comedy and universal tragedy, go on as it will. With the burdened millions, then, the happiest man is he who soonest gets off the stage. Progress is conditioned on something to live for. If there is no God, no soul, no life after death, life with a large part of the race, and with increasing years with the greater part of the race, is not worth living. Thus the happiness of man depends upon the validity of the truths which are central in the teaching of Jesus Christ. But that which

always and everywhere makes for blessing cannot be false. We conclude, therefore, that the strongest and only sufficient counter influence to the pessimism which logically results from a one-sided study of this subject is derived from the religion of Christ. The ideas of God and of salvation—the possibility of escape from vicious legacies—and of immortality, were taught not for the first time by Jesus Christ, but it was He who gave them sufficient sanction for the credence of thoughtful men, and made them truths rather than theories in the world; and it is His teaching regarding them which is now, as it has been for eighteen centuries, the surest antidote to the depression which must be felt when we face the awful mysteries by which we are surrounded.

R

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE PROBLEM OF THE PERSON OF CHRIST

IN studying the relation of heredity to the various social and theological problems we come quickly to the inquiry, How do you account for Jesus Christ? Laying aside speculation, and considering only facts which are uncontested by all who grant the historical accuracy of the Gospels, how is the phenomenal life and career of Jesus of Nazareth to be explained? To make some suggestions toward an answer to this question is the object of this chapter.

It will be well briefly to recall a few of the replies which have been given to our inquiry. Some writers have been satisfied to say, He was a unique spiritual genius. Genius can never be accounted for by heredity, and the problem in no way differs from that which we face when asked to account for Dante, Luther, Goethe, Shakespeare, and Shelley. Men of genius are always outside all categories. They are what the biologists would call "sports."

Another class satisfy themselves and attempt to



satisfy others by simply answering, He was not a man, and laws usually applicable to humanity have no relation to Him. He was God. Argument, of course, is of no avail with those who have no difficulties to be removed; but for most of the world such a reply is without value.

Still another class, of which Ernest Renan is perhaps the most plausible representative, attempt to explain the unique personality of Jesus by the environment in which He was placed. His ethical teaching, it is said, was His legacy from the prophets; with the very air He inhaled lofty spiritual ideals; He was the consummate flower of Judaism, growing in what was practically the centre of the world and of the ages. The various influences of intellectual and spiritual atmosphere, the shining hopes of a people long trained to think divine thoughts, left their impress upon His sensitive spirit, and account for all that was peculiar in His teaching and in Himself, except that impalpable something which we call genius. But this explanation leaves out of account all that was most characteristic of Jesus.

None of these answers are sufficient. To say that He was only a supreme spiritual genius is to ignore the simplest facts of His life; while to be content to say that He was singularly sensitive

to the intellectual and spiritual atmosphere and to the ideals of His age, is to leave untouched the question, Where did that man, who was affected by such influences as no other who ever lived, get His sensitive nature?

Physically Jesus was a Jew, and probably resembled other Jews, although all the ideals of the artists, and all the traditions concerning Him, represent Him as having nothing characteristically national in His appearance. No conclusion, however, can be drawn from this fact, and we grant that in physical traits He was like other men of His nation and time. When we come to His personality as manifested in His ethical teachings, His ideals for himself and for humanity, His intuitions of things unseen and infinite, His reversals of standards of thought and conduct which had behind them the authority of antiquity, then the importance of our inquiry appears. Renan says: "This nature at once smiling and grand was the whole education of Jesus. He learned to read and write, doubtless, according to the method of the East, which consists in putting into the hands of the child a book, from which he repeats in concert with his little school-fellows until he knows it by heart. It is doubtful, however, whether He really understood the Hebrew

writings in their original tongue.”<sup>1</sup> “It is not probable that He knew Greek.”<sup>2</sup> Our problem is this, How do we account for this man whose whole education was derived from “nature smiling and grand;” who probably knew neither Hebrew nor Greek, and yet who has taught wisdom and religion to the highest and lowest alike from His time until our own? He had a spiritual insight of a finer and truer quality than any other man of His race or of any other race, so far as we know, ever possessed. He had an unparalleled consciousness of God. Something like that consciousness had been in others. Moses is represented as having seen the divine glory in the bush that burned but was not consumed; Isaiah said that he saw the Lord, and many others had similar experiences; but their visions, or glimpses, or intuitions, were little like the sight of Jesus, who seemed to live with God, whom with perfect naturalness He called His Father. The more carefully this fact is examined, the more clearly it is seen to be without parallel. His words concerning the Deity were evidently the voice of personal experience. He speaks as one who sees God, while others speak as those who

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Jesus*, Renan, p. 72.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 73.

have heard about God, or who have drawn inferences concerning Him as the result of rational processes. There is a quality of intimacy and acquaintance with the Deity in the words of Jesus unlike the awe-struck humiliation of Isaiah, or the inspired meditation of the Psalmist. He was a Jew, and yet His sympathy was wide as humanity. Occasionally the greatest of the prophets had visions of a kingdom coterminous with humanity, but those visions were of far-off times and dim and uncertain in details. Jesus was born in Judea, and yet was not a Jew. All His ancestry was in one category; He seemed to belong in an entirely different one. Every prejudice of His nation against other nations was absent from Him. The whole world was his fatherland, and all men who loved God and their fellow-men were His brethren. This may not seem remarkable until it is remembered that race prejudices are almost unconquerable. His people were intensely nationalistic and narrow; He was positively humanistic and broad. His people imagined themselves to be the favourites of the Almighty; He declared that all were favourites who did right and obeyed God. His reputed father and mother were citizens of Judea; He was a citizen of the world. Where did those qualities come from? We search in vain for

anything like them among His great ancestors. Isaiah was nearest like Him, but He was far away; and while Isaiah spoke glowing words about a time when sectional and national lines would go down, he himself was an intense patriot.

The unique characteristics of Jesus become more apparent when His teaching is examined in detail. He was surrounded by those who were slaves of the letter, who magnified the unessential; but He spoke one clear message concerning the supremacy of the spirit. Not the letter, but the spirit; not the form, but the substance; not the outward conduct, but the inner state of the heart, according to His teaching, are the tests of character. He still further reversed the teaching of His age. Revenge against enemies had been considered almost a national virtue. He lived near to a great Roman highway, and must have been familiar with the ethical teachings which followed the Roman armies. The idea of love to enemies, that no man could possess a holy character until he could say that he loved those who did him evil, was utterly foreign to His nation and to the atmosphere in which He lived. To the Jews the Romans were brutal dogs, and to the Romans the Jews were a nation of cringing, sneaking, money-loving hypocrites. Yet in the midst

of such surroundings arose this man who had no training but that of nature and of the Jewish and Roman environment in which His days were passed. He taught the conditions to which the world is slowly but surely approximating. When all the good in all the ideals of the philosophers and social reformers is realized, therein will be only what Jesus taught concerning the value of man, and his relations to his fellow-men and to the universe. He was utterly unlike the men of His time in His relation to God; in His sympathies, which were wide as the world; in the fact that He reversed almost all the teaching with which He was familiar. Of course there were probably lessons that came out of the pure heart of that young mother which strangely influenced His career, but what, and how many they were, we may not know. Enough for us that so far as we can understand He was as utterly unlike His fellow-men and His time as a great golden-hearted lily is unlike the muck of a mountain lake in which it grows.

To all these facts must be added another, — His parents were poor. He was compelled to work with His hands for a livelihood. The silent years in the life of Jesus were without doubt passed as the same years were passed by others of His

countrymen of the same station in life. He was acquainted with drudgery. This is undisputed. There was little time for intellectual growth. Others have been trained in the schools; by the path of meditation, like Buddha, or of dialectics, like Plato, they have learned the lessons which lie deep in our common humanity; but Jesus died at about the age that most find themselves qualified for strong thinking. He knew few books, probably none but the Old Testament and some commentaries upon it. He had relatively few opportunities to feel the influence of the great world-currents of thought, and if He had come into touch with them He would have had little time to study their significance. No one else situated as He was has spoken such thoughts or had such visions. Philo and Josephus may be cited, but, although Jews, both had the advantages of intellectual training and travel. All the treasures of Alexandrian libraries were enjoyed by at least one of them. What they learned by investigation, association with men, and the companionship of literature, the young peasant knew by intuition; with all that was valuable in their training and investigation, Jesus seemed to have been possessed from His birth. He could not have been taught this by others. That were to suppose

a miracle as strange as any of those which a too credulous church has woven around His infancy.

Amid these and similar historical conditions His days were passed. Could His environment have made Him? Can it explain Him? "There was a fine fitness in His being a Jew, a Son of Abraham, the Hebrew. The supreme religious person of the race fitly came from its most religious family. He was the personification of its genius, the heir of its work. It had created the history that made Him possible, the men to whom He was intelligible and through whom He could be revealed to the world. But He transcended its powers of production; He was more and greater than its native energies could create. The splendid religious genius of Israel had issued in Judaism, and which of its two great parties could produce a Christ? The Sadducees would not own Him. He belonged to no ruling family, had no priestly blood in His veins; was one whose very meddling with religion deserved nothing less than death. And Pharisaism was as incapable of forming Him. . . . It was fundamentally increative, radically infertile. . . . All its wisdom is the wisdom of the interpreter; all its goodness the goodness of the school. But Jesus is throughout the very antithesis and contradiction of Pharisaism. . . . His historical



conditions, while equal to the making of a Rabbi, were not equal to the creation of a Universal Teacher.”<sup>1</sup> The force of this reasoning is still more evident when, leaving the historical conditions which were the environment of Jesus, we come to our own time. We live in the splendour of an age which inherits the intellectual treasures of Greece; the religious riches of the Hebrew people, in addition to all the teaching and influence of Jesus, and of those whose lives were moulded by personal contact with Him, as well as all the development of the Christian centuries. We live in circumstances which make the world practically one; when the wealth of the intellect of all lands and ages, and all motives toward religion, are the common possessions of every child in even the most humble circumstances. And yet, with the accumulated and improved heredity, and the influence of the better environment, there have been none born since Jesus whom the world thinks of comparing with Him. No other land, no other civilization, no other religion, nor all combined, after nearly two thousand years of continued evolution, have produced another Master who in the slightest degree dims the glory of the young Carpenter of Nazareth. This is a fact worthy of considerate attention.

<sup>1</sup> *Studies in the Life of Christ*, Fairbairn, pp. 27, 28.

But this is not all. By common consent Jesus has been the spiritual teacher of all the ages since His words were known. Even Strauss does not hesitate to say: "And among these improvers of the ideal of humanity, Jesus stands at all events in the first class. He introduced features into it which were wanting to it before, or had continued undeveloped; reduced the dimensions of others which prevented its universal application; imported to it, by the religious aspect which He gave it, a more lofty consecration, and bestowed upon it, by embodying it in His own person, the most vital warmth; while the religious society which took its rise from Him provided for this ideal the widest acceptance among mankind."<sup>1</sup> Remember that, after all the pruning which this critic gives to the Gospel narrative, this is his conclusion concerning what beyond doubt must be accorded to the person of the historic Jesus.

Renan did not speak any too strongly when he wrote of Jesus as "the incomparable man to whom the universal conscience has decreed the title of Son of God, and that with justice, since He caused religion to take a step in advance incomparably greater than any other in the past and probably than any yet to come."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *New Life of Jesus*, Strauss, Vol. II. p. 437.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Jesus*, Renan, p. 64.

Has any other spiritual or social teacher taken one step in advance of Jesus in His teaching concerning God, concerning duty, concerning the ideal for the individual and society? If so, I am ignorant of his name. Moreover, His teaching is reverently and gratefully acknowledged to be the inspiration of nearly all the advanced thought of our time, as it has been of every era since He became well known. There is a large difference of opinion in the interpretation of His teachings, but little concerning their value and their leadership toward the far-away goal of humanity. Indeed He has both set the goal, and is leading the movement toward the prize. Whatever the theory concerning the person of Jesus, few would deny that with Him a new era opened in history. He was the germ of a new spiritual evolution. There is a deep reason for the unanimity with which modern civilization dates all events from His birth. Principal Caird closes his work on "The Evolution of Religion" with these words: "This long, unhasting process of the evolution of religion is itself the best evidence we can have that there is a divine meaning in the world, and that mankind have not laid the sacrifice of their efforts and their thoughts, their prayers and their tears, upon the altar of an unknown or unknow-

able God." That sentiment derives most of its significance from the fact that Jesus has lived. Whether He be considered as the germ of a new evolution, or as the One who more than any other has led the movement of humanity toward the divine, matters little in our present discussion.

There is still another characteristic of the teaching of Jesus which must not be overlooked. It adjusts itself to all times and conditions. This is not the quality of "depth" which has made it the study and inspiration of subsequent ages, but something altogether different. His teachings are principles of universal application, so that when an Oriental receives them he thinks of Jesus as "The Oriental Christ," and when Occidentals study them they think of Him as belonging to the West. This element of adjustability, while difficult of definition, is as real as any force in the history of thought. If one is asked, What was the attitude of Jesus toward the problems which are vexing our time? the reply would be, Our problems are our own. They did not then exist. They are the product of millions of forces, not the least of which are the discoveries of science. And yet all must confess that the teachings of Jesus have vital relation to nineteenth-century problems, and that

they are capable of solution only by those who approach them in His spirit and apply to them the truth which He revealed. His ethics are principles, not laws. Laws have relation to times and places; principles adjust themselves to all times and all places.

Concerning the facts thus far enumerated, there is little, if any, disagreement among those who have tried to solve the problem of the person of Jesus. We have not assumed His sinlessness or His divinity; we have assumed nothing but the substantial historical accuracy of the Gospels. A careful study of them shows us a man who lived in the daily consciousness of God as Father; who believed He was on intimate terms with the Deity; who never argued or attempted to prove anything, but simply said what He saw; and His words concerning the Being behind the visible universe whom men call God, have been the most convincing and satisfying yet spoken by philosopher, moralist, or seer. "He turned the whole mighty current of human history. He planted himself deep in the inmost soul of things, and this great Christendom is throbbing with the breath of His life to this hour. And not only do our Christianities, and Protestant Reformations, and our Landings of Pilgrims taking pos-

session of new worlds and dedicating them *Christo et Ecclesiæ*, and our Declarations of human rights, and our suppressions of huge rebellions against God and man, and whole races emancipated,—not only do these bear witness that Jesus communed with the heart of the world until it burned again; but even these wild vagaries of the imagination, these doctrines of miraculous and immaculate conceptions, and trinities, and double natures, and infinite atonements, and I know not what,—these likewise show what a hand of power must have been laid upon the inmost springs of human thought and feeling by Him who has given occasion to such extravagant speculations.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, more than thirty years ago, wrote one of the ablest and most conservative of Unitarian divines. Those who do not acknowledge the deity of Jesus Christ, as simple students of religion and history readily and gratefully grant all the facts essential to our argument at this time.

Whoever that Nazarene peasant was, He uttered the superlative message concerning the Deity. And this man who died young without intellectual or spiritual training; so far as we know, without the revelations which come to most sen-

<sup>1</sup> Introduction to Schenkel's *Character of Jesus*, by Dr. W. H. Furness, Vol. I. p. x.

sitive souls through long-continued sorrow and pain; who had no teacher but nature, and few if any books but the Old Testament; who was unknown to the world, and who by experience knew not the world, has been "the Great Teacher" from His day to our own. He reversed the ethical and political standards of the past; He antagonized the ideals of His nation; He proved Himself a brother in humanity; He spoke words which the ages have heeded, in language which the ages have loved; and, when a mere youth having, by devotion to what He held to be true, brought His own fate on Himself, He disappeared from history as a criminal—as do all men who dare to face and antagonize the established order.

The details as to the change of social customs and ideals through His influence, and as to the debt of civilization to Him, are not within the limits of this discussion. The record is written, and all who will may read. Our one question is, Can this unique Being be accounted for by heredity and environment? If not, there will remain another question about which we have positive convictions, but to which we shall not at this time attempt an answer.

One of two forms of heredity must be invoked by those who would explain the person of Jesus

as they account for other men, viz. Direct Heredity, or Atavism. But when we turn from this young man, who was the world's Great Teacher, to His mother, Mary, and His reputed father, Joseph, there is nothing whatever in them to indicate that they were His parents. Art, poetry, and the religious spirit have idealized Mary, but when we leave those ideal realms and come to the common world of fact, we find nothing remarkable in her. Raphael and Murillo have painted her as surpassingly beautiful and spiritual, but history shows nothing unique, either in her appearance or her character. She differed not greatly from other peasant maidens of the land and time. Neither Joseph nor Mary apparently were possessed of exceptional ability or remarkable spiritual insight. It may be said that comparatively little is known of women in our own time, that probably in that time they lived in still greater seclusion, and that therefore it is entirely conceivable that Mary may have been a spiritual genius, as the mother of Goethe was an intellectual genius. If that were true, it would be expected that some indication of the fact would appear in her other children, but they were, with one possible exception, very commonplace. They had no appreciation of Jesus, and showed no signs of relationship to Him.



If there was any such genius, it must have come by way of His mother, and there is no evidence that she was possessed either of exceptional character, exceptional ability, or exceptional spiritual insight. The Roman Church has almost apotheosized Mary, but it must not be forgotten that the process began with Jesus. From what He was, an inference was drawn concerning what His mother must have been. If, however, there had been nothing known of Jesus, and nothing except what is recorded in the New Testament known about Mary, there is no probability that from the knowledge of the mother the Church would have created its claims concerning the unique character and personality of the Son. In His reputed parents is seen nothing of those elements of spiritual and intellectual power which made Jesus the Teacher and the Exemplar of succeeding centuries.

But not only was Jesus unlike Joseph and Mary; He was also without the slightest resemblance, in all that constituted His personality, to the other members of their family. Other children were born to those peasants, and all of them were as unlike Jesus as were Joseph and Mary. Napoleon was a transcendent genius, but he resembled his mother in face, figure, and char-

acter; and while he towered above his family as a mountain above its foothills, yet there was an evident family resemblance, and in him all the distinguishing traits of the family were present in superlative growth. Not so in that household of Nazareth. The only other one of its members known to the world was James—but how unlike Jesus he was! “The tendencies of this James were, according to the notices of him by the Apostle Paul, strictly Judaistic and in ecclesiastical tradition he is represented as having lived . . . as a perfect Essenico-Ebionitish saint, in his ascetic conduct more resembling John the Baptist than Jesus. The probability that he was not the real brother, but only a cousin of Jesus, has been attempted to be made out from the fact that the names of James and Joses, which the Nazarenes give as the names of two brothers of Jesus, are stated elsewhere by Matthew (xxvii. 56) to be those of two sons of another Mary, who is taken to be the same person as John (xix. 25) designates as the sister of the mother of Jesus.”<sup>1</sup> In reply it may be said that brothers often differ. True; yet usually not in all their characteristics but only in the more prominent ones, while in others they strikingly resemble each other. We have not the

<sup>1</sup> *New Life of Jesus*, Strauss, Vol. I. p. 260.

data for positive assertion, but so far as we know, these brothers resembled one another in nothing. To be sure, James became a Christian, and was Bishop of Jerusalem, but his conception of Christianity was like that of the Baptist rather than like that of Jesus. The argument becomes cumulative when it is remembered that not only were Jesus and James unlike, but that they were the most alike of any of the family. This argument is significant. Jesus, if such a figure may be allowed in that Galilean household, was like a swan in a brood of chickens; or, better perhaps, like a prince in a household of peasants. A study of the family of Joseph and Mary, so far as it is known, furnishes no clew to the personality of Jesus. It only complicates the problem which we face when we endeavour to account for Him as the consummate flower of His family and His race.

If we hold to the theory that He was the natural child of Joseph and Mary, the conclusion is inevitable — either He was a genius, and to be regarded as “sports” are regarded in biology, or He is the result of atavism. According to the theory of atavism, the characteristics of an individual are not derived from his parents, but from some remote ancestors. But here we get no light. What marvellous spiritual prodigies may have

lived in Judea and been hidden somewhere in the centuries before Jesus was born we know not; but it is hard to believe that any such had existence, since none could have lived in circumstances more unfavourable for their manifestation than Jesus Himself. From that carpenter's home in Nazareth He became the world's Teacher and Leader toward the divine, and if He had ancestors possessed of the same superlative qualities, why did not one of them in five hundred years exert influence enough to cause a ripple on the surface of Jewish society? If He is to be accounted for by atavism, when and where did the ancestor live whom He resembled? No such name appears anywhere in the long history of the Jewish people. Moreover, Jesus was unlike the heroes of His nation. Isaiah prophesied the coming of an ideal king, but to him that king was to rule on an earthly throne, and would be little like the sovereign in the realm of spirit which Jesus has proved Himself. As we have already noted, his countrymen were intensely nationalistic; Jesus was universal in His sympathies. They looked for the day when the world would revolve around Mount Zion; He, when all men would be united in the worship of the one God who is a Spirit. He belonged to the world at large which He had never

seen; they to the nation of which they were bigoted partisans. If we try to account for Him by atavism, we have to imagine the existence of ancestors of whom there is no historical record.

There remains yet one other possible explanation which by some is seriously and even reverently advanced. It is said Jesus was unique; the loftiest height ever reached by humanity; "the one whose worship will grow young without ceasing," but He was what the biologists call a "sport." Let us treat this theory with the respect which it deserves. We freely grant that nothing should ever be ascribed to the supernatural which admits of a natural interpretation. What is a "sport?" In science it is "an animal or plant, or any part of one, that varies suddenly or singularly from the normal type or structure, and is usually of transient character and not perpetuated. A sport is generally an individual variation of apparently spontaneous origin." (Century Dictionary.) Only in this way can we account for the men of supreme genius, like Luther, Shakespeare, Shelley, and Keats. But when this explanation is applied to Jesus, does it satisfy? It may be the prejudice of long years of Christian training, but for one I must pronounce it utterly unsatisfactory. I cannot

co-ordinate Jesus even with the men of "supreme genius." If any are content to accept this explanation of that marvellous personality whose "story will melt the noblest hearts" as long as men love righteousness and truth they must surely be allowed the privilege, while with equal earnestness we who also desire to be loyal to the truth find in Him qualities which forbid His classification even with men of the loftiest genius. In the first place, the number of such men who remain unaccounted for after their mothers are known as well as their fathers is not large. But the mother of Jesus is known as well as the mothers of most ancients, and nothing either in the New Testament records or in authentic tradition warrants her classification among the great and silent souls who have swayed the world through their sons. Indeed, who shall constitute the list of supreme and utterly lonely men of genius who, intellectually and spiritually, are like Melchizedek, without father and without mother? Is there any name which forces itself upon attention except that of Shakespeare? And perhaps it would be better to wait until the question whether the real genius was Shakespeare or Bacon is settled before drawing any very weighty inferences from him.

In this study it will be observed that nowhere

has there been the slightest mention of what are so generally recognized as the miraculous elements in the person and career of Jesus of Nazareth. Those lie entirely outside the field of our investigation. If, however, the validity of His miracles is granted, it becomes still more evident that the presence of Jesus in the world cannot be explained as we explain that of other, even of most exceptional men. I have great sympathy with Herder as interpreted by Strauss. "Is it necessary," asks Herder, "that fire should have fallen from heaven two thousand years ago in order to enable us to see the light of the sun at this day? Must the laws of nature have been arrested in order to convince us now of the intrinsic truth, beauty, and necessity of Christ's moral kingdom? Let us rather thank God that this kingdom exists, and, instead of brooding over miracles, try to comprehend its true nature; its nature itself must be its evidence to our minds, else all the miracles and prophecies ever wrought or accomplished are for us unsaid, unwrought, unprofitable."<sup>1</sup> The unique character and work of Jesus are not at all dependent on the miraculous elements in the story of His life, and I have chosen to omit them altogether from this study. The incontestable facts

<sup>1</sup> *New Life of Jesus*, Strauss, Vol. I. p. 10.

are quite wonderful enough to start the inquiry which is here made; the facts not only of the man Jesus when He lived in Judea and Galilee, but also of His posthumous ministry, and His influence which has been so pervasive and vital for nineteen centuries.

In character, in spiritual insight, in knowledge of man, and of what all men feel must be the truth of God; in ability to see into the very heart of "human life's mystery" and to penetrate the depth of humanity's need; in ability to speak the word which His own age needed and all ages since have needed, this Galilean peasant, whose youth and young manhood were filled with monotonous toil; who had never travelled; who knew few if any books; who had no teacher but a sweet and gracious mother, has surpassed all the ideal heroes. In a public ministry of only a few months He transcended the wisdom of the philosophers, the intellectual and spiritual forces of the universities, and, more than any other, led men — all men, men of the most diverse tastes and prejudices — toward God. It is impossible for me to think that nature, even as glorious as that in which His youth was spent, taught Him all these lessons. No great poet or artist ever came from the midst of such scenery. If He is explained by natural



environment, the question remains, Why has nature produced no successor to Jesus? Switzerland and Thibet have contributed no names to the list of the world's intellectual and spiritual leaders, or even to that of her great artists and poets. Natural environment influences the body, not much the intellectual and spiritual environment. But around this Man the Oriental and the Occidental alike gather, and each seems to find in Him a brother, a teacher, and a friend.

There have been many attempts to explain the character and personality of Jesus. My object is not to add another to that list, but rather to show that the data do not exist which warrant any one in attempting to classify Him with other men as a product of heredity and environment. He seems, indeed, to have been without father and without mother. Whoever He was, and whatever the explanation of His presence on this earth of ours, He was an exception among men; not in such a sense as to break the continuity of humanity, but clearly to make it impossible to account for Him as we account for heroes and men of genius. If, now, any of my readers desire to push their questioning farther, and ask, How, then, do you explain His presence? I must reply that this is not a book

on theology. Such questions belong to the sphere of theology. It is enough here to show that the usual theories fail when applied to Jesus of Nazareth. For myself, it is easier and in every way more satisfactory to believe that the Man Jesus was chosen of God to manifest His glory unto men, as no other man ever was; to believe that the unique Man was prepared by birth and discipline for His unique and awful service, than to attempt to classify Him with Homer and Plato, Dante and Shakespeare, even if He be given the highest place among all who have influenced and taught and served the race. It is enough here, however, to show that so far as can be seen He was not the sole product of the narrow and bigoted people among whom He was born; and that the serene skies above Nazareth, His toiling and oppressed countrymen, His life as a working carpenter, and the tyrannical rule of the conquering Romans, could not have made Him the supreme spiritual Teacher and Leader, the One who has done most to lead humanity toward the divine.

What, then, shall we believe? I prefer to go to my New Testament for my answer, and since this book is not intended to solve such problems, to the New Testament I must send my readers

for their answer. For myself, I am satisfied that there is a profound and glorious truth in these words spoken to Mary by the Angel of the Annunciation: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee; and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; wherefore also that which is to be born shall be called holy, the Son of God." (Luke i. 35.)

## CONCLUSION

IN this book I have tried to set forth clearly and fairly some facts illustrating the relation of the laws of heredity and of environment to human life, human conduct, and human belief, including religious life and thought. Among the matters emphasized as of greatest importance are these:

However bad the vital inheritance, it may be modified and changed by good environment.

Therefore it is the duty of Christian workers and thinkers to be very careful that those whom they would help to elevate and save have not only a correct presentation of truth, but also a helpful environment to minister to the growth of that truth.

The influence of natural causes on the will is great and constant, but the testimony of consciousness is in favour of human freedom, and that testimony is final.

Until Christian philosophy has achieved a new and profounder adjustment of the facts of life to the consciousness of human freedom, the consciousness of responsibility, the innate recog-

nition of the "ought" and "ought not," afford a sufficient basis for appeals to men not to yield themselves as slaves to heredity. Vice, pauperism, and crime will not be eradicated until they are regarded as symptoms of a deep and deadly disease, the tendency to which is remorselessly transmitted, and which can be helpfully treated only by a radical and long-continued change in environment.

All theories of education should be tested by the facts which have been brought out in this discussion, it being the chief credential of the new education that it studies the child before it gives the child anything to study.

The welfare and perpetuity of the home require a wise and careful consideration of the two subjects, heredity and environment, in order that those not properly mated may never be married, and that parents may adapt the training of their children to their individual peculiarities.

That faith alone which of all the religions of the world supplies motives sufficient to inspire even the most degraded to rise against and triumph over evil heritage, may be presumed to rest on an immovable foundation. It has the strongest of possible arguments in its favour, the argument of redeemed human lives.

Finally, the natural laws of which we have been treating have one signal exception; one supreme figure stands above their utmost reach. Whatever may be the conclusion concerning other men, it is impossible to account for the personality of Jesus of Nazareth by either heredity or environment, or by both. Whether He be human or divine, or both in one, He is in the history of the race absolutely and unapproachably unique.

The study of these questions which force themselves so constantly upon the thought of all who observe with any care the facts of life is not without its beneficial effect. He who knows what men are, and what their tendencies are, will not easily misjudge his brother. The growth of that charity which thinketh no evil is greatly stimulated by accurate knowledge of our fellow-men and of the conditions in which their lives are passed.

He who understands the vitality of an evil act will hesitate long before he does that which can never be recalled, and which, like Frankenstein, may return again and again to disturb and make miserable the author of its being. If we could retain within ourselves the consequences of our misdeeds, we might perhaps be willing to take the chances as to their results; but no man liveth to

himself, and the indiscretions of youth and the malice of age alike reach far into the future, and determine the tendencies of those whom we shall never see until we stand face to face with them in the judgment-day.

But evil, after all, has in itself the seeds of its own decay. In a far truer sense than we often dream "the wages of sin is death." On the other hand, righteousness, and that alone, has in itself the assurance of endless growth. The law of reproduction for good reaches as far as the law of reproduction for evil, and while evil tends to death, good has the promise of eternal life. The hope of the future is in "the outpopulating power of a Christian stock." Whatever the tendencies in humanity, and wherever they come from, the evolution of history points toward a time when man will be "no longer half akin to brute;" when that law of nature whose function is the conservation of that which has come from the past will receive and transmit to the future only that which will make for blessing. No man need despair because of his ancestry; no one by birth is altogether bad; in every one are tendencies toward holiness which will surely assert themselves if the opportunity is given; therefore the endeavour of all should be to live so constantly in

the environment of God that purity and virtue, light and love, may grow as naturally and surely from the evil conditions of their lives as lilies and roses from the soil of their gardens. Nature is beneficent, and all her laws are ministers of love — this is the gospel which is written so clearly in the history of the race that all who will may read.

In the Vatican Gallery in Rome is the famous antique group, Laocoön and his sons in the coils of the serpents. The awful agony of the men, depicted in the straining and protuberant muscles, the look of despair, the futile fight against the inevitable, the slimy folds and hissing tongues of the monsters, are real as life and terrible as death. This group has been and by many is still regarded as a true symbol of human existence. To them the serpents which have come up out of the sea of unfathomable mystery which surrounds our mortal life are the two great facts of heredity and environment, and in their silent and remorseless embrace, with griefs, struggles, agonies, despairs unutterable, millions yearly are crushed, and crushed at length to death; and still the slimy folds coil on and on through the centuries, staining the earth with tears and blood.

Such is life to those who never look beyond the



material world. Another group in Rome is to my mind truer to the facts of human life, albeit some of the greatest of those facts are in the future. In the Church of the Cappuchini is Guido's painting of St. Michael and the Dragon. Upon the angel's face the sunlight rests. Eternal youth flashes from his eyes and breathes from his body; beneath his feet, prostrate and helpless, is the dragon, with the spear of light at his head. It is the victory of good over evil. The marble group is the symbol of what life would be without God revealed in Christ, and of what it now seems to those who have no faith; the painting is the symbol of what it is to men of spiritual vision. Between the two symbols stretch, no doubt, ages of toil and conflict, of struggle and death; but nature's laws are not merciless; they are expressions of Him who Himself is love; and sometime eternal Love will realize the ideal depicted in the painting. Sometime the race, purified and renewed by vital relations with Him who is the life, will bless the sweep and universality of that law which often now works so mysteriously and fatefully, the law which conserves the blessings of the generations, accumulates them, and sends them down in streams of light to make glad generations yet to come. Then what seem now to the faith-

less to be serpents shall be regarded as angels of mercy, whose beneficent ministry will never fail, as slowly but surely they lead the race toward the "one far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves," in which every man and all men shall have reached the stature of the fullness of Christ.

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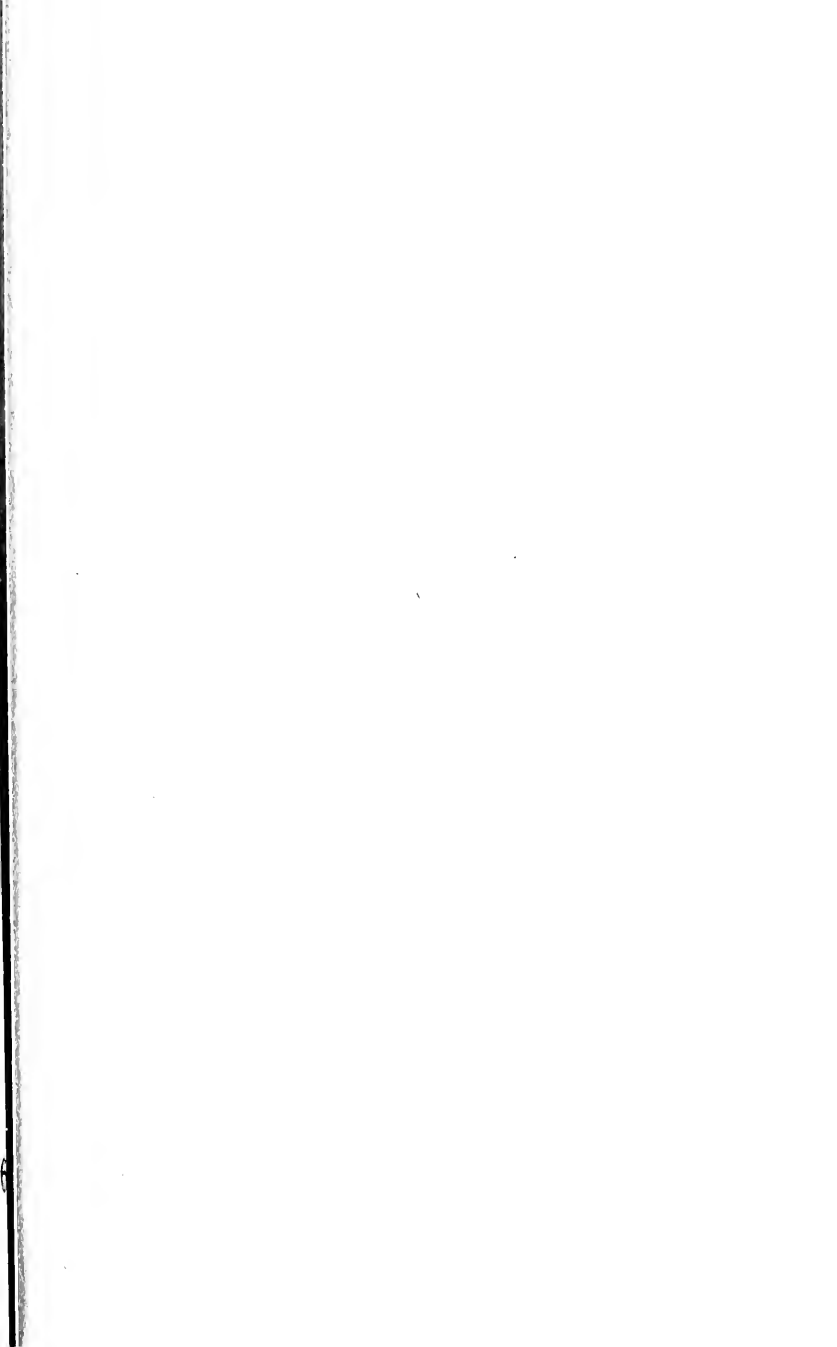
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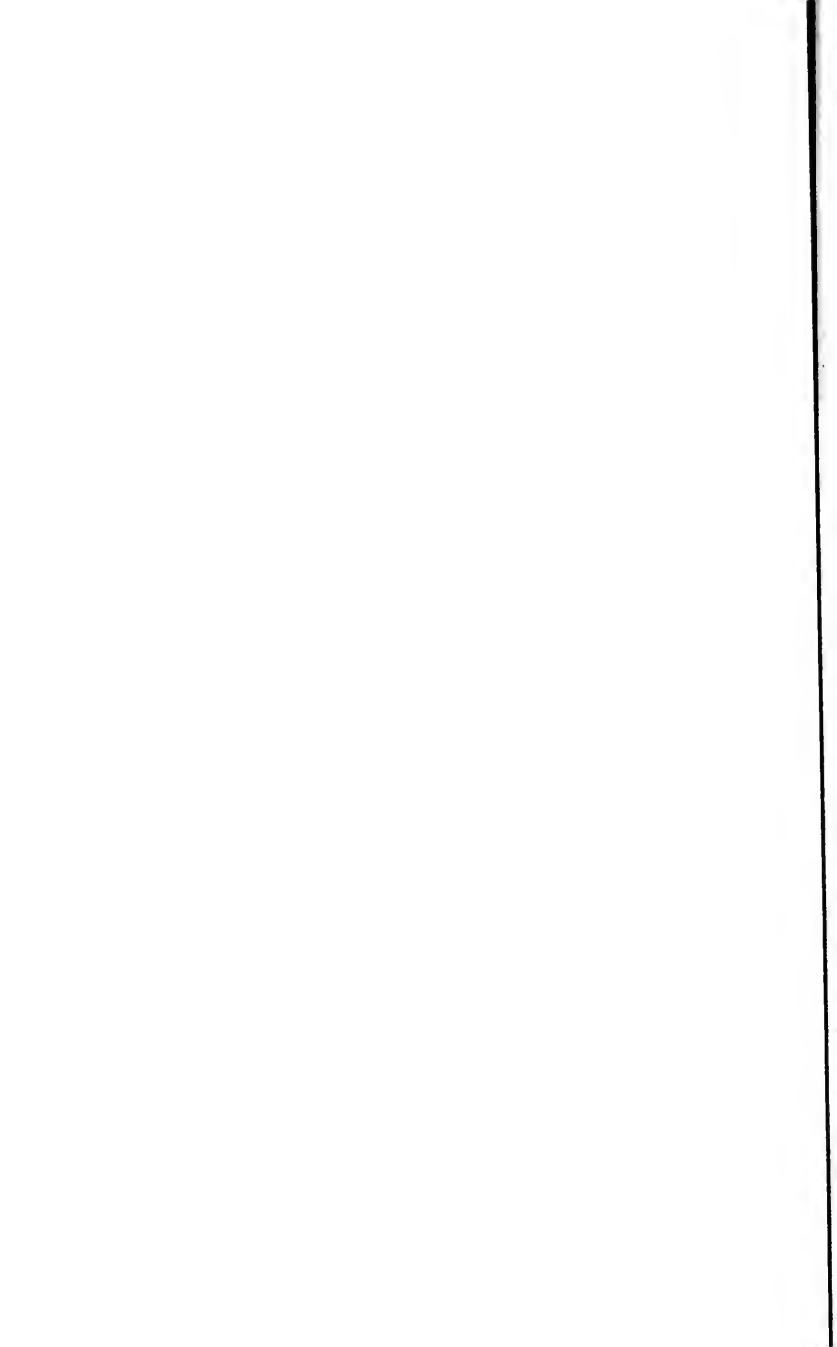
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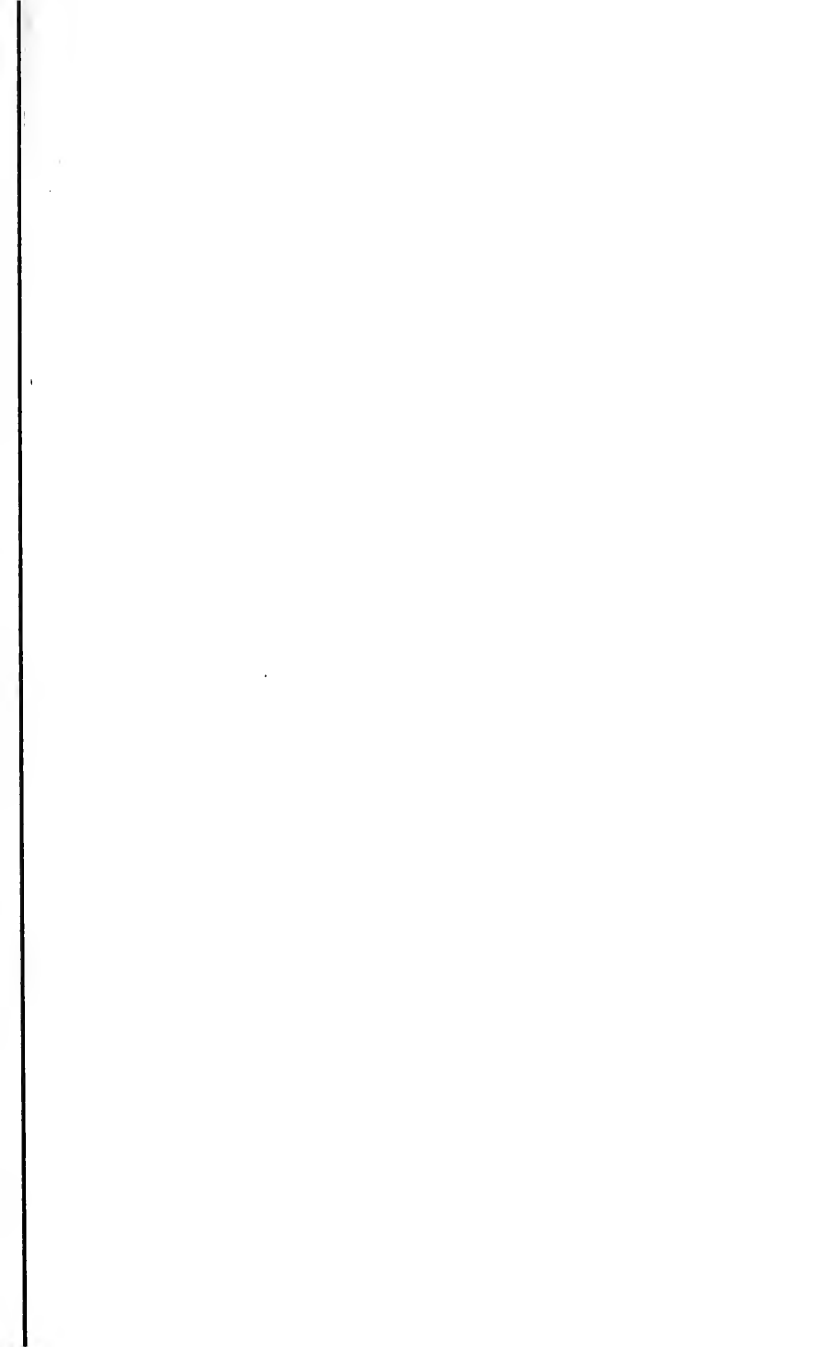
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