

A BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN GENETIC ASSOCIATION FOR RESEARCHES IN HEREDITY

INSPIRED BY THE THOUGHT THAT "IT IS ONLY BY A GREATER KNOWLEDGE AND APPLICATION OF THE LAWS OF LIFE AND GROWTH THAT MAN CAN HOPE TO HASTEN HIS PROGRESS UPWARD"

THE strongest human instinct is that which perpetuates the race, and the highest of human ideals is the welfare of posterity. It is not lack of interest but lack of knowledge that interferes with eugenic progress. Not many people see the need, and there are very few who have a practical conception of the possibilities of improvement, to serve as a basis of constructive action. Charities and philanthropies of many kinds have had rich endowments for centuries, and especially "works of mercy" to care for the diseased or defective whose misfortunes wring our hearts. Few bequests have been made to increase the knowledge of heredity, although more knowledge is the fundamental need. Research in many subjects is being fostered by large donations, including subjects as far from any practical human interest as the remotest stars or the world of departed spirits. Yet we expect that our children and our children's children will go on living in this world, and we believe that the world will be a better or a worse place for posterity in proportion as right values of human life are established. The general lack of interest and support for human improvement renders it the more important that those who have deeper insight and keener sense of eugenic responsibility should seek for more effective ways of establishing and widening the influence of eugenic ideas.

The need of establishing better ideals of human welfare may be considered as the keynote of a remarkable testament received recently by the American Genetic Association. The way of making the bequest and the reasons that are given lend so much interest and value to this document that the testator has been requested to allow some parts of it to be published,

and has given his consent, saying that "If anything I have written could be made the means of arousing new interest in any quarter I would be highly pleased."

Passing over the sections of the will that relate to appointment of trustees, settlement of obligations and personal bequests, the sections that explain the eugenic and educational convictions of the testator are as follows:

"I hereby give and bequeath unto the American Genetic Association located in the City of Washington, District of Columbia, the sum of ten thousand dollars, to be invested and reinvested by the Council of said Association and the net income therefrom to be used and applied by said Council without reservation for the increase and diffusion of knowledge regarding the laws of heredity. In the event, however, that the said American Genetic Association shall cease to exist or to continue engaged in the kind of endeavor for which this fund is bequeathed, the total amount of this bequest shall revert to the Smithsonian Institution located in the District of Columbia to be administered by the Trustees of said Smithsonian Institution in any way it sees fit for the increase and diffusion of knowledge regarding the laws of heredity. * * * *

"All of the rest, residue and remainder of my property, real and personal, and wheresoever situate, I give, devise and bequeath unto my trustee aforesaid, in trust, to carry out the provisions of this, my last will and testament according to my desires and wishes as hereinafter contained. * * *

"The fund created by the last paragraph of this will is to be devoted and used for beneficial purposes only, my wife and family and those coming after them to have the preference right

thereto, but never under any circumstances is such fund to be used wastefully or extravagantly or under such circumstances as to encourage idle or luxurious living. This property represents the savings of a lifetime of industry, economy, and self-denial, and I wish it to be used wisely and made to count for individual and race betterment.***

"As soon as my son is old enough for college, I desire that he be provided with the sum of \$1200.00 per annum for his use during his college course, to meet his necessary expenses and to enable him to pursue his studies, but not to enable him to indulge in extravagancies or luxuries, should he happen to be so inclined. I hope that my son will marry early, say not later than the age of twenty-five, and trust that he will marry advisedly and know that his chosen mate comes from a family in which useful and capable men and women predominate. To assist and encourage him in his chosen pursuit or profession, I direct my trustee to pay to him at the time of his marriage the sum of five thousand dollars. I also direct that for each and every child born to him, before the termination of the trust created by this will, he be paid the sum of twenty-five hundred dollars as soon as each such child shall have attained the age of three years. Should my said son develop scholarly tastes and desire to devote his life to the pursuit of science and the acquisition of knowledge (and particularly along the lines of biology and genetics) and manifest a degree of ability along those lines (which might best be judged and determined by his original essays and papers appearing in scientific publications or by lectures before scientific bodies), then and in that case I desire that he have all of the money that he may need and use to advantage in the pursuit of the studies and researches, even to the limit of the income not otherwise appropriated. Should he desire to follow some business vocation in which capital is required, like agriculture, horticulture, live stock, mercantile or manufacturing pursuits, and manifest an ability in that direction,

I desire that he be paid the sum of ten thousand dollars out of the income or principal of said trust when he shall have attained the age of thirty years, and, if he make progress in such pursuit or calling (my trustee to be the judge as to that) he shall receive ten thousand dollars additional when he shall have attained the age of forty years. If I shall have other sons who shall reach maturity, I desire that he or they shall receive the same benefits and that the same provisions shall apply as to each of them as are above provided for my present son.

"As to my daughter and any future daughters born to me, I desire that she or they shall have the advantage of a higher or college education, if such education be of a practical or beneficial kind, but I do not favor a smattering of music and art and the so-called accomplishments which often carry with them conceits, vanities and follies which later have to be unlearned at bitter cost. Neither do I want their minds taxed with the study of abstruse branches of learning which are of but little use and sometimes result in shattered nerves and weakened womanhood which lessens the possibility of happy and useful lives. I desire that they be taught the laws of health and beauty and how to preserve them; and also something of the laws of heredity. I desire also that they be taught that as this world was created for the evolution and development of man, their supreme duty and greatest glory consists in rearing of a family of noble sons and daughters; that the more nearly perfect they are themselves the greater the obligation which rests upon them in this respect. When it is remembered that college girls are frequently failures as wives and mothers; that recent statistics go to show that they average less than one child, each, it will be seen that I have good and sufficient reasons for not wanting to devote money to the conventional 'higher education' of women. A college education is a failure and race deterioration a certainty when the daughters of the best families in the

land fail in parentage. If my daughters desire the practical kind of education indicated, and there be an institution where such branches are taught my trustee is instructed to supply the means, otherwise nothing is to be expended for 'higher education.' At the time of marriage my trustee is instructed to pay to my daughter or daughters the same amount as provided for my son, and for each child born to her she is to receive the same sum to be paid according to the same conditions as above provided for my son. * * *

"In order to make myself better understood in this my last will and testament I desire first to explain that for many years I have held to the belief that wealth, especially great wealth, in the hands of any party should be regarded to some extent as a sacred trust for it has cost the life and labor of some one, perhaps of many, to produce it. While a man has a legal right to do as he pleases with what is his own, he does not always have the moral right to do so. Money or property wisely employed benefits the entire community, as well as the individual owner; unwisely employed it becomes a detriment to the community, and when devoted to idleness and luxury, or squandered in fast and riotous living it becomes a curse to the one who possesses it. This is so well understood by many that it has been well said that probably the worst thing that could happen to the majority of mankind would be to inherit wealth and to be relieved of the necessity of earning a living. Accumulated wealth in its power for good or evil might be compared to water gathered together in a storage reservoir; it can be made to turn the wheels of industry or irrigate a valley or do both at the same time, but uncontrolled and unguided it becomes a power for destruction, and out of its proper channel it soon becomes a torrent of mud, polluting and destroying everything in its path.

"Another thought which has possessed my mind for a long time is that every man should contribute some-

thing of his savings to some worthy cause, for it is only by so doing that we can repay the debt we owe to those sturdy pioneers of progress who by their unselfish efforts have, in all countries and ages, helped to make civilization possible. This thought has been confirmed and strengthened by the conviction, strong in my mind, that this world with its vast resources and powers, must have been created for a purpose, and that purpose must have been the evolution and development of man.

"The idea that the forces and powers of nature, chemical, mechanical and electrical and all of the vast supplies of coal, oil and minerals, were here to remain forever unused and unapplied, is to my mind unthinkable and as inconceivable as the idea of a great factory, equipped with modern machinery, being located in an uninhabited country.

"Man, then, being the object and purpose of creation, it becomes our duty to co-operate with nature in hastening the day of his perfection, for man is a creature of evolution, and still an unfinished product. To be as brief as possible, I am now convinced from some study and much thought, that it is only by a greater knowledge and application of the laws of life and growth that man can hope to hasten his progress upwards toward that happy day when weakness and sin will be reduced to a minimum and when the least efficient of mankind will be the equal of the greatest of today. Religion alone can never work this change, for polish and refine a man as you will, the work has all to be done over again with his son, for polish is not hereditary any more than the clothes a man wears. Religion at its best is but a crutch to help men walk, to aid the weak and wayward through this life.

"What the world needs is a race of men who are neither crippled in body or mind; for when men are born right, they will have no need to be 'born again.' Religion can help us to lofty ideals but we must look to science to

point the way to a realization of those ideals. Science has achieved wonders in the development of plants and animals, and it is high time now to turn attention to man himself, for he is subject to the same laws of life and growth. For thousands of years nature has been separating the sheep from the goats in her own harsh way. Under primitive conditions the weakest and least alert in body and mind were the first to fall, and progress was rapid. But nature is still on the job and while man today is no longer surrounded by wild beasts and savage foes with whom he has to battle with bare fists, yet he is surrounded with even more destructive and insidious foes in the form of temptations to excesses and indulgencies in hundreds of ways.

"We have all observed how quickly the savage races have fallen when suddenly exposed to the vices and temptations of civilization, and civilized man has by no means acquired immunity. In prehistoric times certain men and families were eliminated on account of their physical weaknesses and imperfections; now they are being eliminated for their vices and immoralities. Man killing monsters did the work then; fool killing vices do the work now.

"Under the earlier conditions man has refined physically; under the latter

conditions he is being refined and perfected morally, for the man of the future must be strong in will power; the power of self direction and self control. The present age is perhaps the most critical and trying in man's career; it is a time when instinct is losing its hold and intelligence and will are not yet sufficiently developed to be a safe guide. As a race our present position might well be compared to that of the young man just out of college. Parents and teachers have done their part and his future success will depend largely upon his own efforts.

"As a race we have been reared in the lap of nature like other creatures, but the time has now arrived when our destiny is largely in our own hands and we must co-operate with all our strength to eliminate weakness and develop the "high minded man, with powers as far above dull brutes endued as brutes excel cold rocks and brambles rude." Race betterment is the all important work toward which our resources and energies should be directed and all other matters are significant only, or mainly, as they contribute to this grand purpose.

"I trust this brief philosophy of life will make me better understood by those who have known me and make my meaning clear in the foregoing disposition of my property."

Pseudo-Science

A STUDY OF THE PHYSICAL VIGOR OF AMERICAN WOMEN, by Edwin Elmore Jacobs, Ph.D., president of Ashland College and sometime fellow in sociology, Clark Univ. With an introduction by Charlotte Perkins Gilman. Pp. 60. Boston, Marshall Jones Co., 1920.

Dr. Jacobs seeks to prove the thesis that American women have become physically more vigorous in recent decades, and that this improvement is due to "release from former excessive household cares." This leads him to try his hand on some of the most formidable problems in the whole range of biology, with the result that he commits almost every sin enumerated in

the "don't's for statisticians" and proves nothing at all. He presents some fragmentary, ill-interpreted, and often misleading data on women's diseases, the birth-rate, longevity and anthropological measurements, sizes of women's shoes, gloves, and corsets, and the participation of women in athletics. Very likely some parts, at least, of the American female population are improving in vigor. This may to some extent be due, as the author believes, to the declining birth-rate and the disappearance of home industries. But no light is shed on these questions by the book under review which, like very much of the "feminist" literature, is apt only to serve as a warning to a class in biometrics.—P. P.

WHAT IS MAN?

What is man? What is the defining characteristic mark of humankind? In the scheme of nature, what is the place—the distinctive place—of the human class of life? Have we propounded the question to ourselves? Professor Keyser thinks not, and in a brilliant address before the annual meeting of the Phi Beta Kappa Society at Columbia University discusses and expands a philosophy of life first sponsored by a Polish engineer, Count Alfred Korzybski.¹

Humans, he points out, entertain two concepts of man, inherited in the mesh of inherited opinions; the one biological or zoological; the other mythological. According to the zoological conception man is an animal, a conception having at least the merit of regarding humans as natural—a merit not possessed by the mythological conception which accords man no place in nature, he being neither natural nor supernatural, but a kind of miraculous union or hybrid of the two.

Are these conceptions true? Or rather since they can not both be true, is one of them true? It should not be amazing to find that both are false; for the concepts are man's and their object is man; thus the difficulty is unique; it is that of a self-conscious being having to regard its kind as an object and rightly conceiving what the object is. If they are not true what is the error in these traditional conceptions? The error is believed to lie in a confusion of types. Plants, the lowest order of living things, are classed as the basic-energy-binding or chemistry binding class of life, while the animals are the space binders—the space binding class of life. What now of human beings, who, like the animals, have the capacity for binding space but with no capacity of a higher order would indeed be animals? The difference lies in the power of initiative, of creative ability, of imagination or reason, the power that makes progress possible, a power not possessed by animals. By virtue of that familiar yet ever strange human power, each

generation inherits the fruit of the creative toil of bygone generations, augments the inheritance, and transmits it to the generations to come; then the dead survive in the living, destined with the living to greet and bless the yet unborn. Past, present, and future are not three; in man they are spiritually united to constitute one living reality and because this capacity for *binding time* under a law of ever-increasing amelioration is peculiar to man the class of human beings is to be conceived and scientifically defined to be the time-binding class of life. Not, as Professor Keyser points out, time binding animals, for time binding, chemistry binding, and space binding constitute three dimensions—three types of life to which belong man, plants and animals. Time-binding activity—the defining mark of man—may involve and often does involve space-binding as a higher involves a lower; but to say that, therefore, man is a species of animal—a time-binding species thereof—is like saying that a solid is a species of surface or that a violin is a species of wood or that symphony is a species of sound.

With this new conception of time binding, a study of man becomes the study of his time-binding energies; the laws of human nature are the natural laws of these energies. One of these laws is conceived as a law of perpetual growth and continued progress; a law of rapidly increasing geometric progression which reduces to the formula PR^{T-1} where P is the progress made in a given generation, R the ratio, and T the time. This then is the natural law for the advancement of civilization, only retarded in operation, the author believes, by the misconceptions man entertains of man, the misconception that man is but an animal and until man ceases to regard man as a species of animal the social life of the world and especially the ethical life will continue to be what it always has been in a large measure—zoological ethics.—J. H. K.

¹ Keyser, Cassius J., *The Nature of Man*, Science, Vol. LIV, No. 1393, pp. 205-213, Friday, Sept. 9, 1921.