

at the points on a scale opposite the height of each parent, and read on another scale the most probable height of son and daughter, as well as the range of variation within and outside of which there is an even chance of his or her appearance.

At first sight, this law seems opposed to the current conceptions of heredity, by which like breeds like, and qualities gather strength as they are handed down from parent to child; but, while the tendencies of the two laws are opposed, this opposition is not a contradiction. There is still room for the appearance of qualities in families, because the exceptional father is still more likely than the mediocre one to have an exceptional son; only the chances are not in favor of having a son equally as exceptional as he himself is. This is true because the rate of regression towards the mean is a ratio, and affects all alike. However, owing to the far greater number of mediocre parents, it is more likely in a given case that an exceptional son is the exceptional child of "average" parents than the "average" of exceptional parents. The law tells heavily against the continued inheritance of particular traits, both beneficial and pernicious ones, and regards as typical the oft-observed decadence of eminent families.

The variations in eye-color, the presence or absence of the artistic temperament, — which is shown to be more prevalent in women than in men, — the tendency towards types of disease, are treated according to the same plan, and the assumption of the validity of the law is found to accord with the facts. Mr. Galton has even attempted an experimental verification. The seeds of sweet-peas differing in size were grown, and the numbers of resulting seeds of

each size were obtained, with the result that the seeds were less exceptional in size than the parent-seeds, and also in about the ratio of one-third.

Besides this chief result, the volume contains a number of minor studies, all of which will be of interest to students in various scientific pursuits. The effect of marriage selection in continuing individual traits; the distinction between traits that blend, such as the mulatto issue of black and white, and those that do not blend but exist side by side; the possible shifting of the average result by a general amelioration of the race; the means of defining quantitatively nearness of kinship, — these form some of the minor points discussed.

In leaving the volume, one is impressed with the great value of method in statistical work, with the power of mathematical treatment to give clearness to results, with the enormous labor necessary to obtain results in this definite form, and with the great possibilities that this study holds out to our posterity as a means of racial and social improvement.

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