

Much of either egotism or bravery is necessary for one to stand up and take exception to so obscure a science as heredity in this direction; in fact, the tendency is toward taking refuge in its darkness. But I firmly believe that the more we investigate along this line the more we will find how misplaced has been the responsibility. To be sure, there are two sides to the question, but the element of speculation exists in both, so it is extremely difficult to disprove on the one hand or verify on the other. However, I have a few puny, perhaps trite, arguments in support of the theory that heredity as a factor in irregularity is an over-estimated and misconstrued quantity.

The most casual thinker will certainly admit that there is nothing in the organization of the Jewish or Egyptian child that would preclude the possibility of its becoming a mouth-breather, a thumb or tongue-sucker, a lip-biter, or a victim of abnormal lip-function, the same as other children, and be subject to the same natural consequences; nor does it seem probable that either race has at any time included many dentists of the ultra-conscientious type who would hesitate to extract because of its later evil influence. The vicious consequences of premature extraction in a child of pure blood would certainly be as apparent as in one of irregular lineage.

Any orthodontist will acknowledge that seven-eighths of the cases that come under his observation can be traced to, or show the mechanical influence of some one or more of the foregoing causes. Why, then, should the Egyptian or Jewish child escape?

If we accept the questionable hypothesis of the transmission of acquired faculties, how have the racial characteristics been maintained?

One of the most complex cases I have yet seen was that of a Jewess.

The result of advanced civilization is also cited. I would ask, then, if that portion of a race that yields to the influence of civilization will not necessarily become the very head and front of this people physically, morally, and mentally? On that theory they are also the most subject to malocclusion.

It would hardly seem, then, as though we could attach absolute faith to the result of measuring thousands of jaws of this people *generally* to verify the idea, because of the extreme likelihood that the material at hand will not represent the class most apt to be afflicted.

The law of the ultimate disposition of the fittest always has, and always will, hold good.

In this connection I wish to quote from one of the current