

Galton, Ribot, and others have given us the most convincing proofs that heredity is stronger than its antagonist, variation, or than its modifier, environment.

In accounting for variations, for no two beings are quite alike, we must admit great ignorance; however it is impossible to ignore or disbelieve in the effect of the environment.

We know that unless there be some favorable features in the environment the best nature can never develop.

The very same breeder we before referred to might possibly be able to show us an animal that through accident, inadequate feeding, or other unfavorable condition in the environment, had never proved worthy of its parentage; and the observer will meet many cases like this among human beings. They are instructive inasmuch as they illustrate the relative part played by heredity and environment in the total result.

Galton, after most exhaustive and careful examination of large classes of men, as statesmen, judges, commanders, divines, authors, artists and others, shows that of all those that attained great distinction, a fair proportion left posterity worthy of them. He concludes also that if a man be possessed of really high-class native ability, he will rise in spite of the environment, or as Shakespeare has it, "Some men are born great."

But what of the mediocre? Do the same laws as to heredity and environment apply? The best way in my opinion to become convinced on this point is to make an honest and careful study of one's self. It sometimes takes years to realize the extent to which we represent—often in an occult manner—our ancestors; and we must remember that law which Darwin has emphasized, that traits of ancestors tend to appear at the same period of life in the offspring as in the parents. It is further to be remembered that by a study of parents alone we cannot get nearly so good an idea of the heredities of any individual as if more distant ancestors and collateral lines (uncles, cousins) be taken into account.

Indeed the believer in man's evolution from lower forms of life takes a much wider view of the whole subject.

It must be plain that each individual in some measure is the resultant of all those forces represented in ancestors—forces which have been modified in innumerable ways by ancestors, a consideration which greatly complicates the study of heredity. But if any one principle has been established, it is that heredity is stronger than environment. However, we must point out that the weaker the heredity the stronger the environment. Education in the proper sense can do more relatively for a mediocre or weak nature than for a very strong one. A real genius or a criminal will be such regardless of education. So that the practical issue for educators narrows down very much to the question of heredity and environment for the mediocre or sub-mediocre. It is with the latter classes that the