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## Is Man Improving?

TO MODERN MAN THERE IS COM-ING A GROWING AWARENESS THAT HE CAN CONTROL NOT ONLY THE INDIVIDUAL LIFE, BUT RACIAL EVOLUTION."

BY PROFESSOR J. ARTHUR THOM

Man has a long ascent behind him, but is he still on the way up? Is he continuing to evolve as an organism? of taking exact measurements in Does he show any organic racial itage is changer, but is man himself Sandowian muscles and dulls his sense of smell; but are these and similar changes more than superficial modifications? Do they in any direct way grip the race? It does not organism is evolving either up or down, either progressively or retrogressively. It seems as if animal species often took a rest after a per- advantageous variations or novelties man evolution has passed from being "if a population contains mainly organismal, as in the days of

We can prove the reality of continued evolutionary change in a race of domesticated animals or of cultivated plants when we have definite records of the state of affairs at successive periods. We are sure that dogs are continuing to evolve-for We are sure that wheats are still evolving; finer and finer races continue to emerge. Similarly in Wild Nature, if we measure a set of characters year after year under similar conditions of life, and find an emphatic increase or decrease in certain measurements, we may safely conclude that the species is moving in a certain direction as regards particular characters. The difficulty of doing this for man is that a human generation means a long time and that the habit of thing exact measurements is very young. The anatomist knows well

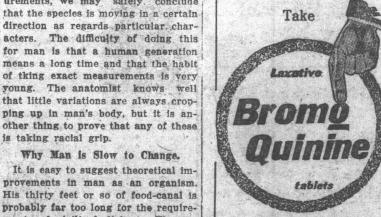
is taking racial grip. Why Man is Slow to Change. It is easy to suggest theoretical improvements in man as an organism. His thirty feet or so of food-canal is. probably far too long for the requirements of civilized dietary. The appendix vermiformis seems a troublesome relic which might be dispensed with. The teeth are often inconvenently crowded, and as a matter of fact the wisdom tooth often fails to cut the gum. The little toe does not seem to be of much account. Now it used in combination with wool per- may be that some of the desirable

improvements are going on at present

hardly to be discerned. There is not, however, much convincing evidence that man is adding any marked way

iod of marked variability and pro- have a good chance of persisting. gress. Perhaps man is one of these When they come, they come to stay periods of stability. Perhaps hu- Professor Punnett has calculated that primitive man, to being mainly out- variety has even a five per cent. sel-

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change in definite directions? It is that are not highly specialized, the plain that his external or social her- hand being a notable example. It is changing? He suffers dints and he horse's hoof, or a bat's wing, or puts on veneer; he fattens himself mole's shovel, or a whale's flapper and makes himself lean; he devolops Why, then, should we not find signs

> In the ordinary course of Nature cent. of a new variety, and if that Why does it not continue to occur in mankind? Because man has rebelled against Nature's method of drastic sifting for health, vigor and efficiency.

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reason for the sluggishness of organ-

The probability is that some imshortening of the food canal and im- body. munity to certain diseases, are in slow progress in mankind; but even if this be so, there must be put on such as short sight and neurasthenia, tage. This is only incipient among are taking racial grip because of the animals, and in the permanent antinadequacy of the sifting processes hill of the beaver village; it means

Two lines of possible evolution and increased utilization of the soc seem to be particularly promising, ial heritage no limits can be set. But there is more than that. Every vigor The first is an increase in the com-

brought it about that valuable new the 9,200 millions of nerve cells in the some measure share in its own evo- vidual life, but racial evolution as departures (in artistic talent for in-cerebral cortex. The size of the brain lution; and so it has been a fortiori well.—John O'London. stance) do not find their due reward has not increased since the days of for all men who have been swimmers, whereas deteriorative changes (ex- the Cro-Magnon men, who lived some not drifters, in the stream. But there treme short sight for instance) are 20,000 years ago, but without increase is more than that. To modern man not visited with their natural penal- of size there might be increase in there is coming a growing awareness ties. This is probably the deepest complexity; and that would mean the that he can, in ways previously unimprovement of intelligence. The se cond possibility is an extension of the

youthful period and an abbreviation of the time of senescence. That might come only by variations in the endoprovements in adaptation, such as a crinal or regulative system of th Man stands apart in his reason and language and morality, but also in the the other side of the account the like- degree to which he enregisters the lihood that disadvantageous changes, gains of the past in the social heri-

DODDS

half of evolution. To the enrichment 087 THE P

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overdress of beige crepe. Bands ofbeaver fur are quite extravagantly used in trimming a wrap of tete de negro velveteen. Embroidery in gold en bands of copper is used on a dress of bright blue silk matelasse flaring at the

-Ry Bud Fisher.

MUTT AND JEFF-

JEFF SLIPS MUTT A HOT SHOT.







