

cies so favorable to the development of such a character, as to make it almost inevitable that in a world constituted as this is, they, if left to themselves, should become what they are. If their criminal tendencies are not strong enough to amount to something like a necessity, they are at least so strong as to put them at fearful disadvantage in the struggle—if there be any struggle—for an honest and virtuous life.

This brings us face to face with one of the profoundest, and, in some of its aspects, one of the most appalling mysteries of nature—the law of heredity, by the operation of which nature visits the iniquities of the fathers, and more especially of the mothers, upon their children, and their children's children, to the third or fourth generation, or even farther. A high authority in Germany, found, as the result of patient investigation, that "over one-fourth of the German prisoners had received a defective organization from their ancestry, which manifests itself in crime." Dr. Vergilio says that "in Italy 32 per cent. of the criminal population have inherited criminal tendencies from their parents." Dr. H. Maudsley says, "The idiot is not an accident, nor the irreclaimable criminal an unaccountable casualty." It seems to be the opinion of those who have had most to do with criminals,—who have watched them most closely and studied their history with the greatest care,—that while there are criminals who are such by occasion and by passion, and who do not properly belong to the typically criminal class, the peculiarities of those who have adopted crime as a vocation, and are found to be incorrigible, are in most instances to be traced to inherited tendencies.

It would be easy, no doubt, to make too much of this aspect of the subject. They are not all criminals, by any means, who have the misfortune of being the offspring of criminal parents, and it is not easy to say what proportion of the children of such, and who

have actually grown up criminals, might have been saved from a criminal life, if in childhood they had been removed from the evil surroundings in which they had the misfortune to have their lot cast. The question is sometimes debated whether hereditary tendencies, or evil environment, has most to do with producing a criminal character; but, unfortunately, these generally go together, and the child born of criminal parents grows up in a home in which he finds himself in an atmosphere of crime even from his infancy. And even if in some of these unfortunates the innate propensity to evil-doing was not abnormal, it would be remarkable if from such a school they did not graduate, in due time, as pests of society.

The evil to itself, and to society, that may be pent up in a single family abandoned to criminal courses, is strikingly illustrated in the history of two or three families in the United States, which have been made the subject of special inquiry during the last few years. Dugdale's Study of the "Jukes" family is too well known to need more than a passing notice; in seven generations it produced 1,200 criminals and paupers. The descendants of Ben Ishmael, who lived in Kentucky one hundred years ago, are no less notorious. Among other contributions which this family has made to the criminal class during six generations is that of 121 prostitutes. And if the Jukes's—as we learn was the case—cost the state \$1,300,000, it is pretty evident that the tribe of Ben Ishmael has cost no less.

The history of vicious families in other countries tells a no less startling tale. Count Pastor Stocker, of Berlin, investigated the history of 834 descendants of two sisters, the elder of whom died in 1825. Among these he found 76 who had served 116 years in prison, 164 prostitutes, 106 illegitimate children, 17 pimps, 142 beggars, 64 paupers in almshouses; the whole number estimated to have cost the state more than \$500,000.