

DOES BLOOD TELL?

Does blood tell? The expected answer will be none but the affirmative. It is a common remark if the blood is all right the man is all right. People, particularly certain classes who consider themselves above the "rank and file," are thoroughly imbued with the spirit that unless a man has "blue blood" in his veins he cannot aspire to higher social standing; in other words, if he is not a thoroughbred he cannot hope to meet all men on equal ground—he is inferior.

What is "blue blood?"

In a recent number of the Saturday Evening Post, Dr. Woods Hutchinson discusses this subject from a clearly logical standpoint.

"Aristocracies and royalties," he says, "are literally such stuff as dreams are made of. It seems natural for the mass of humanity to reverence and worship a man who, by his kingly qualities, is fitted to lead them. In the first place, this leader was self-made. But instead of choosing his successors from the mass, and in spite of the fact that, as a rule, great men breed men of lesser greatness, they chose the one who bore his name and his likeness. It did not matter if he fell below his father's standard of kingly qualities. What he lacked was supplied by the imagination of his supporters. Thus the common people were led to believe in the direct transmission of greatness, and this belief was taken advantage of and fostered by the ruling classes."

"To this day, even in democratic America, the delusion grips us. If we have not much to boast of personally, we can derive great satisfaction from dwelling upon the glories and excellencies of our ancestors. If we have achieved renown on our own account, we are quite sure that we must have had sturdy and distinguished forebears to account for our being such fine fellows."

Acquire Pedigree

"Those who have acquired wealth promptly proceed to equip themselves with a pedigree. On the other hand, those of us who have been less fortunate in securing riches and renown find consolation in the thought that our lineage lifts us above mere worldly wealth."

"In fact, whatever our station or success, we are firmly convinced first, that there is such a thing as aristocracy, and second, that we are it. In one sense this belief is true. We are all well born and one man can boast as illustrious a pedigree as another. It is easy enough to have some notable names in our pedigree when we consider that our ancestry increases by leaps and bounds as we go backward."

As to the so-called aristocracies whose boast is their direct line of ancestors dating back to some notable, Dr. Hutchinson quotes the instance of the gentleman who claimed in all seriousness that his family was descended from Queen Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen; and of another who traced his lineage from Father Mathew, the famous Irish priest, who, by the nature of his vows and callings, of course never married.

"Broadly considered, there is no such thing as 'pure' family, or a superior strain of human blood, or a

hereditarily superior class in human society, any more than there is such a thing as a pure race. The so-called great families of history have been great only by dint of incessant bolstering up by great wealth, with the superior food and surroundings that this brings; by marrying into other great families and attracting to themselves all the wealth, political power and other desirable prizes of the community—and by being constantly invigorated by fresh injections of peasant, or 'common' blood. The 'great families' very seldom improve after the first generation—and usually deteriorate. An aristocracy, as the cynic remarked, is like a potato plant—the best part of it is underground. It takes only one generation to make a great man—a 'thoroughbred'—though it may take three to make that pompous, thick-witted parasite called a 'gentleman.'"

Founded on Wealth

"Like all aristocracies, the English nobility is founded solely and exclusively upon wealth, and consists of a handful of really great men, and these come directly from the common people. The possession of wealth is one thing absolutely necessary for admission to the English peerage, and thus it shows the utter impossibility of keeping even the appearance of aristocracy without the assistance of wealth. Any aristocracy or 'best family' now in existence could be reproduced within two generations from 'common stock' simply by feeding and training in etiquette."

"And this is also true of royalty. The King of Sweden, for instance, is the grandson of a mere soldier of fortune, a private in the marines. The King of Spain is himself anything but a Hidalgo—which, literally translated, is 'son of somebody'—there being no less than six claimants to the honor of being his grandfather, all with good standing in court."

"The King of Italy is the grandson of a small Sardinian landowner. The Emperor of Germany is the great-grandson of an obscure and unscrupulous soldier of fortune; and of the smaller kings of Europe the most popular and warmly beloved by his subjects was at one time in an insane asylum and what would not some of the other nations give if they could put theirs there!"

Dr. Hutchinson goes on to say that any aristocracy or "best blood" of course consists of one man of conspicuous ability with his commonplace wife and mediocre children and grandchildren and, unless the founder be unusually prepotent, his blood and qualities are apt to be completely drowned in the welter of common strains—and certainly tend to get weaker with each successive generation. The writer, of course, points out that it will be objected that these conclusions are at

variance with and, indeed, contrary to the experience of breeders of other species of animals such as horses, cattle, dogs, but the two cases, he says, are far from parallel.

"In the first place," he says, "all our races of superior speed or beauty, or egg-eating, milk-making or a fattening power, as the case may be, have originated from a small group of exceptional individuals who were themselves sports or mutants occurring upon the law of average and picked from hundreds of thousands of ordinary or average individuals."

In Breeding

"In the second place, in order to establish and fix these breeds or strains, it has usually been found necessary to breed them in and in, as the saying is; mating individuals who were the closest blood relations. This, of course, for obvious reasons, has never been carried out in human superior strains, save in a few rare instances."

"In the third place, these superior breeds and strains have been industriously and insistently supported and re-enforced by the best chance—occurring individuals of each generation of common stock."

"Fourthly, though the off-spring of pedigreed stock is likely to be of a higher general level and to contain a larger number of individuals showing superior qualities than the off-spring of the common or 'scrub' stock, yet the actual percentage of high grade individuals is comparatively small, with an immense number of culls and wastrels."

"Finally, the problem before the breeder of thoroughbred stock is a totally different one from that before the human race breeder. A cattle breeder can, for economic reasons, afford to own and deal with only a few dozen or score—or, at the outside, a few hundred—individuals; and consequently he must make these few individuals all of as high quality as possible in order to get as high a probability of high grade or exceptional offspring as possible. If he could deal with and handle, say, ten thousand grades and scrubs he could pick out, each year from that number, more high class and

thoroughbred individuals than he could out of his two or three dozen pure-blood animals; but the experiment is too costly and progress too slow."

"In the case of human race-breeding we have obviously a totally different state of affairs. We have, as the Indian explained to some one who complained of lack of time, 'all the time there is'—that is to say, all the thousands or millions of individuals in the nation are at our disposal to select from. Those low grade or inferior individuals whom we do not need for purposes of leadership and artistic, inventive or literary production, will support themselves at their own expense. We can make our selection from tens of thousands and from millions; and we have no need whatever to favor specially the reproduction of a small group of superior individuals in order to develop an adequate number of great men."

"As a matter of fact, nine-tenths of all our leaders and great men have come and still come from the great eighty per cent. of the community and not from the ten or fifteen per cent. of middle class or from the five per cent. of superior or aristocratic families."

Distribute Wealth

"The broadest and most statesmanlike course on the part of the biological engineer—the race builder—is to so diffuse and distribute the wealth and resources of the race as to give to the largest possible number that measure of comfort, of nutrition and of favorable surroundings that will enable such geniuses and such individuals of ability as are born to grow up healthy and vigorous, and to develop to the highest possible degree such exceptional powers as they are born with."

"Such distribution, then, of our resources as will raise the general average of comfort and well being to that point where every child born shall have a full and fair opportunity to develop all the power and possibilities that may be hidden in him, will produce the largest numbers of leaders, of geniuses and of men who will honor and bless their generation."



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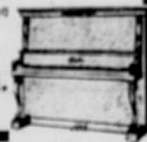
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