

Books of Special Interest

Life Histories of Twins

TWINS: HEREDITY AND ENVIRONMENT. By NATHANIEL D. MITTRON HIRSCH. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1930.

Reviewed by ARNOLD GESELL
Yale University

THE study of twins is fast attaining the dimensions and status of a sub-science. Twins have been investigated from almost every angle,—biological, anthropological, physiological, medical, and psychological. The pioneer psychological investigation dates back to Galton, who in 1876 published a paper on "The History of Twins as a Criterion of the Relative Powers of Nature and Nurture."

In the present volume Dr. Hirsch takes up this very problem, using, however, new forms of mental measurement which were not available to Galton. This study has had the encouragement of President Lowell of Harvard University and the supervision of Professor William McDougall. It is monographic in character, but the material is organized and treated in a readable manner "in the hope that the study may reach some small part of the educated public as well as the specialist."

On the basis of objective criteria, but not without the hazards of subjective error, Dr. Hirsch established three groups of twins for comparative study and experimental analysis of physical and mental traits. From a larger total body of twins, by intentional elimination, three groups of twins were selected: (a) fifty-eight pairs of dissimilar twins living under similar environment; (b) thirty-eight pairs of similar twins living in similar environment, and (c) twelve pairs of similar twins living in dissimilar environments. Only like sexed twins were studied, to eliminate differences arising from sex. For the two major groups the data include anthropometric measurements, disease history, handwriting, and drawing specimens, tests of manual and motor ability, and educational and intelligence tests. The statistics are presented in tabular form in the body of the volume, accompanied by photographs and non-technical comment.

Ratios of average difference for the various items for the ninety-six pairs of twins in the two major groups are calculated. Heredity and environment are weighed in the balance, and the author reads the results as follows:

For the ninety-six pairs of twins in question in Table I we can affirm that heredity is about five times as important as environment in respect to differences in intelligence quotient; about four times as important in respect to differences in head length; about four times as important in respect to differences in height; two and seven-tenths times as important in respect to differences in weight; about two times as important in respect to differences in cephalic index; and about one and one-half times as important in respect to differences in head width. Thus the relative importance of heredity versus environment in explaining differences varies very significantly in respect to the particular trait or form of ability that is measured.

Approximately one person out of forty-seven in the population is of twin origin. Left-handedness is present in about four per cent of the population at large. Hirsch found, however, among fifty-eight pairs of dissimilar twins, seven pairs, or twelve per cent, with one left-handed member. Among forty-three pairs of similar twins, eighteen, or forty-two per cent, had left-handed members. These figures are strongly suggestive of the secondary role of cultural factors in the production of handedness.

Investigators of the psychology of twins, almost without exception, emphasize the preponderance of inheritance in the determination of mental traits. Hirsch's conclusions are in general harmony with previous studies by Galton, Thorndike, Merriman, and Lange. Lange's recent monograph on "Criminality as Fate" was based on a study of criminal twins, both living together and apart. He concluded that heredity, though not exclusively the cause, was probably the most important factor in the occurrence of criminality. He was so impressed with the social importance of his findings that he suggested that the state ought to undertake lifelong observations of twins.

In the monograph by Dr. Hirsch, twins have once more served as a touchstone to

establish the basic role of inheritance in the determination of mental traits. One is left, however, with the impression that there is some danger in oversimplifying the concepts of heredity and environment. The concepts should not be too sharply set into dualistic contrast. Hirsch's interesting study gives the reader abundant opportunity for speculatively testing the truth of Galton's suggestion: "Necessitarians may derive new arguments from the life history of twins!"

A Federated Europe

THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE. By EDOUARD HERRIOT. New York: The Viking Press, 1930. \$3.50.

Reviewed by HENRY KITTREDGE NORTON
"QUEL HOMME!" ejaculated the city clerk.

"Quel homme!" exclaimed the schoolmistress.

"Quel homme!" exploded the chauffeur. In fact, it appeared to be the universal custom in Lyons whenever the name of Herriot was mentioned to cast up the head, the eyes, and the hands and fervently expel the words, "What a man!" No wonder that for twenty-five years his admiring fellow-citizens have annually reelected him Mayor of the second city of France. And for many of those years they have also sent him to Paris either as Deputé or as Senator. The nation has seconded their opinion by giving him a place in numerous cabinets and on one occasion calling him to the Premiership.

With all his myriad public duties, even while he was serving on important committees in Paris during the week and administering the public business of Lyons on week-end visits, he has found time to study and to write. Madame Récamier, French literature, Soviet Russia, and the philosophy of post-war youth, all have been touched and clarified by his facile pen. Who more ideally qualified, then, to expound to a waiting world the mysteries, the desires, and the inhibitions that surround the problem of "The United States of Europe"?

None. Herriot, the French Liberal who wore the double laurel of statesmanship and literature; Herriot, the collaborator of Briand, was just the man. Doubtless this was the view of the publishers when they contracted for the book; doubtless this will be the view of the public when it buys the book. It was certainly the conviction of this reviewer when he first opened the volume.

Despite this high regard for Herriot—perhaps because of it—the book is a distinct disappointment. It is wholly unworthy of the man. It is not the keen analysis, the convincing argument that we expect from one of the world's best known statesmen. It is such a compilation as might be made by a graduate student in one of our own universities as a thesis for a Master's degree. But a fraction of the text is Herriot's. The rest is made up of quotations from everybody under Heaven from Plato to Poincaré and excerpts from innumerable reports whose value is undoubted but which make dull reading none the less.

Only once in a long while does the man of political power and statesmanlike insight speak through the infinite barrier of commonplace paragraphs. It takes over a hundred pages for the author to work himself up to this:

"... the customs, with its excesses and its caprices, is only the outward and visible sign of an economic disorder, maintained and aggravated by centuries of history. *The customs barrier is an effect, not a cause.* It is chimerical to seek to cure a disease by taking account only of its external symptoms. *Customs reform can only be the result of a European reorganization*" (italics Herriot's).

But does the former Premier go on from there to attack the problem which he suggests? He does not. He dawdles with the Nordic Administrative Federation and the Pan-American Union as affording "useful lessons" for Europe. He sings the praises of the Little Entente as a regional union making for peace and economic progress. He strokes the fur of the Italian tomcat until one can almost hear him purr. Not once does he throw himself into a real discussion of the things that matter.

His conclusions are marshalled with due dignity under Roman numerals. Most of them are innocuous enough. Number IX is particularly enlightening:

"IX. It must be flexible, prudent, and patient."

One would like to think that Edouard Herriot had instructed a secretary to collect the historical material to serve as the basis of a work on "The United States of Europe" and that, through a most regrettable error, the secretary's report was published as the master's opus.

Turkish Life

UNVEILED. The Autobiography of a Turkish Girl. By SELMA EKREM. New York: Ives Washburn, 1930. \$3.

Reviewed by C. C. EDWARDS

THREE or four years ago, Halidé Edib gave us what was, I think, the first autobiography to be written in English by a Turkish woman. Now Selma Ekrem helps to fill out Halidé Edib's picture of a girl's life in Turkey. This autobiography is less artistic, less well-written, less self-conscious; it is not less useful to an understanding of Turkish life.

Her book begins with her earliest recollections, in about the year 1906. (No date is given, but the year can be fairly accurately deduced.) To read it is to marvel afresh that the vigorous young Turkey of today has risen after a racking succession of revolution, foreign wars, defeat, and victory from the grave of the Sick Man of Europe. Miss Ekrem, who is still a young girl, has known the closing years of the reign of Abdul Hamid; the first and second revolutions of 1908 and 1909; the Italian War; the Balkan War; the Great War; the occupation of Constantinople by the Allied troops; the victory of the little Turkish army in Asia Minor over the Greeks, and the setting up of the new government under Mustafa Kemal. Because her father was a government official, many of these events had an immediate and decisive effect on the life of her family. Of necessity, therefore, they form the background of her picture. But she has wisely resisted the temptation to make of her autobiography a history of her time. She has given us instead a fresh and vivid account of the life of a Turkish family of the upper class. By her happy choice of detail, she has made her characters stand out individual, and essentially human; so that the reader recognizes, in this Turkish circle, men and women who are akin to his own family and friends.

Her first chapter is entitled "The Shadow of Fear." Constantly in her early years she lived in that shadow. In Constantinople, under Abdul Hamid, there was fear of the Sultan and of the Palace camarilla; in Jerusalem, where her father was Governor, there was fear of the Christians: their fanatical sects might at any time flame up into warfare one against the other and involve the Turkish people in the disaster. During the Balkan War, her father was Governor of the then Turkish islands of the Ægean. There the Greeks were feared; it was the Greeks who sailed one morning into the harbor of Mytilene:

The crescent had gone with the night, pale white in its field of red-hot blood. One by one my eyes counted the enemy ships, the Greek fleet whose arrival we had dreaded. One, two, three, another smaller one behind. But the ships were endless. Masses of hard gray steel, masses of dread.

By nightfall, the family were prisoners of the Greeks.

At the time of the occupation of Constantinople, there was fear of the Allied soldiers, mingled with a disgust for their rowdiness and dissipation.

... The city was covered with cheap cabarets where the Allied soldiers could get all the drinks they wanted. Every street was filled with reeling soldiers so that we hated to stay out after dark. Stamboul had never seen such drinking before and the horrors that the Allies brought with them. Side by side with these gaudy cabarets bearing foreign names lay the peaceful coffee-houses where a few wrinkled faces could be seen.

In spite of the shadow of fear, Selma Ekrem led an eager, zestful, individual life. As a child she rebelled against the custom of centuries, and refused to wear the veil. In the face of public disapproval and many difficult moments, her parents allowed her to follow her own way in this. When she was old enough, she went to the American college for girls in Constantinople. There with girls of many nationalities she studied and played under American teachers. There she became filled with a longing to visit America which was afterwards realized.

Her book is unequal in interest; but it is alive. It is written by a real person who has something to say. Though the writing is loose and often faulty, it is surprisingly good from one who learned her English in Turkey. Often a literal translation of a Turkish idiom gives quaint and lively emphasis to the narrative. It is a book to be read by those who wish to know something of the daily life and character of the Turks.

George Francis Hill, who has just succeeded Sir Frederic Kenyon as Director and Principal Librarian of the British Museum, has been keeper of the department of coins and medals at the Museum since 1912. Mr. Hill is the author of numerous books on numismatics. He has been connected with the Museum since 1893.

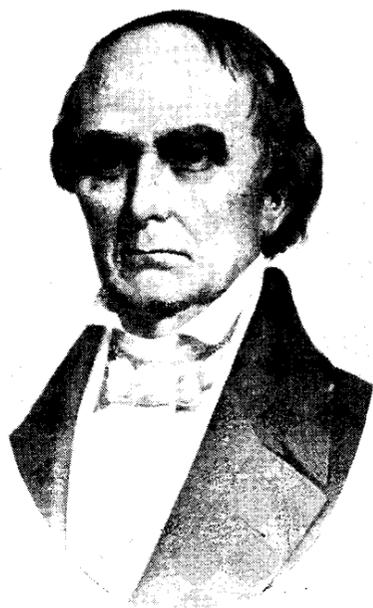
NO GOODNESS IN THE WORM GAY TAYLOR

THE shifting balance of the sexes in today's world is the theme of this novel. It gives to modern fiction virtually the first true expression of the modern woman's predicament in regard to building her life on the love of men. Its realism is honest and penetrating—ignoring the superficial, transcending the vulgar. Gay Taylor is a new writer of genuine talent—with something worth while to say.

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DANIEL WEBSTER

By

CLAUDE M. FUESS

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Allan Nevins in *The Saturday Review of Literature*:

"At last we have a biography of Webster which ranks with the very best lives of American statesmen yet written—with Schurz's Clay, with Bruce's Franklin and with Beveridge's Marshall."

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James E. Craig in *The New York Sun*:

"Illustrates modern scholarship at its best... it is superior to almost any other recent American biography. It seems destined to stand with Beveridge's 'Life of John Marshall'."

***The American Mercury*:**

"The best biography of Webster in print. It contains more information about the man than any of its predecessors."

***The Book-of-the-Month Club News*:**

"These two volumes will unquestionably

constitute the accepted biography of Webster for years to come."

Sherwin Lawrence Cook in *The Boston Transcript*:

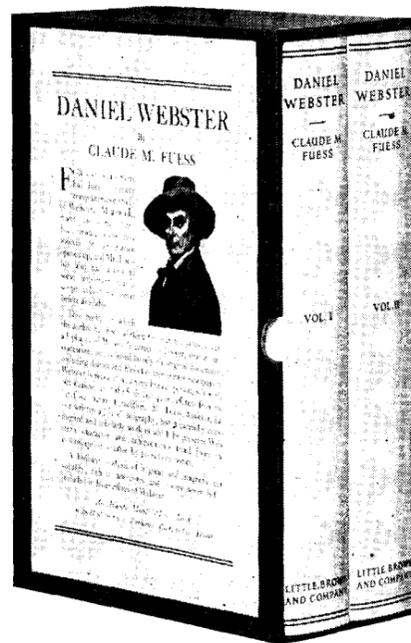
"Here is a figure worthy of any pen. And here is a pen worthy of the figure."

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Points of View

Looking Backward

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*: . . .
SIR:

Pretty nearly every present-day writer who has any affiliation with the so-called "intellectuals"—I use that unhappy word only because I know of no equivalent—and who touches on the World War in any way takes it for granted that the participation of the United States in the war was unwarranted and that, as we look back, it clearly appears that we should have washed our hands of the whole matter. To take an illustration at random I have just finished reading Miss Helen Hull's novel "The Asking Price," which has impressed me as exceptionally acute and penetrating in its analyses of character: I notice that the author virtually assumes it as too plain for discussion that her protagonist's attempt to keep himself "above the battle" was the only sensible course and that his wife and his faculty colleagues were altogether perverse in backing the government. Almost every contributor to the *Saturday Review* who refers to the war at all takes a similar attitude. Thus Mr. Harlan Hatcher, in what seemed to me for the most part an exceptionally careful and well-balanced article entitled "As a Man Thinketh" (published in the *Saturday Review* for January 18, 1930) says of his generation, "We were high school students when it [*i. e.*, the war] began; we were ready for college when our country went mad; we have reached maturity in the disillusioning years which have followed."

The plain implication of these remarks and of the multitude like them is that it was a mistake for the United States to go into the war. It would, of course, be dangerous for a person no better informed than I am to assume to dogmatize on the broad question thus presented. One aspect of the matter, however, seems to me clear. Had the United States not gone in, Germany

would in all probability have won the war. If the United States ought not to have gone in, this can only be because a German victory, if not positively advantageous to the United States, would at least have been for America a matter of comparative indifference. Such a view is, of course, perfectly intelligible, but the number of persons ready to take it in cold blood is comparatively small. What the writers to whom I refer seem not to appreciate is, that, if they are not ready to take that position, their attempts to decry our participation in the war are misconceived.

Most of these writers, so far as I can judge, base their attitude towards the war not so much on any theory that, as it now turns out, the United States backed the wrong horse, as on the feeling that the war was a nasty, vulgar thing which nobody of sensibility should have had anything to do with. It is this superficial attitude that I should like to see called in question by someone whose weight and standing is such as to assure him a hearing. I believe that the *Saturday Review* would greatly promote the cause of clear thinking if it would invite such a writer to point out that the issue as to the participation of the United States in the war is a narrow one. The question is not whether, if the infirmities of human nature on one side or the other had been less pronounced, affairs might have been so ordered that the war would not have come at all or that, if it had come, no necessity for American participation would have arisen. Neither are the merits of the original controversy as between the Allies and the Central Powers at all decisive. The sole question is whether, the situation being what it was in April, 1917,—never mind who or what was to blame—it was expedient for America to stand aside, suffer the Allies to be crushed and assume the risk of being obliged later to engage single-handed in a contest with a triumphant Germany. Anyone who is prepared to answer that question in the affirmative is en-

titled to say that the course taken by the United States was a mistake. Unless a writer, however, has thought the thing through and has come to that conclusion, he has no right blandly to assume that America "went mad" when she decided to go into the war.

Anything conducing to accurate thinking on this subject will be of value in clearing the air of what, I must confess, seems to me a vast volume of gas, and I believe that the *Saturday Review* is peculiarly qualified to render this service.

HAROLD S. DAVIS.

Dickinsoniana

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

Miss Genevieve Taggard's attempt to show (page 152 of "The Life and Mind of Emily Dickinson") that the phonetic spelling "Vevay" in one of Emily's poems had emanated from a misspelling by George Gould, loses its plausibility in light of the fact that Emily's close friend, Samuel Bowles, wrote three letters from "Vevay, Switzerland" in September 1862, one of them (September 22) addressed to the *Springfield Republican* which Emily read. (See pages 378-382 in "The Life and Times of Samuel Bowles," Vol. 1.) Mr. Bowles's descriptions of Switzerland, the Alps, and the passes into Italy seem to have been the inspiration of Emily's poem, "Our lives are Swiss." With no grounds for doing so, Miss Taggard quotes the entire poem (page 146) as evidence that Emily Dickinson's imagination was following George Gould's journey through Europe.

Miss Taggard makes an argument of the point that since Emily learned the name and address of the unsigned author of "Letter to a Young Contributor" in the *Atlantic Monthly* for April 1862, and since she wrote a letter the same month directly to Mr. Higginson in Worcester, she must have been informed of Mr. Higginson's identity and residence by George Gould who was in Worcester at the time (page 15). And on page 355 Miss Taggard refers to Josephine Pollitt's book, "Emily Dickinson: The Human

Background of Her Poetry," with these words: "It is implied that Emily knew from the *Springfield Republican* the identity of the author of a 'Letter to a Young Contributor,' published in the *Atlantic*, April 1862. Two persons, one of them myself, have found not one line in the *Springfield Republican* concerning the authorship of this article." If Miss Taggard and her assistant had looked carefully, they would have read the review of the April issue of the *Atlantic* in the *Springfield Republican*, March 29, 1862, page 2, column 2. That review begins: "The *Atlantic Monthly* for April is one of the best numbers ever issued; not of that popular periodical merely, but of magazine literature since its first inception. It is full of rich thoughts clothed in well-chosen words; the ripe fruits of culture, presented with admirable taste. Its leading article, T. W. Higginson's Letter to a Young Contributor, ought to be read by all the would-be authors of the land, although such a circulation would surpass that of the *New York Ledger* or any other periodical whatever. It is a test of latent power. Whoever rises from its thorough perusal strengthened and encouraged, may be reasonably certain of ultimate success." Here, in the newspaper in whose opinions Emily Dickinson had confidence, she read the name of Higginson. Here is the reason for her choice of Mr. Higginson as her literary mentor. In a sense the choice was not so much hers as the *Republican's*, seconded by her own good judgment. This impressive recommendation of Mr. Higginson's article as "a test of latent power" for "all the would-be authors in the land" is what moved Emily to write her first letter to Mr. Higginson on April 15, 1862. All of Miss Taggard's explanations and psychologizings and questionings of the reasons for Emily's choice of Mr. Higginson (pages 8 to 16) fall beside the point.

FREDERICK J. POHL.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

Demon of the Absolute

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

In your interesting editorial on "Standards" some time ago, it seems to me that the issue was falsely drawn.

If I understand this editorial aright, the critical controversy now in progress is to be viewed as one between humanists or traditionalists who stand for absolute truth and the journalists or historians of the present who stand for relative truth. I appear to accept these battle lines myself: "Truth absolute and truth relative have been, as Mr. Norman Foerster justly says, at the bottom of the critical warfare fought so briskly in American literary journals for the past year."

I did not say this in the *Bookman* article to which you refer, nor, so far as I recall, anywhere else. Furthermore, the sentence is ambiguous. Does it mean that the problem of the absolute and the relative has been the problem underlying the whole controversy? This is true enough. Or does it mean that one side in the controversy has stood for absolute truth and the other for relative truth? In its context this is what the sentence does seem to convey, and this I conceive to be false.

As Irving Babbitt and others have said, humanism seeks the mean between the extremes of the absolute and the relative. Humanism fully concurs in your own assertion, "Absolute truth there may be, but in its pure form it is never known in this world." If I may quote myself, to offset your alleged quotation, in the preface to "Humanism and America" I remarked: "No doubt the truth *an sich* is hopelessly elusive, but the attainment of provisional or human truth is the reward of courage and labor." The humanists do not stand for absolute truth as opposed to relative truth; they stand for provisional truth as opposed to both absolutely fixed and absolutely relative truth.

The great danger today is not, I think, that which you point to, "the tyranny of fixed opinion." I see no sign of this danger even among the humanists, who disagree abundantly with one another. The great danger is rather the tyranny of no-opinion, a tyranny from which we have suffered enough in recent years, as the public has begun to discover. There is little to be gained today by talking of the stiffening of truth into "a cocoon of rigid principle from which the butterfly can never hatch." Nothing of the sort has ever happened in human history, nor do humanists wish to make it happen. Nor would it be sensible to speak of a cocoon of rigid relativity from which the butterfly can never hatch. The tyranny of no-opinion cannot last, and that is what is giving humanism its chance.

NORMAN FOERSTER.

University of Iowa.



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