

## **Eugenics and history / by J. Foster Palmer.**

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The Men



EUGENICS

By J. FOSTER

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Much of the documentary power  
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Bases change their languages  
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race of bad linguists will do  
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invaded our country and spoke  
France, where they called them  
Some of these, however, came  
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Angles and Saxons, an entirely  
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## EUGENICS AND HISTORY.

By J. FOSTER PALMER, F.R.Hist.S.

IN the last event, as has been suggested, the appeal must be to History. The future is dark. The present is experimental, and liable to all the fallacies incident to experiments; the past we have, if we but take the trouble to search for it. The facts are there, if we can find them. But they do not come to us unsought, or wrongly sought. At one time History depended largely on documents and language. But documents lie, and philological tests are fallacious. Much of the documentary portion of historical research has consisted in the transforming of historical characters into myths, and resuscitating them again on further evidence. Philology, too, when applied to some questions of race, has generally led to false conclusions. Races change their languages, but not their bones. The true test is anatomy. Much depends on their linguistic capacities. A race of good linguists will change its language with its environment, while a race of bad linguists will carry their language wherever they go. The Scandinavian race is an example. When these people inhabited Norway and Denmark they spoke a certain language. Some of them invaded our country and spoke English. Others went to the north of France, where they called themselves Normans, and spoke French. Some of these, however, came over to England, and, in course of time, again changed their language and spoke English. Meanwhile the Angles and Saxons, an entirely distinct race, spoke the same Teutonic tongue whether they were in Germany or in England, and their predecessors in Britain adopted it. The philologists, arguing from these premises, have concluded that the Scandinavian race was allied to the Teutonic, and that the inhabitants of this country are almost entirely of Anglo-Saxon origin. Both conclusions are absolutely wrong. The shape of the skull shows a far greater resemblance between the Scandinavian and Celtic races. The Scandinavian and Teutonic races agree in nothing but their language. Similar evidence, too, points to the conclusion that the bulk of our population consists largely of the same race as it did before the invasion of the country



by the Angles and Saxons. The average cranial index of the early British races, as shown by the skulls in Barnard Davis's collection, was 77.5, and that of the Angles and Saxons was 75.26. That of the present population, from whatever section taken, is, almost always, approximately 78. I have examined several heads of living persons I have known, and the average always works out at about this figure. Dr. Messenger Bradley examined the heads of a number of prisoners, and found the index to be 79. All are far removed from the true Anglo-Saxon type. The more reasonable conclusion is that the conquest of Britain by the Angles and Saxons resulted, not in extermination, but in the subjection of the mass of the population to new masters. This is further confirmed by the fact that the pre-Celtic races, who must, after repeated conquests, have sunk to the very bottom of the social scale, were remarkably short in stature. The observations of Mr. Charles Roberts some years ago showed that height is still in a direct ratio to social standing. The professional and upper classes were found to be the tallest, and, with the exception of idiots, the lowest classes had the shortest stature, 65½ inches being about the average for the latter against 69 inches for the former. Environment may do something, but it cannot account for all. The early inhabitants would be a mixture of the Celtic and pre-Celtic races: these were subdued and driven down by the taller Angles and Saxons, and these again by the still taller Danes and Normans. The tallest men, too, are found to be, generally speaking, in the eastern and northern parts of England and Scotland, those most subject to the incursions of the tall Scandinavians, while the shortest are still found, as might be expected, in the Welsh and south-western districts. The predominating influence of heredity can never be ignored or explained away while we have history to guide us, and it is seen, not only in physical, but in mental characteristics also. "Aquilæ," as Horace says, are not found to be the parents of "Columbæ." Black men have black children. All our organs, even down to the appendix vermiformis, are reproduced on the parental type, and it is incontrovertible that the disposition of groups and the functions of the brain are due to a similar influence. The distinctive characters of the Irish, the Welsh, the English, and the Scandinavian races are as marked among us as they were three centuries ago. It would be still within the mark if we said ten centuries.

History, indeed, especially in its bearing on heredity, must be studied from all points of view. No single method can be relied on exclusively. The evidence of anatomy, of archæology, of documents, and of philology, must all be examined critically before judgment is finally pronounced.



Among the methods of study to be followed, however, I do not include a certain pseudo-scientific system which has found some favour of late. I mean the indiscriminate mixture of features resulting from what are called composite photographs. A more misleading method can hardly be imagined. It assumes an equality in the share taken by a number of ancestors in the physical equipment of every individual; an equality which simply does not exist. This assumption, of course, includes a similar equality in the share taken by the various ancestors in the *mental* equipment. The share of ancestral influence varies infinitely. I would even go so far as to say that in some instances certain characteristics may be conveyed along a certain line of ancestry to the exclusion of others. This need not necessarily be the male line, though in this line the evidence is more easily attainable. When we speak of "family characteristics" we speak of those bearing the same family name, and, consequently, related on the male side only. The Stuart character ran in the same male line for many generations. In Charles I. there was the same love of literature and the fine arts as there was in his far-off ancestor, James I. of Scotland. Both, too, had the same uncompromising spirit of resistance to public opinion which brought them to a violent death. There were seven generations between them, the male line being only once broken, in the case of Mary Queen of Scots, and she married a Stuart. Taking it, then, as six generations, the normal proportion remaining of the original male stock would be  $\frac{1}{64}$  only, yet we find the characters essentially similar. The duplicity, too, of the Stuart family is proverbial. The Bourbons of France and the Hapsburgs of Germany presented similar characteristics through many generations. The latter dynasty came to an end with Maria Theresa. Her son, Joseph II., of a different male line, was an Emperor of a new mental type. "Joseph," said Frederick the Great, "is an Emperor such as Germany has not had for a long time."

The history of the Tudor Dynasty shows the presence of the same intensity, impatience of control, and strength of will in every member of the family, notwithstanding the very varied descent on the maternal side. Yet when the male line dies out, and a new dynasty ascends the throne, the character, too, changes. There is little, indeed, in common between the mental type of the Tudor family and that of the Stuart, nor, again, between that of the Stuart and that of the Guelph, though all three families presented distinct characteristics so long as the male line lasted. While the male line continues, the distinctive characteristics continue. When it comes to an end the character changes. William III., again, the sole representative of the Orange Dynasty in this country, possessed a character equally distinct



from that of the Tudors, the Stuarts, and the Guelphs. It will be for future historians to decide whether the Wettin family of our Kings resembles most in character the Hanoverian ancestors of Queen Victoria, or the family of their paternal ancestor, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha.

The first Earl of Albemarle came over from Holland with William III. in the ninth decade of the seventeenth century. Two hundred years later his lineal descendant, the then Earl, as well as his brothers, presented a distinctly Dutch type of figure and countenance, although his ancestors had married English wives. Two hundred years represents six generations, so that, according to the Galtonic mathematical theory, the Dutch descent would be represented by  $\frac{1}{64}$  only. Surely there must be here some preponderating influence in the male line. In Richard III. we find all the distinctive mental qualities of his father, Richard, Duke of York, but in a much higher state of development. In him are reproduced and intensified the great talents, the military capacity, the ambition, far-sightedness, unscrupulousness, hypocrisy, and disregard of human life, which characterised his father. On the other hand, the Neville character, of which the Earl of Warwick was the type, and which, according to the Galtonic sub-division theory, he ought to have inherited from his mother, is conspicuous by its absence.

This view of the (at least) occasional preponderance of characteristics in the male line is borne out by the observation of deviations from physiological standards. Sir Alfred Garrod, in his work on "Gout," mentions the case of a gentleman who can trace gout in his family in a direct male line for 400 years. During this period the disease attacked every eldest son without a single intermission. It came on at an early age, and was therefore not acquired, and always showed itself in a severe form. Four hundred years means twelve generations. On the equal division theory the original tendency to gout must have been divided by two twelve times, leaving the share normally due to Sir Alfred's patient  $\frac{1}{4096}$ ! Where does the equal division come in?

Indeed, it is no more possible to approach the study of eugenics and the influence of heredity on character without reference to history, than it is to study the evolution of the organic world without reference to the evidence of past ages. Modern observations have their value, as Darwin found with his experiments on pigeons and other species, but only as a test, to confirm or otherwise, the conclusions arrived at by the records of former times found in the geological strata.

When we consider the problems of heredity from a more extended point of view, as in the case of races and nations, the appeal



to history is still more imperative. In numerous instances there are differences so conspicuous that he that runs may read. To take, first, the great divisions of mankind, the Caucasian, the Mongolian, and the Negroid (white, yellow, and black races). The influence of heredity is seen here on the largest scale. The characteristics of these great types, both mental and physical, are well known to all. There can be no mistake here as to the influence of heredity. Environment will not make a black man white, nor a white man yellow. A negro retains his type whether on the west coast of Africa, or in the centre of the North American Continent. It has, indeed, been maintained by some that races change their type and character under changed geographical surroundings. Such a view is consistent only with a very superficial knowledge of the history of nations. It is not supported by the persistence of the Jewish type, mental and physical, for 4,000 years, under all varieties of climate and environment.

The same result is shown, on a much larger scale, in the history of the Chinese and Japanese races. Both China and Japan have been peopled for thousands of years by Mongolian or Mongoloid races. The type has been in no way changed by the geographical position or climate. In both cases the present inhabitants were preceded by people of the Caucasian type. These aboriginal inhabitants are still represented in certain parts of Japan by the Ainus. Thus, if climate has any effect in changing a type, either the Caucasian Ainus ought to have approached the Mongolian type or the present races of China and Japan have come to resemble their Caucasian predecessors.

In our own country we see, on a smaller scale, the same persistence of the several types. We may still trace the emotional character of the Celtic races in Wales and Ireland, where those races most predominate. The eloquence of the Celt, too, is still conspicuous among them. The Scandinavian character and physique is also found to be prevalent along the east coast of England and Scotland, the parts which have been most overrun by the Scandinavian invasion. In the Orkney Islands, which have from the earliest historic times been inhabited by a Scandinavian race, I found the characteristic type of countenance prevalent to a very striking degree. Indeed, it appeared to be almost universal, and is in strongly marked contrast to the usual type of the central and southern parts of England, and, indeed, with that of the greater part of Scotland.

A remarkable instance of persistence of type is pointed out by Bishop Lightfoot in one of his commentaries. Before its invasion by the Frankish tribes France was inhabited by a Celtic race called Gauls. A section of this race, as the result of some great social convulsion, had left Gaul, and migrated eastward, and had, after various



wanderings, settled in the middle of Asia Minor. Here, surrounded by races of an entirely different character, they continued to preserve the salient mental features of the Celtic races. In St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians the Bishop traces, by the manner in which he addresses them, their distinctive mental characteristics, and points out the wide difference between his language to them and that to the speculative oriental mystics of the Asiatic nations by which they were surrounded, as the Ephesians and Colossians. Equally distinct, too, was it from that to the dissolute and polished Grecians who lived at Corinth.

S. Paul's denunciation of the "drunkenness and revellings" of the Galatians will certainly coincide with certain shortcomings of the Celtic race, if not, as the Bishop suggests, pointing to a "darling sin" of that people. He, however, quotes Diodorus Siculus, Cicero, and Ammianus as evidence of the well-known intemperance of the Gauls, and also of their meanness, to which the Apostle also refers when he speaks of their niggardly almsgiving as a mere "mockery of God."

The same Roman writers describe the Gauls as being especially quick of apprehension, easily susceptible of impressions and eager for knowledge, but at the same time inconstant and quarrelsome. These two characteristics appear to have made a special impression on the Apostle. "I marvel," he says, "that ye change so quickly." Such sudden changes he can only attribute to the influence of hypnotism. *τίς ὑμᾶς ἐβάδισεν*, he asks: "Who has hypnotised\* you?" (Gal. iii, 1). The reference to the second of these shortcomings is still more emphatic. "If ye bite and devour one another," he says, "take heed that ye be not consumed one of another" (Gal. v, 15). Is there not a parallel to this in an ancient fable relating, surely, in allegory, to a certain branch of this same Celtic race, which records the mutual extermination of certain carnivorous mammalia of the family of the Felidæ, residing, I believe, in the neighbourhood of Kilkenny, in Ireland?

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\* *βαρκαρία* was probably the Greek synonym for what we now speak of a hypnotic suggestion.







