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less value, indeed, than Crabb Robinson's Diary, because Miss Mitford was by no means so accurate a judge of human character and capacity as Crabb Robinson. But it is vivacious reading from beginning to end, not a little of its piquancy being caused by Miss Mitford's sharp and sudden way of estimating people's powers and characters, and equally sharp and sudden way of changing her opinion. What a terrible iconoclast this good little woman was! Johnson himself could not have been more dogmatic and paradoxical. In general, she seems to have taken up rising genius and become enthusiastic about it when it was only rising, and to have got angry with it and called it contemptuous names when it had become famous. Who would have thought that the authoress of "Our Village" could be thus sharp and sarcastic? Where did she get, how did she nourish, such a fund of spite? It is not too much to say that she has thus alternately praised and scoffed at all the eminent men and women who came under her keen eyes, from Charles James Fox to Harriet Beecher Stowe. Readers on this side of the water will feel some interest in learning that the man she seems to have admired most—to be sure, he did not remain very long under her close observation—was Daniel Webster.

"I PROPOSE to show in this book that a man's natural abilities are derived by inheritance under exactly the same limitations as are the form and physical features of the whole organic world. Consequently, as it is easy, notwithstanding those limitations, to obtain by careful selection a permanent breed of dogs or horses gifted with peculiar powers of running or of doing anything else, so it would be quite practicable to produce a highly-gifted race of men by judicious marriages during several consecutive generations." Such are the opening sentences of the introductory chapter to a work called "Hereditary Genius," by Francis Galton, F. R. S., of London, which is introduced to American readers by Messrs. Appleton. The two sentences we have quoted are the keynote to the whole volume. Mr. Galton is convinced that genius, skill, and, indeed, all remarkable qualities of mind or body, are hereditary; and he sets about proving this theory, as nearly as it may be proved, by an elaborate and tabulated exposition of the numbers of illustrious men in every walk of life who have had eminent rela-

tives. Obviously Mr. Galton's theory, whether it be a scientific proposition or a mere *aperçu*, looks apt and probable. It seems reasonable that the intermarrying of people of intellect should bring forth another generation of people of intellect. But we doubt whether Mr. Galton's ingenious and elaborate lists and tables really carry us much beyond the point from which we may see that there is some substantial reason for admitting the aptness and probability of the theory. Some of the illustrations in this remarkably clever book remind one a little of the manner in which somebody cited by Macaulay used to argue that Jacobins always have three names—namely, by stringing together Charles James Fox, Theobald Wolfe Tone, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, John Horne Tooke, and all other names which suited his line of argument. Our own impressions are with Mr. Galton rather than against him, and he has certainly produced a very ingenious, interesting, and able volume; but he has hardly pushed his theory high enough up into the clear, dry air of scientific debate to secure it as yet a chance of full, grave, and exhaustive consideration.

NOT much need be said of the new novel, "Only Herself" (Harper & Brothers), by Mrs. Pender Cudlip, who used to be Miss Annie Thomas. It is a clever, bright story in its way—a sort of feminine compound of Anthony Trollope and Edmund Yates. If there were any use in being sorry for anything which was probably inevitable, one might be sorry for Annie Thomas having to convert herself into a regular hack writer of novels, so many per year. There was a time when this vivacious, fresh young Irishwoman promised to make a mark on literature, but that time has passed, and she now keeps on grinding at the novel-making machine like dozens of other men and women, no worse, no better. There is not one hint of an original character or idea in this latest of her novels. It is pleasant reading enough for those who are not tired of mere cockneyism, but there is nothing in it to remember, or to bid us hope.

THERE are so many ladies named Edwards engaged in the writing of novels that it would be very natural and excusable if the public were to hash them all up together, after the fashion of the Englishman who expressed his wonder and regret that a statesman so