

THE POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENT OF THE HUMAN BREED
UNDER THE EXISTING CONDITIONS OF LAW AND
SENTIMENT.^a

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In fulfilling the honorable charge that has been intrusted to me of delivering the Huxley lecture, I shall endeavor to carry out what I understand to have been the wish of its founders, namely, to treat broadly some new topic belonging to a class in which Huxley himself would have felt a keen interest, rather than to expatiate on his character and the work of his noble life.

That which I have selected for to-night is one which has occupied my thoughts for many years, and to which a large part of my published inquiries have borne a direct though silent reference. Indeed, the remarks I am about to make would serve as an additional chapter to my books on Hereditary Genius and on Natural Inheritance. My subject will be "The possible improvement of the human race under the existing conditions of law and sentiment." It has not hitherto been approached along the ways that recent knowledge has laid open, and it occupies in consequence a less dignified position in scientific estimation than it might. It is smiled at as most desirable in itself and possibly worthy of academic discussion, but absolutely out of the question as a practical problem. My aim in this lecture is to show cause for a different opinion. Indeed, I hope to induce anthropologists to regard human improvement as a subject that should be kept openly and squarely in view, not only on account of its transcendent importance, but also because it affords excellent but neglected fields for investigation. I shall show that our knowledge is already sufficient to justify the pursuit of this, perhaps the grandest of all objects, but that we know less of the conditions upon which success depends than we might and ought to ascertain. The limits of our knowledge and of our ignorance will become clearer as we proceed.

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HUMAN VARIETY.

The natural character and faculties of human beings differ at least as widely as those of the domesticated animals, such as dogs and horses, with whom we are familiar. In disposition some are gentle and good-tempered, others surly and vicious; some are courageous, others timid; some are eager, others sluggish; some have large powers of endurance, others are quickly fatigued; some are muscular and powerful, others are weak; some are intelligent, others stupid; some have tenacious memories of places and persons, others frequently stray and are slow at recognizing. The number and variety of aptitudes, especially in dogs, is truly remarkable; among the most notable being the tendency to herd sheep, to point, and to retrieve. So it is with the various natural qualities that go toward the making of civic worth in man. Whether it be in character, disposition, energy, intellect, or physical power, we each receive at our birth a definite endowment, allegorized by the parable related in St. Matthew, some receiving many talents, others few; but each person being responsible for the profitable use of that which has been intrusted to him.

DISTRIBUTION OF QUALITIES IN A NATION.

Experience shows that while talents are distributed in endless different degrees, the frequency of those different degrees follows certain statistical laws, of which the best known is the normal law of frequency. This is the result whenever variations are due to the combined action of many small and different causes, whatever may be the causes and whatever the object in which the variations occur, just as twice 2 always makes 4, whatever the objects may be. It therefore holds true with approximate precision for variables of totally different sorts, as, for instance, stature of man, errors made by astronomers in judging minute intervals of time, bullet marks around the bull's-eye in target practice, and differences of marks gained by candidates at competitive examinations. There is no mystery about the fundamental principles of this abstract law; it rests on such simple fundamental conceptions as, that if we toss 2 pence in the air they will, in the long run, come down one head and one tail twice as often as both heads or both tails. I will assume, then, that the talents, so to speak, that go to the formation of civic worth are distributed with rough approximation according to this familiar law. In doing so, I in no way disregard the admirable work of Prof. Karl Pearson on the distribution of qualities, for which he was adjudged the Darwin medal of the Royal Society a few years ago. He has amply proved that we must not blindly trust the normal law of frequency; in fact, that when variations are minutely studied they rarely fall into that perfect symmetry about the mean value, which is one of its consequences. Nevertheless, my conscience is clear

in using this law in the way I am about to. I say that *if* certain qualities vary normally, such and such will be the results; that these qualities are of a class that are found, whenever they have been tested, to vary normally to a fair degree of approximation, and consequently we may infer that our results are trustworthy indications of real facts.

A talent is a sum whose exact value few of us care to know, although we all appreciate the inner sense of the beautiful parable. I will, therefore, venture to adapt the phraseology of the allegory to my present purpose by substituting for "talent" the words "normal talent." The value of this normal talent in respect to each and any specified quality or faculty is such that one-quarter of the people receive for their respective shares more than one normal talent *over and above* the average of all the shares. Our normal talent is therefore identical with what is technically known as the "probable error." Therefrom the whole of the following table starts into life, evolved from that of the "*probability integral*."

TABLE I.—Normal distribution (to the nearest per ten thousand and to the nearest per hundred).

-4°.		-3°.	-2°.	-1°.	M.	+1°.	+2°.	+3°.	+4°.	Total.
r and below.	<i>u.</i>	<i>t.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>r.</i>	R.	S.	T.	U.	V and above.	
35	180	672	1,613	2,500	2,500	1,613	672	180	35	10,000
	<u>2</u>	7	16	25	25	16	7	<u>2</u>		100

It expresses the distribution of any normal quality, or any group of normal qualities, among 10,000 persons in terms of the normal talent. The M in the upper line occupies the position of mediocrity, or that of the average of what all have received; the +1°, +2°, etc., and the -1°, -2°, etc., refer to normal talents. These numerals stand as graduations at the heads of the vertical lines by which the table is divided. The entries between the divisions are the numbers per 10,000 of those who receive sums between the amounts specified by those divisions. Thus, by the hypothesis, 2,500 receive more than M but less than M+1°, 1,613 receive more than M+1° but less than M+2°, and so on. The terminals have only an inner limit; thus, 35 receive more than 4°, some to perhaps a very large but indefinite amount. The divisions might have been carried much further, but the numbers in the classes between them would become less and less trustworthy. The left half of the series exactly reflects the right half. As it will be useful henceforth to distinguish these classes, I have used the *capital* or large letters, R, S, T, U, V, for those above mediocrity and corresponding *italic* or small letters, *r*, *s*, *t*, *u*, *v*, for those below mediocrity, *r* being the counterpart of R, *s* of S, and so on.

In the lowest lines the same values are given, but more roughly, to the nearest whole percentage.

It will assist in comprehending the values of different grades of civic worth to compare them with the corresponding grades of adult male stature in our nation. I will take the figures from my *Natural Inheritance*, premising that the distribution of stature in various peoples has been well investigated and shown to be closely normal. The average height of the adult males, to whom my figures refer, was nearly 5 feet 8 inches, and the value of their "normal talent" (which is a measure of the spread of distribution) was very nearly $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches. From these data it is easily reckoned that class U would contain men whose heights exceed 6 feet $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Even they are tall enough to overlook a hatless mob, while the higher classes, such as V, W, and X, tower above it in an increasingly marked degree. So the civic worth (however that term may be defined) of U-class men, and still more of V-class, are notably superior to the crowd, though they are far below the heroic order. The rarity of a V-class man in each specified quality or group of qualities is as 35 in 10,000, or, say, for the convenience of using round numbers, as 1 to 300. A man of the W class is ten times rarer, and of the X class rarer still; but I shall avoid giving any more exact definition of X than as a value considerably rarer than V. This gives a general but just idea of the distribution throughout a population of each and every quality taken separately so far as it is normally distributed. As already mentioned, it does the same for *any* group of normal qualities; thus, if marks for classics and for mathematics were severally normal in their distribution, the combined marks gained by each candidate in both those subjects would be distributed normally also, this being one of the many interesting properties of the law of frequency.

COMPARISON OF THE NORMAL CLASSES WITH THOSE OF MR. BOOTH.

Let us now compare the normal classes with those into which Mr. Charles Booth has divided the population of all London, in a way that corresponds not unfairly with the ordinary conception of grades of civic worth. He reckons them from the lowest upward, and gives the numbers in each class for East London. Afterwards he treats all London in a similar manner, except that sometimes he combines two classes into one and gives the joint result. For my present purpose I had to couple them somewhat differently, first disentangling them as I best could. There seemed no better way of doing this than by assigning to the members of each couplet the same proportions that they had in East London. Though this was certainly not accurate, it is probably not far wrong. Mr. Booth has taken unheard-of pains in this great work of his to arrive at accurate results, but he emphatically says that his classes can not be separated sharply from one another. On the

contrary, their frontiers blend, and this justifies me in taking slight liberties with his figures. His class A consists of criminals, semi-criminals, loafers, and some others, who are in number at the rate of 1 per cent in all London—that is, 100 per 10,000, or nearly three times as many as the *v* class; they therefore include the whole of the *v* and spread upward into the *u*. His class B consists of very poor persons who subsist on casual earnings, many of whom are inevitably poor from shiftlessness, idleness, or drink. The numbers in this and the A class combined closely correspond with those in *t* and all below *t*.

Class C are supported by intermittent earnings; they are a hard-working people, but have a very bad character for improvidence and shiftlessness. In class D the earnings are regular, but at the low rate of 21 shillings or less a week, so none of them rise above poverty, though none are very poor. D and C together correspond to the whole of *s* combined with the lower fifth of *v*. The next class, E, is the largest of any, and comprises all those with regular standard earnings of 22 to 30 shillings a week. This class is the recognized field for all forms of cooperation and combination; in short, for trades unions. It corresponds to the upper four-fifths of *v* and the lower four-fifths of R. It is, therefore, essentially the mediocere class, standing as far below the highest in civic worth as it stands above the lowest class with its criminals and semicriminals. Next above this large mass of mediocrity comes the honorable class *F*, which consists of better-paid artisans and foremen. These are able to provide adequately for old age, and their sons become clerks, etc. *G* is the lower middle class of shopkeepers, small employers, clerks, and subordinate professional men, who as a rule are hard-working, energetic, and sober. F and G combined correspond to the upper fifth of R and the whole of S, and are, therefore, a counterpart to D and C. All above G are put together by Mr. Booth into one class, H, which corresponds to our T, U, V, and above, and is the counterpart of his two lowermost classes, A and B. So far, then, as these figures go, civic worth is distributed in fair approximation to the normal law of frequency. We also see that the classes *t*, *u*, *v*, and below are undesirables.

WORTH OF CHILDREN.

The brains of the nation lie in the higher of our classes. If such people as would be classed W or X could be distinguishable as children and procurable by money in order to be reared as Englishmen, it would be a cheap bargain for the nation to buy them at the rate of many hundred or some thousands of pounds per head. Dr. Farr, the eminent statistician, endeavored to estimate the money worth of an average baby born to the wife of an Essex laborer and thenceforward living during the usual time and in the ordinary way of his class. Dr. Farr,

with accomplished actuarial skill, capitalized the value at the child's birth of two classes of events, the one the cost of maintenance while a child and when helpless through old age, the other its earnings as boy and man. On balancing the two sides of the account the value of the baby was found to be £5. On a similar principle, the worth of an X-class baby would be reckoned in thousands of pounds. Some such "talented" folk fail, but most succeed, and many succeed greatly. They found great industries, establish vast undertakings, increase the wealth of multitudes, and amass large fortunes for themselves. Others, whether they be rich or poor, are the guides and light of the nation, raising its tone, enlightening its difficulties, and imposing its ideals. The great gain that England received through the immigration of the Huguenots would be insignificant to what she would derive from an annual addition of a few hundred children of the classes W and X. I have tried, but not yet succeeded to my satisfaction, to make an approximate estimate of the worth of a child at birth according to the class he is destined to occupy when adult. It is an eminently important subject for future investigators, for the amount of care and cost that might profitably be expended in improving the race clearly depends on its result.

DESCENT OF QUALITIES IN A POPULATION.

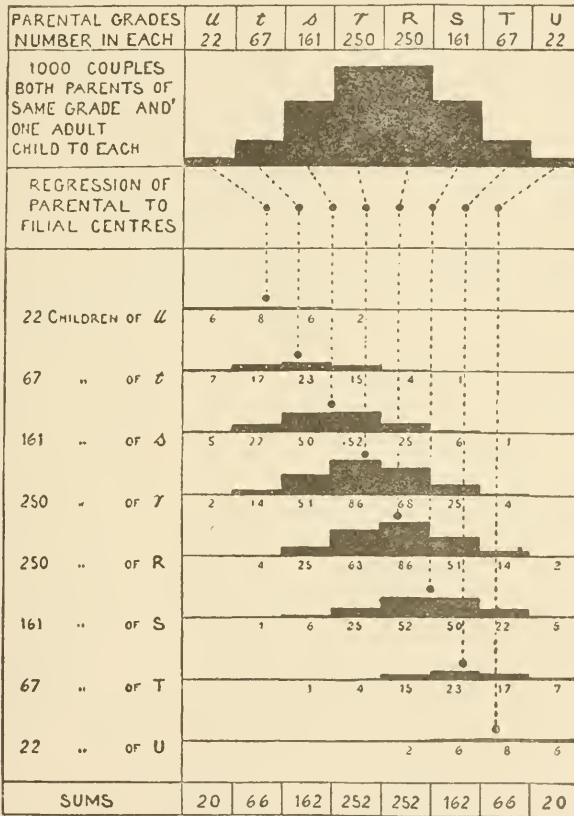
Let us now endeavor to obtain a correct understanding of the way in which the varying qualities of each generation are derived from those of its predecessor. How many, for example, of the V class in the offspring come respectively from the V, U, T, S, and other classes of parentage? The means of calculating this question for a normal population are given fully in my *Natural Inheritance*. There are three main senses in which the word parentage might be used. They differ widely, so the calculations must be modified accordingly. (1) The amount of the quality or faculty in question may be known in each parent. (2) It may be known in only one parent. (3) The two parents may belong to the same class, a V-class father in the scale of male classification always marrying a V-class mother, occupying identically the same position in the scale of female classification.

I select this last case to work out as being the one with which we shall here be chiefly concerned. It has the further merit of escaping some tedious preliminary details about converting female faculties into their corresponding male equivalents, before men and women can be treated statistically on equal terms. I shall assume in what follows that we are dealing with an ideal population, in which all marriages are equally fertile, and which is statistically the same in successive generations, both in numbers and in qualities, so many per cent being always this, so many always that, and so on. Further, I shall take no notice of offspring who die before they reach the age of marriage, nor

shall I regard the slight numerical inequality of the sexes, but will simply suppose that each parentage produces one couplet of grown-up filials, an adult man and an adult woman.

The result is shown to the nearest whole per thousand in the diagram up to "U and above." It may be read either as applying to fathers and their sons when adult, or to mothers and their daughters when adult, or, again, to parentages and filial couplets. I will not now attempt to explain the details of the calculation to those to whom these methods are new. Those who are familiar with them will easily understand the

STANDARD SCHEME OF DESCENT



exact process from what follows. There are three points of reference in a scheme of descent, which may be respectively named "mid-parental," "genetic," and "filial" centers. In the present case of both parents being alike, the position of the mid-parental center is identical with that of either parent separately. The position of the filial center is that from which the children disperse. The genetic center occupies the same position in the parental series that the filial center does in the filial series. Natural Inheritance contains abundant proof, both observational and

theoretical, that the genetic center is not and can not be identical with the parental center, but is always more mediocre, owing to the combination of ancestral influences—which are generally mediocre—with the purely parental ones. It also shows that the regression from the parental to the genetic center, in the case of stature at least, would amount to two-thirds under the conditions we are now supposing. The regression is indicated in the diagram by converging lines which are directed toward the same point below, but are stopped at one-third of the distance on the way to it. The contents of each parental class are supposed to be concentrated at the foot of the median axis of that class, this being the vertical line that divides its contents into equal parts. Its position is, approximately, but not exactly, halfway between the divisions that bound it, and is as easily calculated for the extreme classes, which have no outer terminals, as for any of the others. These median points are respectively taken to be the positions of the parental centers of the whole of each of the classes; therefore the positions attained by the converging lines that proceed from them at the points where they are stopped represent the genetic centers. From these the filials disperse to the right and left with a “spread” that can be shown to be three-quarters that of the parentages. Calculation easily determines the number of the filials that fall into the class in which the filial center is situated and of those that spread into the classes on each side. When the parental contributions from all the classes to each filial class are added together they will express the distribution of the quality among the whole of the offspring. Now it will be observed in the table that the numbers in the classes of the offspring are identical with those of the parents, when they are reckoned to the nearest whole parentage, as should be the case according to the hypothesis. Had the classes been narrower and more numerous, and if the calculations had been carried on to two more places of decimals, the correspondence would have been identical to the nearest ten thousandth. It was unnecessary to take the trouble of doing this, as the table affords a sufficient basis for what I am about to say. Though it does not profess to be more than approximately true in detail, it is certainly trustworthy in its general form, including as it does the effects of regression, filial dispersion, and the equation that connects a parental generation with a filial one when they are statistically alike. Minor corrections will be hereafter required, and can be applied when we have a better knowledge of the material. In the meantime it will serve as a standard table of descent from each generation of a people to its successor.

ECONOMY OF EFFORT.

I shall now use the table to show the economy of concentrating our attention upon the highest classes. We will therefore trace the origin of the V class, which is the highest in the table. Of its 34 or 35 sons

6 come from V parentages, 10 from U, 10 from T, 5 from S, 3 from R, and none from any class below R; but the numbers of the contributing parentages have also to be taken into account. When this is done, we see that the lower classes make their scores owing to their quantity and not to their quality, for while 35 V-class parents suffice to produce 6 sons of the V class, it takes 2,500 R-class fathers to produce 3 of them. Consequently, the richness in produce of V-class parentages is to that of the R class in an inverse ratio, or as 143 to 1. Similarly, the richness in produce of V-class children from parentages of the classes U, T, S, respectively, is as 3, $11\frac{1}{2}$, and 55 to 1. Moreover, nearly one-half of the produce of V-class parentages are V or U taken together, and nearly three-quarters of them are either V, U, or T. If, then, we desire to increase the output of V-class offspring, by far the most profitable parents to work upon would be those of the V class, and in a threefold less degree those of the U class.

When both parents are of the V class the quality of parentages is greatly superior to those in which only one parent is a V. In that case the regression of the genetic center goes twice as far back toward mediocrity, and the spread of the distribution among filials becomes nine-tenths of that among the parents, instead of being only three-quarters. The effect is shown in Table II.

TABLE II.—*Distribution of sons.*—(1) One parent of class V, the other unknown; (2) both parents of class V (from Table II, with decimal point and an 0).

	Distribution of sons.								Total.
	t.	s.	r.	R.	S.	T.	U.	V.	
(1) One V parent.....	0.3	1.2	3.5	7.9	9.6	7.5	3.6	1.3	34.3
(2) Two V parents.....				3.0	5.0	10.0	10.0	6.0	34.0

Position of the filial center of (1)=1.44, of (2)=2.89; when both parents are T it=1.58.

There is a difference of fully two divisions in the position of the genetic center, that of the single V parentage being only a trifle nearer mediocrity than that of the double T. Hence it would be bad economy to spend much effort in furthering marriages with a high class on only one side.

MARRIAGE OF LIKE TO LIKE.

In each class of society there is a strong tendency to intermarriage, which produces a marked effect in the richness of brain power of the more cultured families. It produces a still more marked effect of another kind at the lowest step of the social scale, as will be painfully evident from the following extracts from the work of Mr. C. Booth (i, 38), which refer to his class A, who form, as has been said, the lowermost third of our "v and below." "Their life is the life of savages, with vicissitudes of extreme hardship and occasional excess. From them come the battered figures who slouch through the streets and

play the beggar or the bully. They render no useful service; they create no wealth, more often they destroy it. They degrade whatever they touch, and as individuals are perhaps incapable of improvement; * * * but I do not mean to say that there are not individuals of every sort to be found in the mass. Those who are able to wash the mud may find some gems in it. There are at any rate many very piteous cases. Whatever doubt there may be as to the exact numbers of this class, it is certain that they bear a very small proportion to the rest of the population, or even to class B, with which they are mixed up and from which it is at times difficult to separate them. * * * They are barbarians, but they are a handful." He says further: "It is much to be desired and to be hoped that this class may become less hereditary in its character; there appears to be no doubt that it is now hereditary to a very considerable extent."

Many who are familiar with the habits of these people do not hesitate to say that it would be an economy and a great benefit to the country if all habitual criminals were resolutely segregated under merciful surveillance and peremptorily denied opportunities for producing offspring. It would abolish a source of suffering and misery to a future generation, and would cause no unwarrantable hardship in this.

DIPLOMAS.

It will be remembered that Mr. Booth's classification did not help us beyond classes higher than S in civic worth. If a strong and widely felt desire should arise to discover young men whose position was of the V, W, or X order, there would not be much difficulty in doing so. Let us imagine for a moment what might be done in any great university where the students are in continual competition in studies, in athletics, or in public meetings, and where their characters are publicly known to associates and to tutors. Before attempting to make a selection, acceptable definitions of civic worth would have to be made in alternative terms, for there are many forms of civic worth. The number of men of the V, W, or X classes, whom the university was qualified to contribute annually, must also be ascertained. As was said, the proportion in the general population of the V class to the remainder is as 1 to 300, and that of the W class as 1 in 3,000. But students are a somewhat selected body, because the cleverest youths, in a scholastic sense, usually find their way to universities. A considerably high level, both intellectually and physically, would be required as a qualification for candidature. The limited number who had not been automatically weeded away by this condition might be submitted in some appropriate way to the independent votes of fellow students on the one hand and of tutors on the other, whose ideals of character and merit necessarily differ. This ordeal would reduce the possible winners to a very small number, out of which an independent committee

might be trusted to make the ultimate selection. They would be guided by personal interviews. They would take into consideration all favorable points in the family histories of the candidates, giving appropriate hereditary weight to each. Probably they would agree to pass over unfavorable points, unless they were notorious and flagrant, owing to the great difficulty of ascertaining the real truth about them. Ample experience in making selections has been acquired even by scientific societies, most of which work well, including perhaps the award of their medals, which the fortunate recipients at least are tempted to consider judicious. The opportunities for selecting women in this way are unfortunately fewer, owing to the smaller number of female students, between whom comparisons might be made on equal terms. In the selection of women, when nothing is known of their athletic proficiency, it would be especially necessary to pass a high and careful medical examination; and as their personal qualities do not usually admit of being tested so thoroughly as those of men, it would be necessary to lay all the more stress on hereditary family qualities, including those of fertility and prepotency.

CORRELATION BETWEEN PROMISE IN YOUTH AND SUBSEQUENT PERFORMANCE.

No serious difficulty seems to stand in the way of classifying and giving satisfactory diplomas to youths of either sex, supposing there were a strong demand for it. But some real difficulty does lie in the question, Would such a classification be a trustworthy forecast of qualities in later life? The scheme of descent of qualities may hold good between the parents and the offspring at similar ages, but that is not the information we really want. It is the descent of qualities from men to men, not from youths to youths. The accidents that make or mar a career do not enter into the scope of this difficulty. It resides entirely in the fact that the development does not cease at the time of youth, especially in the higher natures, but that faculties and capabilities which were then latent subsequently unfold and become prominent. Putting aside the effects of serious illness, I do not suppose there is any risk of retrogression in capacity before old age comes on. The mental powers that a youth possesses continue with him as a man, but other faculties and new dispositions may arise and alter the balance of his character. He may cease to be efficient in the way of which he gave promise, and he may perhaps become efficient in unexpected directions.

The correlation between youthful promise and performance in mature life has never been properly investigated. Its measurement presents no greater difficulty, so far as I can foresee, than in other problems which have been successfully attacked. It is one of those alluded to in the beginning of this lecture as bearing on race improvement, and being on its own merits suitable for anthropological inquiry.

Let me add that I think its neglect by the vast army of highly educated persons who are connected with the present huge system of competitive examinations to be gross and unpardonable. Neither schoolmasters, tutors, officials of the universities, nor of the State department of education, have ever to my knowledge taken any serious step to solve this important problem, though the value of the present elaborate system of examinations can not be rightly estimated until it is solved. When the value of the correlation between youthful promise and adult performance shall have been determined, the figures given in the table of descent will have to be reconsidered.

AUGMENTATION OF FAVORED STOCK.

The possibility of improving the race of a nation depends on the power of increasing the productivity of the best stock. This is far more important than that of repressing the productivity of the worst. They both raise the average, the latter by reducing the undesirables, the former by increasing those who will become the lights of the nation. It is therefore all important to prove that favor to selected individuals might so increase their productivity as to warrant the expenditure in money and care that would be necessitated. An enthusiasm to improve the race would probably express itself by granting diplomas to a select class of young men and women, by encouraging their intermarriages, by hastening the time of marriage of women of that high class, and by provision for rearing children healthily. The means that might be employed to compass these ends are dowries, especially for those to whom moderate sums are important, assured help in emergencies during the early years of married life, healthy homes, the pressure of public opinion, honors, and above all the introduction of motives of religious or quasi-religious character. Indeed, an enthusiasm to improve the race is so noble in its aim that it might well give rise to the sense of a religious obligation. In other lands there are abundant instances in which religious motives make early marriages a matter of custom and continued celibacy to be regarded as a disgrace, if not a crime. The customs of the Hindoos, also of the Jews, especially in ancient times, bear this out. In all costly civilizations there is a tendency to shrink from marriage on prudential grounds. It would, however, be possible so to alter the conditions of life that the most prudent course for an X-class person should lie exactly opposite to its present direction, for he or she might find that there were advantages and not disadvantages in early marriage, and that the most prudent course was to follow their natural instincts.

We have now to consider the probable gain in the number and worth of adult offspring to these favored couples. First, as regards the effect of reducing the age at marriage. There is unquestionably a tendency among cultured women to delay or even to abstain from marriage; they

dislike the sacrifice of freedom and leisure, of opportunities for study, and of cultured companionship. This has to be reckoned with. I heard of the reply of a lady official of a college for women to a visitor who inquired as to the after life of the students. She answered that one-third profited by it, another third gained little good, and a third were failures. "But what becomes of the failures?" "Oh, they marry."

There appears to be a considerable difference between the earliest age at which it is physiologically desirable that a woman should marry and that at which the ablest, or at least the most cultured, women usually do. Acceleration in the time of marriage, often amounting to seven years, as from 28 or 29 to 21 or 22, under influences such as those mentioned above is by no means improbable. What would be its effect on productivity? It might be expected to act in two ways—

(1) By shortening each generation by an amount roughly proportionate to the diminution in age at which marriage occurs. Suppose the span of each generation to be shortened by one-sixth, so that six take the place of five, and that the productivity of each marriage is unaltered, it follows that one-sixth more children will be brought into the world during the same time, which is, roughly, equivalent to increasing the productivity of an unshortened generation by that amount.

(2) By saving from certain barrenness the earlier part of the child-bearing period of the woman. Authorities differ so much as to the direct gain of fertility due to early marriage that it is dangerous to express an opinion. The large and thriving families that I have known were the offspring of mothers who married very young.

The next influence to be considered is that of healthy homes. These and a simple life certainly conduce to fertility. They also act indirectly by preserving lives that would otherwise fail to reach adult age. It is not necessarily the weakest who perish in this way—for instance, zymotic disease falls indiscriminately on the weak and the strong.

Again, the children would be healthier and therefore more likely in their turn to become parents of a healthy stock. The great danger to high civilizations, and remarkably so to our own, is the exhaustive drain upon the rural districts to supply large towns. Those who come up to the towns may produce large families, but there is much reason to believe that these dwindle away in subsequent generations. In short, the towns sterilize rural vigor.

As one of the reasons for choosing the selected class would be that of hereditary fertility, it follows that the selected class would respond more than other classes to the above influences.

I do not attempt to appraise the strength of the combined six influences just described. If each added one-sixth to the produce the number of offspring would be doubled. This does not seem impossible,

considering the large families of colonists, and of those in many rural districts; but it is a high estimate. Perhaps the fairest approximation may be that these influences would cause the X women to bring into the world an average of one adult son and one adult daughter in addition to what they would otherwise have produced. The table of descent applies to one son or to one daughter per couple; it may now be read as specifying the net gain and showing its distribution. Should this estimate be thought too high, the results may be diminished accordingly.

It is no absurd idea that outside influences should hasten the age of marrying and make it customary for the best to marry the best. A superficial objection is sure to be urged that the fancies of young people are so incalculable and so irresistible that they can not be guided. No doubt they are so in some exceptional cases. I lately heard from a lady who belonged to a county family of position that a great aunt of hers had scandalized her own domestic circle two generations ago by falling in love with the undertaker at her father's funeral and insisting on marrying him. Strange vagaries occur, but considerations of social position and of fortune, with frequent opportunities of intercourse, tell much more in the long run than sudden fancies that want roots. In a community deeply impressed with the desire of encouraging marriages between persons of equally high ability the social pressure directed to produce the desired end would be so great as to insure a notable amount of success.

PROFIT AND LOSS.

The problem to be solved now assumes a clear shape. A child of the X class (whatever X signifies) would have been worth so and so at its birth, and one of each of the other grades, respectively, would have been worth so and so; 100 X parentages can be made to produce a net gain of 100 adult sons and 100 adult daughters who will be distributed among the classes according to the standard table of descent. The total value of the prospective produce of the 100 parentages can then be estimated by an actuary, and consequently the sum that it is legitimate to spend in favoring an X parentage. The clear and distinct statement of a problem is often more than halfway toward its solution. There seems no reason why this one should not be solved between limiting values that are not too wide apart to be useful.

EXISTING ACTIVITIES.

Leaving aside profitable expenditure from a purely money point of view, the existence should be borne in mind of immense voluntary activities that have nobler aims. The annual voluntary contributions in the British Isles to public charities alone amount, on the lowest computation, to £14,000,000, a sum which Sir H. Burdett asserts on good grounds is by no means the maximum obtainable. (Hospitals and Charities, 1898, p. 85.)

There are other activities long since existing which might well be extended. I will not dwell, as I am tempted to do, on the endowments of scholarships and the like, which aim at finding and educating the fittest youths for the work of the nation; but I will refer to that wholesome practice during all ages of wealthy persons interesting themselves in and befriending poor but promising lads. The number of men who have owed their start in a successful life to help of this kind must have struck every reader of biographies. This relationship of befriender and befriended is hardly to be expressed in English by a simple word that does not connote more than is intended. The word "patron" is odious. Recollecting Dr. Johnson's abhorrence of the patrons of his day, I turned to an early edition of his dictionary in hope of deriving some amusement as well as instruction from his definition of the word, and I was not disappointed. He defines "patron" as "a wretch who supports with insolence and is repaid with flattery." That is totally opposed to what I would advocate, namely, a kindly and honorable relation between a wealthy man who has made his position in the world and a youth who is avowedly his equal in natural gifts, but who has yet to make it. It is one in which each party may well take pride, and I feel sure that if its value were more widely understood it would become commoner than it is.

Many degrees may be imagined that lie between mere befriending and actual adoption, and which would be more or less effective in freeing capable youths from the hindrances of narrow circumstances, in enabling girls to marry early and suitably, and in securing favor to their subsequent offspring. Something in this direction is commonly but half unconsciously done by many great landowners whose employments for man and wife, together with good cottages, are given to exceptionally deserving couples. The advantage of being connected with a great and liberally managed estate being widely appreciated, there are usually more applicants than vacancies, so selection can be exercised. The consequence is that the class of men found upon these properties is markedly superior to those in similar positions elsewhere. It might well become point of honor, and as much an avowed object, for noble families to gather fine specimens of humanity around them as it is to procure and maintain fine breeds of cattle, etc., which are costly, but repay in satisfaction.

There is yet another existing form of princely benevolence which might be so extended as to exercise a large effect on race improvement. I mean the provision to exceptionally promising young couples of healthy and convenient houses at low rentals. A continually renewed settlement of this kind can be easily imagined, free from the taint of patronage and analogous to colleges, with their self-elected fellowships and rooms for residence that shall become an exceedingly desirable residence for a specified time. It would be so in the same way that a good club by its own social advantages attracts desirable candidates.

The tone of the place would be higher than elsewhere on account of the high quality of the inmates, and it would be distinguished by an air of energy, intelligence, health, and self-respect, and by mutual helpfulness.

PROSPECTS.

It is pleasant to contrive Utopias, and I have indulged in many, of which a great society is one, publishing intelligence and memoirs, holding yearly elections, administering large funds, establishing personal relations like a missionary society with its missionaries, keeping elaborate registers and discussing them statistically with honest precision. But the first and pressing point is to thoroughly justify any crusade at all in favor of race improvement. More is wanted in the way of unbiased scientific inquiry along the many roads I have hurried over to make every stepping-stone safe and secure, and to make it certain that the game is really worth the candle. All I dare hope to effect by this lecture is to prove that in seeking for the improvement of the race we aim at what is apparently possible to accomplish, and that we are justified in following every path in a resolute and hopeful spirit that seems to lead toward that end. The magnitude of the inquiry is enormous, but its object is one of the highest man can accomplish. The faculties of future generations will necessarily be distributed according to laws of heredity, whose statistical effects are no longer vague, for they are measured and expressed in formulæ. We can not doubt the existence of a great power ready to hand and capable of being directed with vast benefit as soon as we shall have learned to understand and apply it. To no nation is a high human breed more necessary than to our own, for we plant our stock all over the world and lay the foundation of the dispositions and capacities of future millions of the human race.