

(continued from previous page)

be of two different sorts. Sometimes they are not very alike and may be one of each, a boy and a girl, no more alike than brothers and sisters born separately. In other cases twins are of the same sex and as alike as two peas or more so. In three out of four cases of twinning the first happens. Two individuals develop together and have differing inheritance. In the fourth case, however, the human egg divides completely and two identical individuals develop.

Identical Twins

At the present time about two thousand pairs of identical twins are born in Great Britain every year, and a proportionate number in this country. Jacob and Esau are the classical example of twins who are non-identical. The similarity in the case of identical twins is astonishing and many strange stories are told of them. Their identity extends even to finger prints. The right hands of a pair of identical twins are more alike as judged by finger prints than the right



"King Solomon's suggested experiment was abandoned"

and left hands of the same person. Hand-writing is similar, teeth decay together, similarity in bodily and mental characteristics is pervasive and minute. Identical twins are created equal. No others are.

In England at least one person in two hundred is feeble-minded; and again the proportion, if judged by the same standards, is about the same here. What could be done to reduce this unfortunate form of inequality? Something could be done by eugenics, but not nearly as much as some enthusiasts have imagined. The reason is clear. About 80 per cent. of mentally deficient children are born to parents who are apparently normal. In their case there was no known reason why they should not have normal children: but they carried some latent defect in their inheritance and it appeared in some one or more of their children. Mental defect is mainly transmitted by persons who are themselves unaffected. If every defective person were prevented from having children it would still take hundreds of generations to eliminate mental defect.

Environment Also Counts

Now what about environment, or what we are born into. Well, in many things it makes what is already unequal more so. It is important to have a clear idea about the relation between heredity and environment. They are often regarded as opposed and contrasting influences. This is not so. They interact. The way the genes themselves interact and what they produce depends on the conditions, on

the environment, that is. Take the case of stature or body height. Bodily stature has usually been regarded as mainly hereditary in origin, but it has recently been shown that living conditions can make a big difference. Shortly before the war in the Pacific began an American scientist made a large-scale study of Japanese born in Hawaii and their own relatives and connections born in Japan. This study showed those born and brought up in Hawaii to be taller and heavier than those in Japan, a different diet being an important factor in bringing about this change in stature. Heredity and environment interact here. Environment can thus increase, or of course sometimes decrease, the inequalities due to heredity.

HEALTH

BATTLE FOR HEALTH, by Stephen Taylor, 8/8 posted.—Stephen Taylor has written this book because he believes that knowledge is one of the chief weapons against disease. He has traced the great advances made in social prevention of disease and shows how they may be extended by public co-operation. The many photographs and readily-understood charts assist in making this a striking book.

THE VIRUS, LIFE'S ENEMY, by Kenneth M. Smith, 14/8 posted.—This is an account of the discovery and pursuit of the viruses which cause disease in man, animals and plants. It is an account for the layman, non-technical and interesting.

DISEASE AND THE SOCIAL SYSTEM, by Arthur Guirdham, 19/3 posted.—The author points to the increased strain of modern civilisation as a potent factor in bad health. Many diseases are a response to, or an evasion of, strain. Guirdham has remedies to suggest which are both helpful and provocative.

CHEMISTRY OF FOOD AND NUTRITION, by Henry C. Sherman, 28/8 posted.—The study of nutrition in relation to health has made tremendous advances in recent years. This is the latest, revised edition of an important book on the principles of nutrition.

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