

Names Essay Subject

The new history subject of New York has announced the subject of its 10th international prize competition, "How can youth develop co-operative and harmonious relations among the races of the earth."

This competition is open to all under the age of 30, in the countries of Africa, Alaska, Australia, Canada, Newfoundland, and New Zealand.

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BIOLOGY AND EDUCATION

It was said long ago that the proper study of mankind is man. The study, it need hardly be added, has many ramifications; but there is not one more important than that which relates to the problem of heredity. Utopian dreamers, or well-wishers of their race—according as one chooses to regard them—have speculated on the possibility of extirpating hereditary predisposition to mental or physical defects in future generations, by discontinuance of the marriage of persons unlikely to prove desirable parents. Nor is it alone the elimination of defects which they have in mind. By attention to breeding they are sanguine of carrying the human stock to such altitudes of greatness as to dwarf into insignificance the race of supermen whom the Nazis are doing their best to develop by excluding from their country all but Nordics. The idea, of course, is as old as the days of Plato who, in his "Republic," proposed that the race should be carried on by parents chosen by the State, the resulting offspring being committed, like racehorses, to the care of proper trainers. It is all very well to say with Huxley that a man ought to be careful in his choice of parents. The drawback to these plans of artificial breeding is that children have a way of differing fundamentally from their parents and from each other. It seems hopeless to expect that a time will ever come when they will be produced after any prescribed pattern, or that those temperamental differences which so frequently astonish us in brothers and sisters, will ever be obliterated. Even twinning offers no security. The closing years of the famous Siamese twins have led to have been embittered by their opposite views on the American Civil War.

The problem does not trouble the breeder of the lower orders of creation, for mistakes there are easily rectified. If the offspring of the tumbler or the pointer shows a tendency to revert to the primitive rock pigeon, the disgusted breeder may wring its neck. In Plato's city, deformed or defective children were "expelled"; but what Government would venture on a course so ruthlessly logical as was adopted by the "guardians"? No; there is no shorter cut to racial improvement than was discovered by our fathers last century when they universalised education; and we should be thankful for the assurance tendered by so high an authority as Dr. E. W. MacBride that they were right. As Professor of Zoology in the Imperial College of Science for more than two decades, Dr. MacBride, in an article in the London "Morning Post," calls biology to witness that the heritability, not only of physical, but mental characters. He admits that it is still, to most scientists, a question that there are few authorities who maintain that the benefits of education are limited to immediate recipients; and that intelligence and

ability are far from being transmissible qualities. Again, Dr. MacBride admits that, in the human sphere, intelligence, evidence as it is not due to chance. In English-speaking countries, liberty dies so easily on her throne, that, till the assumption was corrected by hard experience, it was taken for granted that democracy would find as comfortable a seat in all countries claiming to be civilised. It would not have been expected that the right of a man to elect his rulers, in other words to call his political soul his own, would have caused so much difficulty as has been experienced in Russia, Germany, and Italy in getting itself established, or that lungs would have to be habituated to the pure air of freedom for at least a few generations in order to create a craving for it.

There are some who say that this craving is inherent, and cannot be acquired, and that there is something in his national temperament which inclines the Briton to revolt against the idea of being the slave of any ruler. Dr. MacBride, however, holds that what applies to one section of the human race applies to another; that habits of thought may be acquired by training and experience; and that there is no limit to what may be accomplished through these agencies. This theory he has tested by experimentation; and the human race not being available as a subject, he has used rats. He says that F.R.S. is quoted as having used generations of rats to solve the problem as to the heritability of mental conditions. Into a tank of water provided with two ways of escape, in the shape of platforms of which one was electrified and the other safe and easy, successive generations of rats were plunged. Shocks of electric current were used to avoid the electrified route and take the other; and with later generations, the avoidance became an instinct. Let it should be said that the lesson was imparted by parent to offspring, the litter was removed from the mother at birth, and suckled by a foster-mother wholly unfamiliar with the tank. Yet, when placed in the water, rat after rat avoided the danger; and what could the experimenter conclude but that there was a case of transmitted intelligence? Experiments of other kinds, with insects for their subjects, clinched the truth that mental habits can, like physical traits, be evolved. The discovery has a bearing on evolution; but its real significance to humankind lies in demonstration of what education protracted over a long enough period, may accomplish. We cannot all be born in a country where supermen, by the mere fact of their birth there, are as common as "autumnal leaves that strew the brooks in Val-d'Ambroia," but a very good substitute for such a privilege may be found in an adequate system of education, which as Huxley long ago discovered, means something much more than the mere development of the intelligence. That biologist was once a fanatical upholder of the doctrine of the mental faculties, until years ago he convinced himself that it was not nearly as much mental as moral education that the human race needed; that a mere knowledge of the classics or mathematics, or any other subject in the curriculum of the schools, was no qualification for the duties of a citizen, which is to see that wrong does not prevail, and right does, and that a man does not shirk himself of his obligations as a citizen by stepping his mind in the lore of the ages. Hence, agnostic though he was, Huxley gave the first place to moral education, on the ground that without it the duties of a citizen would be wanting, in the absence of which a sense of public duty is a vain thing. As Dr. MacBride says it was Huxley's conviction that the education of the intellect does nothing to correct the predilection of most people for "getting through" to a minimum of pleasure, and a minimum of pain. At the rest, they view life as a spectacle, and not as a stage on which all men and women should be players.

MEDICAL EXHIBITION BY THE ACTING SURGEON GENERAL

TWO SESSIONS TODAY

Many hundreds visited the medical exhibition at the University yesterday. His Excellency the Governor (Sir W. St. John Dugan) and many prominent citizens were present in the afternoon at the invitation of the Medical School, and at night the public was admitted to the attendance exceeding the expectations of the University authorities. The exhibition, which has been in connection with the jubilee celebration of the Medical School, will be continued this afternoon and tonight.

Medical students and teachers were more than willing in some instances to initiate visitors into the mysteries of modern medical science. In one department they invited spectators to have a blood test, and to experience the satisfaction which comes from knowing the composition of their own blood. This required the extraction of a drop of blood, but visitors were assured fearlessly that this operation was only a slight annoyance for the purpose of being examined to prefer to remain in "group X."

GATHERING OF 1500 MEDICAL MEN

B.M.A. Conference To Begin On September 10

MELBOURNE, August 30.—The Melbourne meeting of the British Medical Association will be held in the week beginning September 9. This will be the final official figure of the number of honorary and honorary members of the association. About 1500 members of the association and representatives of corresponding societies will appear in accordance with the programme of the meeting, which was begun in London a month ago and adjourned to Melbourne at the Town Hall on Tuesday. Sessions of business will be held in the evening also at the official religious services, which will be held at St. Paul's Cathedral that afternoon. Other sessions of business will be the ceremony of conferring honorary degrees at the University on Wednesday, September 11, the garden party which will follow, and the ceremony on the following afternoon at the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, when honorary memberships will be conferred on distinguished visitors.

The largest party of visitors, principally from Great Britain, but with representatives from Canada and the United States, will arrive at Adelaide in the week-end by the Ararangi, which has more than 250 famous physicians and surgeons on it, including a passenger list.

For the purposes of the general meeting, the association will be divided into 14 sections, each representing a separate branch of medical science, and these sections will meet separately at the University on the Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings, the sections being preceded by the evening addresses by distinguished British and foreign specialists. Most of the meetings and lectures will be highly technical, and will be attended by the members of the association. On September 13, however, Lord Horder will give a public lecture on "Eugenics."

The Council of the University has awarded the degree of Doctor of Science to Mr. Arnold Leitch, B.Sc., Ph.D., and Mrs. Kay Stanley Burdon, B.Sc. Mr. Leitch submitted as his thesis his recently published work, "Thermionic Emission," supported by other scientific papers, and Mr. Burdon presented a number of scientific papers, the main work being "Investigations into the Surface Phenomena presented in Mercury." The degree of Master of Science has been conferred on Mr. Harry Adams Grant, B.Sc., for a thesis on "The Minimum Water Requirements of Pinus Radiata." These degrees will be conferred at the Commemoration in December. Dr. Reimann, who is staff in the research laboratory of the General Electric Company, Wembley, England, he obtained his Doctor of Philosophy at the Berlin University with highest honors. He gained a three-year scholarship at the Norwegian Institute of Technology, Alfred College, where he won a further scholarship, which took him to the University of Cambridge for three years. There he entered upon the study of the course, and obtained the ordinary and honors B.Sc. degrees. Before going abroad for further study, Dr. Reimann held the appointment of evening lecturer and demonstrator in physics at the Adelaide University for three years. Dr. Reimann is the younger son of the late Mr. I. G. Reimann and Mrs. Reimann, who is residing with her daughter, Miss Kay Reimann, a violin teacher, at Young Street, North Unley. Mr. Burdon graduated in science at the University of Adelaide in 1916, and is now lecturing in physics at the University. Mr. Cromer gained his B.Sc. degree at the University of Adelaide in 1932.

At Afternoon Tea

Many guests at the University of Adelaide Medical School jubilee conversations were present at afternoon tea in the Refectory yesterday. Tables, covered with white cloths, were arranged with floral decorations comprised of sweet peas, nasturtiums, gaultherias, Iceland poppies, and stocks. Among those noticed at afternoon tea were His Excellency the Governor (Sir Winston Dugan), attended by Commander Phillips, the Vice-Chancellor of the University (Sir William Mitchell), Mr. and Mrs. T. E. Barr, Mr. and Mrs. C. R. de Smith, Dr. and Mrs. M. P. D. Helen Mayo, Sir Douglas Mawson and Lady Mawson, Professor and Mrs. A. Gillen Macbeth, Professor H. J. Wilkinson, Sir Henry S. Newland, Dr. and Mrs. Charles Duculd, Dr. and Mrs. H. O'Halloran Giles, Dr. and Mrs. Greagh Smeaton, Dr. and Mrs. S. Hanson, Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Rowe, Dr. and Mrs. Darcy Cowan, Madam Krawsky and Miss Olga Krawsky, Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Lenau, Mr. and Mrs. Edgar L. Bean, Dr. Violet Plummer, Mrs. E. A. Pickering, Mrs. G. E. C. Wilson, Mrs. E. A. Matison and Miss Matison, Mr. and Mrs. H. H. E. Russell, Mrs. R. H. Pulline, Sir William Goodman, and Lady Goodman, Professor Kerr Grant, Mrs. E. Beech, Mrs. L. J. Pellev, Dr. and Mrs. Bone, Professor G. V. Fortis, and Mrs. Fortis, and Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Bampton.

Sir James Barrett has been appointed Chancellor of the Melbourne University in succession to the late Sir John MacFarland, says a Melbourne message. Sir James Barrett has held the positions of Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Chancellor, Sir John Latham, K.C., has been appointed Deputy Chancellor.