

OGDEN CITY, UTAH, SATURDAY, JANUARY, 17, 1914.

EUGENICS FIRST IN THE GHETTO



While the Rich Theorize About Producing Children Scientifically, Their Poorer Relatives Put It Into Practice and Rear Perfect Babies.

About every fourth day some couple comes to the front with the claim that they are the first eugenic couple to be married in their particular balliwick. About four thousand three hundred and eight first eugenic babies have been born at different points, according to the reports of newspaper correspondents from about the same number of cities and hamlets. One of the peculiarities of these eugenic children is that they come mostly from the ranks of the poor. Rich folks have been theorizing about eugenics for several years. College professors have been studying about it, but down in the slums they have been practicing it. When a descendant of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow decides she is to be married according to the latest theories, the news is heralded far and wide. It is considerable of an accomplishment for her, but down in the Ghetto there are eugenic marriages every little while and there is no more noise about it than if the marriages were just ordinary ones. The fact is the couples don't particularly care to brag about their scientific marriage. They don't say anything about it until their first baby takes the sweepstakes at the baby show, and then when questioned by reporters they admit they found they were physically fit to have children before marriage. They admit they didn't rush to the altar blind to the future. They went to a physician and had their qualities inventoried before they got the marriage license. After the stork made his visit the mother joined the mother's club and began bringing up the child just like any stock raiser would bring up a prize-winning colt. Babies and colts are a good deal alike, the scientists say. Both need care if they are to be first-class animals. There are those who can afford to have ill born crying babies; but down in the Ghetto they want children who laugh instead of squawk. Crying children don't allow their mothers to finish their work. Eugenics is not a necessity among the rich. A nurse can be hired to take care of the baby if he is sickly, but among the poor eugenics is economy. EUGENICS IN VOGUE IN STOCK RAISING. When farmers raise colts they take the best care of them in the world. In fact they start before the colts are born. They begin with the mothers and fathers. If a farmer owns a mare subject to distemper or that is lean and scrawny, he does not allow it to produce offspring, because the colts are almost sure to develop into lean, scrawny, distempered horses. When he wants to increase his herd of horses he picks the finest mare he has to become the mother of the colts and mates her to the finest male in the township. When the colt arrives it is a perfect animal. In fact, it is a eugenic colt, though it does not go by that name. The mother of the colt tends to its bringing up. She does not allow other horses to nose her colt—kissing it is what they call it in man language. When another

horse tries to nose her colt she kicks with all her might. Instinct teaches the mother that other horses might do the colt harm—that is, bring it disease germs. The mother horse is one of the best followers of eugenics going. Scientists have learned a lot from her about bringing up babies. Dean Walter T. Sumner of the Cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul in Chicago, is enthusiastic in following the wake of the farmer and applying eugenics to the human race. Several years ago he refused to marry couples unless they brought medical certificates of good health. One of the first couples he married was Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Bode. Bode is a police telegrapher. A child was born to that marriage last December 6. Physicians said it was perfectly formed. In Jersey City, N. J. Edward Dean, four months old, recently joined the ranks of eugenic babies and in a better babies show won first prize. Nathan Erwin Shapiro, 6 months old, carried off the sweepstakes in St. Louis at the Better Babies Show of the Jewish Alliance, Christmas week. Nathan's home consists of three rooms in the heart of the poorer quarters of St. Louis. His father, Ben Shapiro, has a shop in front of the store. The baby is twenty-six inches long, weighs seventeen pounds, has chest and abdomen measure of seventeen inches and an arm reach of sixteen and one-half inches. ALL BABIES BORN GOOD NATURED. He laughs most of the time he is awake. His mother, Mrs. Fannie Richter Shapiro, says all babies are born good. They cry only when something is the matter with them. Nathan never gives her any trouble because he was born with nothing the matter with him and he has been kept well ever since. She doesn't experiment with her child. She cares for him according to the most approved lines. "Maybe I didn't have all the chances in the world," she says. "Maybe Ben and I do not have them now, but Nathan is going to have a chance to be strong and well." Some of the far-reaching results of the scientific research work being done by the Eugenics Record office at Cold Spring Harbor, L. I., are made public in a report of the Committee on Applied Eugenics of the American Medical-Psychological Association, recently published in pamphlet form. In addition, the committee, consisting of Dr. Hubert Work, chairman; Dr. H. M. Carey and Dr. Charles C. Hill, makes some startling recommendations on its own account, including the removal of the feeble-minded from the public schools and society, and that no males should be admitted to detention until all females of child-bearing age have been safeguarded. Colonization of defectives for immediate relief is also recommended. In its summary of results already obtained the report says: "Twenty-seven States have given

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legislative consideration to this subject, eleven having enacted laws. Many Legislatures associated with these bills marriage regulation features, while some considered this last feature independently. Public school inspection has been adopted by boards of education in the large cities of the United States. A few city schools have attempted to segregate backward children in classes, chiefly as a protection to normal children. UTAH MEDICAL JOURNAL HAS EUGENIC STAFF. "Medical periodicals have given the subject the undisturbed space in the year past; the Utah Medical Journal established a department of eugenics with a staff of associate editors, while the research work being done at the Training School at Vineland, N. J., is the crowning glory of this new science. Our inquiries teach that the thoughtful

NATHAN ERWIN SHAPIRO in different poses.

and compelled with, and many hospital superintendents' reports devoted space to the subject. The consensus of opinion from scientific thinkers on eugenics teaches that the feeble-minded are the result of inherited defect. That improvement may be confidently predicted in many, but restoration in none. That whether defect be recessive or congenital, the trail of feeble-mindedness is transmitted with certainty. That the rate of increase by propagation is more rapid than in normal people, and that the defective class is a self-perpetuating body. That the feeble-minded female is about three times as likely to mate sexually as the male. "No one has been found who deprecates the menace of the feeble-minded in America. Many are surprised at the sudden pending of the evil, forgetting that heretofore they were hidden or destroyed through

neglect and disease, as the insane were, but now they are uncovered by census and public care to mature and multiply. All who express themselves agree that limitation of offspring from defectives must be accomplished. "We believe that neither sterilization nor colonization will meet the situation alone, but the advantages of both should be joined. It would be impractical for a commission to canvass a community and compel sterilization of its children. The beneficence of the colony should first be employed and the advice of those skilled in the subject procured, after observation has been had. Now that intellect can be measured, youthful genius and imbecility need not be confused and the interruption of lines of genius feared by the timid. TWO PER CENT OF CHILDREN DEFECTIVE. "Two per cent of our school children are incapable of taking their place in society because mentally deficient. New York City alone has 15,000 feeble-minded children in its schools. Allowing 500 to the colony, this would mean thirty institutions for that city or thirty times more than it now has. "In the opinion of your committee, the problem of the feeble-minded is first in importance of all public questions and may never be solved in its entirety. Its limitation is all we can hope for, because it is so difficult for the human mind to understand mind and recognize defect. Against this hope stands that semireligious sect which has for its shibboleth, 'Everything that is, is right,' that part of the Christian church that fears the soul may exist without intellect. The mental defect that is covered by criminality, and the moron, who, because different from his family, is suspected of being a genius until his attempts to earn a livelihood show his defects as-through a transparency. "Once the relation between feeble-mindedness, criminality and the lesser derelictions can be impressed upon the public, then only will the enormity of the subject become patent to it and its cost in dollars be appreciated. Criminals are incarcerated because they represent danger to life and property. Reform schools are supported to turn boys away from a criminal manhood. The public must learn that the feeble-minded propagate themselves. A phase of mental defect not heretofore generally associated has horrified the reading public for a year past. Sociologists have long known that prostitutes as a class are mentally deficient, so weak, in fact, that they are colonized and rented by keepers, receiving for themselves scant maintenance only. The cunning process has enlisted the producer, also a moral idiot, who boldly abducts from the streets those pliant enough to listen, and has incidentally advertised his traffic. WAGES ALONE WILL NOT LIFT MORALS. "It is not low wages alone that lies back of our vice commissions' findings. We have no assurance that girls who become immoral while earning \$5 per week would remain virtuous if paid \$12 per

week. It is well known that the working girl is as moral as her sisters who are provided for; in itself evidence that the first cause of female degradation is not financial. There is a definite relation between a limited earning capacity and a low wage. Any arbitrary fixed minimum wage is a doubtful moral aid and an industrial impossibility. Sociologists searching for the cause of poverty have given little thought to mental defect. Alcoholism, criminal instinct, environment and avicious employers have each been attacked, passing over the inherent organization of the individual that craves alcohol, invites crime, selects environment and makes him unemployable. "Back of it all lies mental defectiveness, the principal asset of commercialized vice—and not its putative parent, low wages. The institutions already built for the feeble-minded have been designed in error, for the development of latent faculties and to graduate normal citizens from your children. We now know that these efforts have failed because mentality was not latent, but absent. "Literary education of the feeble-minded is valueless. That gained by the defective can not compete with that acquired by normal children because no stability of character is associated, but it often is an aid in criminality. "Abstract teaching is wasted energy. The defective brain may be impressed only by repeated bombardment of its centers by impressions received through association of the hands and eyes. Imitation is the schoolmaster of the feeble-minded and it is equally accessible from vicious and virtuous sources." Might Impress the Bull. Whistler, the artist, was once walking through a field, when suddenly he found that a huge bull was making straight towards him. He ran as he had never run before. When he reached the other side of the fence he saw a farmer, the owner of the field, coolly watching the proceedings. Mr. Whistler was furious, and shaking his fist at the farmer said: "What do you mean, sir, by letting a savage bull like that roam at large? Do you know who I am sir? I'm Whistler." "Are you?" replied the farmer. "Then what's the good of telling me? Why didn't you tell the bull?" Telephone Learned From the Deaf. Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of the telephone, hit on his marvelous discovery while studying and while teaching the deaf. At a dinner in Washington Professor Bell said, apropos of this fact: "Yes, we can learn valuable secrets from the most unlikely sources. A Persian poet, famed for his wisdom, was once asked by his king where he had learned his philosophy. "From the blind, sir," the poet replied—"from the blind, who never advance a step until they have tried the ground."