

Hereditary Genius: An Inquiry Into Its Laws and Consequences (Classic Reprint)

Francis Galton Sir



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I trust the reader will pardon a small percentage of error and inaccuracy, if it be so small as not to affect the general value of my results. N 0 one can hate inaccuracy more than myself, or can have a higher idea of what an author owes to his readers, in respect to precision but, in a subject like this, it is exceedingly difficult to correct every mistake, and still more so to avoid omissions. I have often had to run my eyes over many pages of large bio graphical dictionaries and volumes of memoirs to arrive at data, destined to be packed into half a dozen lines, in an appendix to one of my many chapters.

The theory of hereditary genius, though usually scouted, has been advocated by a few writers in past as well as in modern times. But I may claim to be the first to treat the subject in a statistical manner, to arrive at numerical results, and to introduce the law of deviation from an average into discussions on heredity. A great many subjects are discussed in the following pages, which go beyond the primary issue, - whether or no genius be hereditary. I could not refuse to consider them, because the bearings of the theory I advocate are too important to be passed over in silence.

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