

**IS AMERICA SAFE FOR DEMOCRACY? SIX
LECTURES GIVEN AT THE LOWELL INSTITUTE
OF BOSTON, UNDER THE TITLE
"ANTHROPOLOGY AND HISTORY, OR THE
INFLUENCE OF
ANTHROPOLOGIC CONSTITUTION ON THE
DESTINIES OF NATIONS"**

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Is America Safe for Democracy? Six Lectures Given at the Lowell Institute of Boston, Under the Title "Anthropology and History, or The Influence of Anthropologic Constitution on the Destinies of Nations" by William McDougall

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WILLIAM MCDOUGALL

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FOREWORD

As I watch the American nation speeding gaily, with invincible optimism, down the road to destruction, I seem to be contemplating the greatest tragedy in the history of mankind. Other nations have declined and passed away; and their places have been filled, the torch of civilization has been caught up and carried forward by new nations emerging from the shadow-lands of barbarism. But, if the American nation should go down, whence may we expect a new birth of progress? Where shall we look for a virile stock fit to take up the tasks of world-leadership? It may be that the yellow millions of the Far East contain the potency of an indefinite progress and stability. That is a vague and uncertain possibility. Whatever that potency may be, it behooves us, the bearers of Western civilization, to take most anxious thought that we may prevent, if possible, the decline and decay which have been the fate of all the civilized nations of Europe and of the Near and Middle East.

Many excellent books have been published,

urging the claims of "eugenics," since Francis Galton first stirred the conscience of Europe and America on this problem of the preservation of human qualities. Most of these books have been written from the purely biological standpoint. They give excellent accounts of the principles of natural selection, of heredity, and of the Mendelian laws. It has seemed to me that a presentation of the case for eugenics from a more psychological standpoint and on a broad historical background might usefully supplement these biological treatises. For, important as are the facts and principles of physical heredity, the general reader may have some difficulty in connecting the processes of cell-division, the chromosomes of the fruit-fly, or the coat-colors of piebald guinea-pigs with the spiritual endowment of mankind. I have therefore brought together in these few lectures the findings of mental anthropology, which are now beginning to be garnered on a large scale; and I have tried to indicate, in as impartial and scientific a manner as is possible in this still obscure field, their bearing upon the great problems of national welfare and national decay. The body of the book is the substance of six lectures given at the Lowell Institute of Boston in the spring of this year. I have added in foot-notes some evi-

dential matter which may be neglected by the cursory reader. And in appendices I have put forward certain proposals which, if they could be put into practice, would, I think, go far to remedy the present disastrous state of affairs.

I would especially draw the attention of readers interested in political, economic, or social science to the evidence cited in this volume which indicates very strongly, if it does not finally prove, that the social stratification which exists in modern industrial communities is positively correlated with a corresponding stratification of innate moral and intellectual quality, or, in less technical language, that the upper social strata, as compared with the lower, contain a larger proportion of persons of superior natural endowments. This is a proposition which has been stoutly maintained by most of the eugenists from Galton onward. But it has been the greatest weakness of the eugenic propaganda that it is so largely founded upon and assumes the truth of this proposition. For the critics and scorners of eugenics have vehemently denied it, or poured ridicule upon it; and no proof of it was available for their refutation. In a paper read before the Eugenics Education Society in London ("Psychology in the Service of Eugenics," *Eugenics Review*, January, 1914) I pointed out that