

**AMERICAN MEN OF  
LETTERS: THEIR NATURE  
AND NURTURE**

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American Men of Letters: Their Nature and Nurture by Edwin Leavitt Clarke

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LETTERS: THEIR NATURE  
AND NURTURE**



# AMERICAN MEN OF LETTERS

Their Nature and Nurture

BY

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**MY FATHER AND MOTHER**

**TO WHOM I OWE THE NATURE AND NURTURE  
WHICH MADE THIS STUDY POSSIBLE**

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## PREFACE

THE plan of this dissertation was conceived in 1911, as a result of reading the fascinating pages of Professor Lester F. Ward's *Applied Sociology*. Ward's work was based on an inductive study of the nature and nurture of French men of letters, Alfred Odin's *Genèse des Grands Hommes*. Ward had been profoundly impressed by Odin's work. In the *Applied Sociology* he suggested the desirability of making other inductive studies which should be modeled after Odin's, and applied to many nations and fields of activity.

When this study was undertaken, the author believed that the opinions advanced in Ward's work were in every way justified by the evidence. Results attained in his own work, however, have convinced him that nurture is not predominant over nature to the extent that Ward supposed. Nevertheless he still agrees that Ward's plea for the socialization of opportunity is quite warranted. If this study in any way strengthens the case for the extension of opportunity to any who are at present denied their birth-right, he will feel that the work has served its purpose.

In conclusion, acknowledgments are due; first, to the many authors and relatives of authors who courteously answered the questionnaire sent to them; second, to teachers in Columbia and colleagues in Hamilton College who reviewed the statistical aspects of the work, and finally, to Dr. Alvan A. Tenney of Columbia University, for his constructive criticism and generous advice.

E. L. C.

JANUARY, 1916.

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