

THE
BIOLOGICAL BASIS
OF HUMAN NATURE

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TO CALVIN B. BRIDGES

*to whose profound and constructive investigations all
students of Genetics are deeply indebted*

PREFACE

This volume is an attempt to present those aspects of modern experimental biology that are of most interest in considering the problem of human personality and society. It deals with the origin, development and nature of the traits which distinguish individuals, and which in man make up character; and with some of the relations of these matters to social questions. The material is drawn mainly from the relatively new sciences of Genetics and Experimental Embryology. An effort is made to present it in non-technical language, though for a few important things unknown to common speech the technical terms are the only ones available.

The first five chapters summarize the biological foundations for the matters dealt with later. They are necessarily more technical than the others; they are compelled to present certain points that have not yet become familiar, but which in time will be a part of the every-day knowledge of all educated persons. Understanding of the more general questions dealt with in later chapters depends absolutely on a grasp of the matters presented in these chapters.

Chapters six to eight deal with the relations of this fundamental knowledge to certain more problematical questions of life and mind, chapter eight presenting certain historical aspects of these matters. Chapters nine to twelve inclusive take up the application of this knowledge to some social problems. Chapter thirteen stands by itself; it is speculative. The three final chapters are devoted to aspects of the problem of evolutionary change.

References to sources, and other comments, are gathered into notes at the end of each chapter. They are designed merely as keys by which the reader may follow further any subjects which interest him. The books or papers referred to

will usually be found to contain titles of other works along the same line, through which the entire field of knowledge may be explored. Z~

For permission to make use of material previously published in the form of articles or addresses, the author is indebted to the *Forum*, *Plain Talk*, *Science*, and the *Survey-Graphic*. He is indebted for important aid in the preparation of the volume to Louise B. Jennings, Ruth Stocking Lynch, and Harold Heath.

Baltimore, January 4, 1930.

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