

The First Noble Eugenic Baby—Now What!

The Easiest Part of Our American Duchess of Roxburghe's Interesting Experiment Over—Here Are Her Unique Future Difficulties



All the world naturally takes a sympathetic interest in the long and remarkable efforts of the American Duchess of Roxburghe to produce a male heir to her husband's dukedom.

The Duchess planned in the first place to have a son, and in the second to bring him up on modern, strictly eugenic principles, so that he might become as nearly perfect as possible, physically and mentally, and a credit to the ancient title which he will inherit from his father and the great fortune of \$25,000,000 which he will inherit from his mother.

The Duchess, who was Miss May Goelet, daughter of the late Ogden Goelet, of New York, was married to the Duke in 1903. She has, therefore, spent ten years waiting for the fulfillment of the first part of her plan. It is said that she consulted the celebrated Professor Schenk, of Vienna, in order to secure the birth of a son. In accordance with his well-known theories, she abstained from sugar and other articles of diet, the presence of which in the mother's system he believes to aid in the production of female children.

The most distinguished modern biologists, however, including Professor Jacques Loeb, declare that it is impossible to control the production of sex. The paternal elements, they say, always contain germs of both male and female characters, and it is entirely a matter of accident which of the two accomplish the final fertilization.

In any case, the Duchess, in securing the birth of a son, must be regarded as having achieved only the easier part of her great task. To bring up the son of a Duke of Roxburghe and a Goelet to be eugenically perfect will be as difficult an undertaking in its line as it is possible to conceive.

Eugenics, or the science of producing a fine race, has recently been brought to something approaching an exact science, chiefly through the study of heredity.

Now, in order to have a perfect child, the two parents must first of all be in perfect physical and mental health. The Roxburghe baby nearly fulfils this condition, since the Duke is a good physical specimen, and the Duchess, though slight and delicate, is apparently in good health.

It is in dealing with earlier hereditary characteristics that the Duchess will meet with the greatest and well-nigh hopeless difficulties. The science of heredity teaches the law of the alternation of generations, whereby the offspring resembles a more remote ancestor in the direct line, the alteration being in regular or irregular rhythm. According to this law it is necessary, in order to be eugenically perfect, that a baby should have perfect ancestors for many generations past, since the evil qualities of a long past generation may at any time crop out in full force in a new generation.

The prospect of what may happen to a Roxburghe baby under this law is simply appalling. The Roxburghe ancestry begins in the Middle Ages with red-handed freebooters of the Scottish border, who delighted in surprising their neighbors by night and slaughtering them in their beds. All the most brutal elements of the Middle Ages are represented in these border families, such as the Kers of Cessford, who were the original ancestors of the Duke of Roxburghe.

As the family rises in importance, a more highly developed sensuality is added to the earlier elements of brutality. The first Earl of Roxburghe took an important part in the drama of intrigue and assassination that marked the tragic reign of Mary Queen of Scots, and made his fortune by betraying her.

From that time the Roxburghes were in the highest rank of the British aristocracy. We find the Earl of Roxburghe of the time of Charles II. a favorite companion of that king. He revelled in the extraordinarily licentious court life of the Restoration, when the drama reached a pitch of shamelessness that must make our present "white slave" plays seem modest by comparison. He spent his days and nights in carousing with the merry king and his favorites, Nell Gwynn, Barbara Villiers, Rochester and the rest of them.

Many alarming elements enter into the Duke's ancestry besides those traceable to the direct line. Through his mother he is a descendant of the famous Duke of Marlborough, who founded his fortune by blackmailing a king's mistress, by profiting by his sister's dishonor, and by betraying all his employers.

Therefore, it seems that a Roxburghe baby, even if reared with the utmost physical and moral precautions, may unexpectedly develop the bloodthirsty temper of a mediæval border baron, the morals of a Restoration courtisan, the gross appetites of a Palstaff, the capacity for duplicity and intrigue of an Elizabethan statesman, and the bibulous tendencies of an eighteenth century "three bottle squire."

The Duchess may give her son all the physical surroundings necessary for perfect development. He will live largely in the open air. He will run about with bare feet, wearing clothing very loose at the neck and waist. He will sleep in a hammock when he is very young, because that most closely corresponds to pre-natal conditions.

The house in which he lives will be sterilized and perfectly ventilated. He



The Duchess of Roxburghe (May Goelet, of New York), the Mother of the First Noble Eugenic Baby.

will live almost entirely on cereals and vegetables while he is a child, because they are the best food for growing tissues.

His mother took many precautions before his birth. He was born in a specially constructed hygienic apartment in Chesterfield House, London. The great event did not take place at Floors Castle, the Roxburghe ancestral seat, because the surroundings might have tended to revive ancestral tendencies. His mother slept in the open air as much as possible before his birth.

The physical part of his training may be carried out perfectly, and yet it may be rendered entirely worthless by the outcropping of old evil ancestral characteristics. His first participation in a game of football may revive the brutal temper of the border baron. The sight of a pretty figure when he is a growing youth may bring forth all the sensual characteristics of the Restoration profligates. A glass of wine may awake the old tipping habits of many generations.

The young heir enjoys the title of Marquis of Bowmont from birth. He must, of course, be taken before long to his ancestral home, Floors Castle. The sight of this magnificent house, with its family portraits and armor; the deference with which he will be treated; the adulation of the tenants; and the general luxury of his surroundings, must prove strong factors in reawakening the old, sinful, self-indulgent tendencies inherited from twenty generations.

The almost inevitable pull toward luxuries lying in

one who is a child of dukes and millionaires will doubtless be one of the greatest obstacles to the Duchess's ambition to raise a eugenically perfect son.

The young nobleman's education will be directed so as to hold in check the evil ancestral tendencies which are most likely to recur. Some of his ancestors have had good qualities, and his trainers will endeavor to bring these out.

Many interesting facts in heredity have recently been deduced from the observation of animals. It has been found that certain important qualities are transmitted to offspring by one sex alone. Thus it has been found that high egg yield in hens and good milking yield in cows are qualities transmitted by the male parent only.

It is argued that analogous rules must apply with regard to human beings. If the Duchess of Roxburghe knew which important qualities are transmitted through one sex alone, she would have a better prospect of developing those qualities in her son; but, unfortunately, science has not yet established the necessary rules with sufficient clearness in the human race.

The facts and arguments given here prove that a task supremely interesting, but of almost unparalleled difficulty, lies before the Duchess of Roxburghe in trying to

"What will she do with these ghosts of the bad Roxburghes—wicked old ancestors who claim their toll in the babe through his hereditary instincts? Can the mother protect him, even in his eugenic glass, against them?"

How Potatoes Poison You

THE close investigation being made into the poisons to be found in various foods of common consumption has not left the humble potato entirely scatheless. "The poisonous alkaloid and glucocoid known as solanine," is declared by the London Lancet to be a normal constituent of the healthy potato, although in a small degree. When potatoes are beginning to sprout, however, this alkaloid increases rapidly, and in the skin of the toothsome tuber especially, it may be found in quantities that are likely to prove dangerous.

The poison of the potato, like the poison of the peanut is one to which comparatively few people are susceptible, but to those, very small quantities set up a great deal of disturbance. It not infrequently happens that illnesses of unknown origin come from the eating of foods which are healthful to the majority of people, but which have a direct toxic effect on others.

On the other hand, this particular alkaloid is valuable as a sedative in cases of nervous pain and it is also helpful in keeping down fever. To any one suffering from neuralgia, a plentiful use of potatoes is helpful in soothing the nerves and quieting the pain, more so, frequently, than the same drug administered in a concentrated form, because it is more evenly absorbed by the body when taken as a part of the regular food supply.

Aside from this one injurious factor, the potato passes the test of examination well. No such accusation has been lodged against it as has been directed upon the turnip and the justly suspected cereals, especially corn and rye, and it has been declared to be even more nutritious than was commonly supposed. If, however, a pudding is to be judged by the eating of it, surely the potato needs to do nothing in self-defence but point to the race which dines on it most freely and rest its case.



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Little Eugenicists Playing Ball in Adam's Code.