

They descend from little mounds and high peaks and lofty altitudes, through wide roads and narrow paths, down noble marble stairs and creaky stairs of wood, and some go down to the street, and some go down to the cellar, and some down to the pits of shame and infamy, and still some to the glory of an unfathomable abyss where there is nothing but the staring white stony eyeballs of Destiny.

And again other footsteps climb. They climb to life and to love, to fame, to power, to vanity, to truth, to glory, and to the gallows; to everything but Freedom and the Ideal.

And they all climb the same roads and the same stairs others go down; for never, since man began to think how to overcome and overpass man, have other roads and other stairs been found.

They descend and they climb, the fearful footsteps of men, and some drag, some speed, some trot, some run; the footsteps are quiet, slow, noisy, brisk, quick, feverish, mad, and most awful is their cadence to hear for the one who stands still.

But of all the footsteps of men that either descend or climb, no footsteps are as fearsome and terrible as those that go straight on the dead level of a prison floor from a yellow stone wall to a red iron gate.

## BOOKS

### "THE SUPER-RACE."

**The Super Race.** An American Problem. By Scott Nearing, Ph. D. B. W. Huebsch, 225 Fifth Ave., The Art of Life Series. 50 cents net.

Professor Nearing's book differs from other works on race culture in two rather important particulars: it is well written, and it recognizes that environment and education are as necessary as eugenics to the furtherance of that better grade of human stock which the author christens the Super-race. The demerit of the book, on the other hand, and this time its quality is shared by practically every other book on eugenics, is its trustful optimism.

Mr. Nearing has read all the authorities on eugenics and apparently his politeness and reverence for science have led him to swallow their statements whole. He actually thinks that Positive Eugenics is a practicable programme. "What prospective parent," he asks his readers, "does not fondly imagine that his children will be at least near-great? Yet how many individuals, in their choice of a mate, set out with the deliberate intention of securing a life-partner whose qualities, when combined with his own, must produce greatness?" Like Mr. Nearing, the writer cannot answer and is reduced to wondering "How many?" but he sincerely hopes that if ever answer was vouchsafed from any oracle that answer would be "None."

It would seem unnecessary to labor the point, but the idea that the bond of love is not a personal matter, not a union of sympathetic spirits—regardless of whether they both be mathematicians or both painters—but a breeding proposition only, is an idea negated by every instinct of the human heart. Only a sophisticated academician who has wandered far from Life in her first intention could so confuse his values. That Nature does not approve of any such thing is shown by the indubitable fact that she always plunges the man and woman whom she would mate into a temporary insanity—witness the poetry of people in love. Having thus put their troublesome intellects out of the way, her mysterious plans are not interfered with by any clumsy eugenic matchmaking of men.

Of course, Nature not being a personal or observing power, needs the help of the eyes of men, and so when men see that two people are victims of a few—and they are only a few—really transmissible and general diseases such as feeble-mindedness, then they can prevent mating, in the interests of society. But as has been shown by Professor Hobbouse of London, such interference is not necessary in the case, for example, of tuberculosis, which can be taken care of very adequately by the gradual improvement of the environment. Or, if the case be epilepsy, then the eugenicist should not forget that epileptic strains produce more than their share of geniuses, and so he should not be too ready dogmatically to interfere.

Mr. Nearing's discussions of the environment and of education are stimulating and suggestive, but throughout them he constantly returns to his eugenic note with a touching faith. His optimism is occasionally rather excessive. "War, however, has practically ceased," he tells us. Has it? Improvements in the art, at least, still seem to find a very ready market, and certain of our industrial situations look as if something very like civil war may some day be precipitated if the scientists and social observers can think of nothing better than eugenics as the path of humanity's emancipation from its present narrow cell of injustice, unspirituality, greed and want.

LLEWELLYN JONES.



### THE PROBLEMS OF THE POOR.

**One of the Multitude.** By George Acorn, with introduction by Arthur C. Benson. New York. Dodd, Mead & Company. Price, \$1.25.

Perhaps "One of the Multitude" is hardly a title to apply to the very exceptional youth who tells his own story of life in the London slums with a simplicity that is like a photographic copy of the characters and scenes presented.

George Acorn, with his honest ambitions and soaring aspirations, could hardly claim heredity from the low, vulgar, brutal father and mother