
The Dice of Destiny

The Dice of Destiny is a timely book. These are days when some scientists must leave the ivory lab long enough to present in clear and simple language to the many the facts known to the few. Knowledge and good-will are both necessary if man is to control his destiny for the common good. Neither alone will suffice.

Dr. Rife, for many years a specialist in the field of human heredity, has made a notable contribution to a better understanding of human nature in this little book. He has chosen wisely in title, in content, and in method of presentation. The book is to be recommended as much for omission of subject material as for what is included. Without attempting to chart a course for the unsuspecting reader through the tortuous channels of modern genetics, the author has presented in compact form a wealth of pertinent facts on inherited variations as found in individuals, families, and races. He has dealt largely, though not exclusively, with genetic alternatives widely spread in human populations rather than with rare inherited abnormalities.

The first chapter begins with: "Take a piece of paper from the envelope on the back inside cover of the book, put it in your mouth and make a paper wad of it. Does it taste bitter?" This is perhaps the first time that an author has invited his reading public literally to taste a book. Even though that initial taste proves bitter, as it will to about 70% of readers, the reviewer will venture that few will stop until they have fed well on the substantial meal which follows.

A concise discussion of the inheritance of taste, blood groups, hair, skin and eye color, sex and sex-linked characters, twinning, finger-prints, handedness, mental capacity, and special abilities is included. Racial variations in these and other traits are considered. A sound presentation of the relative roles of heredity and environment, of eugenic methods and their probable results, and of racial and individual variations, gives the reader a background for understanding the problems of human nature. In the closing chapter, "Genes and Democracy," current fallacies about race are exposed, a glimpse of possible scientific advances leading to improved environment is given, and an equality of opportunity for all is urged.

Unfortunately the book, otherwise attractive in format, is marred by frequent typographical errors. It is to be hoped that these will be corrected in a second printing, as some of them will prove confusing to the general reader.—*Warren P. Spencer.*

The Dice of Destiny, An Introduction to Heredity and Racial Variations, by David C. Rife. 163 pages, 23 figures and 14 tables. Long's College Book Co., Columbus, Ohio, 1945. \$1.75.