



The Racial Elements of European History,
by Hans F. K. Gunther

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The Racial Elements of European History. By HANS F. K. GÜNTHER. Translated from the second German edition by G. C. WHEELER. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., no date. Pp. vii+279. \$4.60.

There is little to be said about this book that has not been said about many others. It is a racial interpretation of European history that is more erudite and less interesting than that of Madison Grant, but otherwise not very different. It is unusual only in that it is recent; it first appeared in Germany no more than a few years ago, and in the present translation only last year. The controversy with the racial determinists has long passed its height; the tumult and the shouting dies; and still one untroubled voice raises the ancient myths of Gobineau.

All differences in group behavior, and particularly in military achievement, are interpreted as the result of varying proportions of racial blood. Each race has its "mental" traits. The courage and leadership of the Nordic, the laziness and profligacy of the Mediterranean, are familiar, but we learn also what to expect—and that is mostly bad—of the "East Baltic," the "Dinaric," the "Hither Asiatic," and the "Oriental" races. Germans can best enjoy the *Iliad* because its spirit is akin to their own Nordic instincts.

This quaint nonsense is illustrated with many excellent photographs of racial types, and with maps, interesting to physical anthropologists, showing the distribution of various somatic traits in Europe. The last chapter is interesting because, in giving an account of the policies and institutions in which the "Nordic Ideal" has found a structure, it presents a short history of a social movement.

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