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David Starr Jordan: Editorial

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DAVID STARR JORDAN

EDITORIAL

When two germ cells unite to make the fertilized egg, the beginnings of a man, what that man is to become as an adult depends in part upon what those germ cells contain in the way of hereditary characters, and in part upon the environment, prenatal and postnatal, to which the egg and developing embryo are subsequently subjected.

The subject of this sketch seems to have been fortunate in both conditions, heredity and environment. He developed a huge, vigorous body and a powerful, alert mind, one peculiarly capable of noting and retaining infinite details of color, form, and structure. The fishes, a group characterized by almost unbelievable diversity of form, color-pattern, and habitat, were thus admirably suited to his retentive type of mind, and David Starr Jordan became an ichthyologist, a student of fishes. He followed them in pond and creek, in river and ocean; he knew them as scarcely no man had known them before.

He personally described and named nearly a thousand distinct species of fishes, as well as naming many new genera. Any one who has ever read his "Story of the Salmon" has discovered that David Starr Jordan not only knew fishes but knew how to write entertainingly about them as well.

He knew men, however, as well as fishes, and possessed, like Agazzis, a remarkable capacity for attracting students to work under him. He once made a walking trip of five hundred fifty miles with a group of students, and one of those students recently remarked of him: "My admiration for his scholarly attainments, and for him as a man grew day by day. I determined then and there to become a student of his."

He was professor at Butler University, then at Indiana University and subsequently its president, retiring from this position to accept the presidency of the Leland Stanford University just then being endowed and started by Senator and Mrs. Stanford. He literally made this great university, continuing as its president until well advanced in years.

David Starr Jordan loved life, and believed that men and other creatures loved their lives as he loved his. He, thus hated war, and became in his later years an "apostle and prophet of peace." What would be the status of the world today if in July, 1914, men like Jordan had sat in the seats of the Czar, the Kaiser, Earl Grey, and of the Count von Berchtold?

Something of his philosophy of life may be understood from these characteristic words: "Wisdom is knowing what one ought to do next; virtue, doing it; religion, our conception of the reason why right action is better than wrong; and prayer, the core of our endeavor."

He was a naturalist, an explorer, a teacher, a poet, and a minor prophet of Democracy. And in being all these things, he crowded his eighty years of life to the full. Science, as well as the world, is richer and better because of David Starr Jordan.

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ARE YOU HEALTHY?

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vacation comes to an end before they can make up their mind. Some people cannot face facts squarely. They are always on top of the fence, and never on either side. Some meet a difficult situation with their heads up, smiling, others are beaten before they begin. Some people tell the truth instinctively; others weigh the advantages of telling a lie. These things are mental habits denoting states of mental health. Some of us are quite ill in this respect. We cannot be cured except by a long and painful process. It would have been much better for us had someone aided in making us immune when we were young so that now we might be able to answer present when roll call on this ideal was called.

8. "To have sex desire normally