

A SCIENTIST LOOKS EASTWARD

THERE is a certain logic, if little wisdom, in the recent advice given to young scientists by Dr. Julian Huxley, who is now Director General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. In an address last month before a London meeting of the New World Federation for Mental Health, the eminent British zoologist, grandson of Thomas H. Huxley, advocated the practical study of "yoga" by Western scientists. Amplifying this suggestion in an interview, he spoke of the "remarkable things" that may be accomplished by persons trained in yoga. Among the attainments he mentioned were the control of breathing, the gaining of a trance condition, and arriving at "a state of mystical exaltation." Young scientists concerned with the problems of mental health, he said, might learn the techniques of yoga for whatever benefits they involve. He thought that possibly everyone could eventually master the secrets of yoga.

Although Dr. Huxley seems quite ignorant of the practical dangers to mental and even physical health involved in yoga practices, he has doubtless assured himself that his recommendation will involve no theological entanglements. For some years, now, he has been a leading spokesman of scientific agnosticism. When, in 1942, the editors of *Fortune* wished to compensate for several contributions from religious authorities—such as Jacques Maritain, the French Catholic Neo-Thomist, and Willard L. Sperry, of the Harvard Divinity School—they invited Dr. Huxley to state the skeptical scientific position, which he did, with skill and clarity, in the December, 1942, issue. The Huxleyan view is briefly contained in three propositions:

The supernatural is in part the region of the natural that has not yet been understood, in part an invention of human fantasy, in part the unknowable.

Body and soul are not separate entities but two aspects of one organization. . . . Matter and mind are two aspects of one reality.

. . . we have no longer either the intellectual or the moral right to shift. . . . responsibility from our own shoulders to those of God or any other outside power.

With these as the foundations of his philosophy, it is reasonable to infer that Dr. Huxley sees in yoga a means of getting at the benefits of religion without adopting any religious belief at all—and this, then, is the "logic" behind his recommendation to Western scientists. Yoga seems to invite the extension of scientific method into the field of human behavior, and since the Western world is seriously ill with disorders in human behavior, both personal and social, Dr. Huxley is interested in its possibilities.

Mere curiosity concerning so-called "occult" powers said to be common in the Orient is nothing new, but a serious scientific concern, emerging at the UNESCO level, is worth examining for what it may mean for Western culture. Dr. Huxley's high estimate of Eastern psychology reminds one of the more explicit declaration by Louis Jacolliot, more than eighty years ago, regarding the achievements of Indian yogis. Europeans, he said, in comparison to the East, have not learned even the first letters of the alphabet of psychological science. Jacolliot, who served for years as a chief justice in the French East Indies, wrote many books on the marvels he witnessed in India, and in one volume he reproduced the explanations made to him by a learned Brahmin. "You," said the Brahmin, meaning European civilization, "have studied physical nature, and you have obtained, through the laws of nature, marvellous results—steam, electricity, etc.; for twenty thousand years or more, we have studied the intellectual forces, we have discovered their laws, and we obtain, by

making them act alone or in concert with matter, phenomena still more astonishing than your own."

Jaccoliot, of course, was generally disbelieved by his nineteenth-century audience as a romancer of tall tales, although his books—some twenty in all—being intensely interesting, gained many readers. Even if it be admitted that these works are partly fiction, Jaccoliot was nevertheless one of the first Europeans to attempt an intelligent report of the psychical phenomena of the East. But the interest of men like Julian Huxley in psychical powers has a different line of descent. It starts, probably, with the first scientific investigation of nineteenth-century Spiritualism, instituted by the London Dialectical Society in 1869 as a program of serious research. Later, the London Society for Psychical Research (founded in 1882), headed by such persons as Prof. Henry Sidgwick and Prof. F. W. H. Myers, accomplished something in the direction of making psychical investigations "respectable." No scientist of the nineteenth century, however, whether he were William Crookes, Alfred Russel Wallace, or Oliver Lodge, could hope for much more than contempt and ridicule from his colleagues, should he admit an interest in psychical phenomena. (*Heyday of a Wizard*, by Jean Burton, published a few years ago, provided a light-hearted account of the life of D. D. Home, a medium with whom Crookes performed some of his experiments.) It should be said that the foundation of the Theosophical Society in 1875 contributed to an interest in psychic powers, as one of its objectives was concerned with the rationale of such powers. The Society also attracted many who were interested in or fascinated by spiritualistic phenomena, though the method of study adopted by the Theosophists stressed a difference between "mediumship" and the wonders achieved by the fakirs and yogis of India. Mediums, it was said, represent an abnormal and unhealthy passivity, while the yogi is one who accomplishes his feats by will. However, the "supernatural" characteristics of both séance phenomena and "Yoga-powers" led the majority of men to

consider both indiscriminately as belonging to the same broad field of "psychic research."

In the United States, William James anticipated the academic interest in Eastern yoga powers, and also was concerned with the phenomena of the spiritualists. He wrote essays on both subjects; in one, called "The Energies of Men," he recounted the experience of a European follower of Vivekananda, who undertook a course of yoga exercises; in the other, he vouched, after twenty-five years of sporadic investigation, for "*the presence, in the midst of all the humbug, of really supernormal knowledge.*" (Both essays appear in *Memories and Studies* by William James, published by Longmans in 1917.) James was well acquainted with a former member of the London Society for psychical Research, who undertook similar duties in Boston. The work of the Boston Society, by the way, stimulated the interest in Spiritualism of such persons as the novelist, Hamlin Garland and B. O. Flower, editor of the *Arena*. Garland introduced the subject to John O'Hara Cosgrave, editor of *Everybody's Magazine*, who engaged the former to write on the phenomena.

Not until well on into the twentieth century, however, after the first world war, did any general scientific interest in psychical research show itself. Popular interest led the way. In 1915, there were 52 American magazines devoted to Spiritualism, but this number grew to a peak of 136 in 1920, reflecting the longings of parents and others bereaved by the war. Then, in 1923, the *Scientific American* held its famous investigation of "Margery" (in private life, Mrs. Le Roi Goddard, wife of a reputable Boston physician). Probably the most important event connected with that investigation was the effect it had on Dr. William McDougall, who was then head of the Department of Psychology at Harvard University. Some years later, at Duke University, Dr. McDougall instituted the cycle of experiments which have since become famous as the Duke

studies of ESP (Extra Sensory Perception) directed by Dr. J. B. Rhine.

During the past twenty years, a number of scientific and semi-scientific as well as popular influences have developed to increase a serious interest in psychical research. Publication in England of *An Experiment with Time* by J. W. Dunne (1927) set the scientific world to thinking about the extraordinary implications of prophetic dreams. The Yale University Institute of Human Relations in 1937 sponsored *Yoga, A Scientific Evaluation*, by Kovoov Behanan. The various books by Dr. W. Y. Evans-Wentz stirred a scholarly interest in mystical and occult subjects, while an impudently popular volume on yoga by Yeats-Brown fed the spreading popular appetite for Oriental pseudo-occultism. Wendell Thomas in his *Hinduism Invades America* (1930) tells the unlovely story of the *swami* invasion of the United States, and litigation between rival yogis over their division of the spoils has been sufficient to indicate that the harvest reaped by these purveyors of oriental charm runs into many millions. In the field of mystical religion, Gerald Heard, a sponsor of Christian Quietism on the Pacific Coast, once told his followers (in *The Third Morality*, 1937) that breathing exercises are "the most instant and powerful of all the physical methods of affecting, altering and enlarging consciousness." While admitting the dangers of Hatha or "Body" Yoga—in which breathing exercises play a major part—and warning that "no one can say what the casualty rate may be," Mr. Heard asserted that "it is a risk we have to take." Whether he still maintains this view, we cannot say, but unless the incidence of obsession and other forms of madness overtaking curious practitioners of Hatha Yoga in the United States has much diminished, we suspect that Mr. Heard has changed his mind.

Yoga for Hollywood and the international playboy set has been the contribution of Theos Bernard, who returned from the East several years ago, claiming to have mastered Tibetan secrets of psychic and physical discipline. Steward Edward

White, long known for his exceptionally fine books on the great Western out-of-doors, began publishing his spiritualistic *Betty Books* in the 30's and climaxed this series with *The Unobstructed Universe* (1940), a volume of spiritualistic exploits described with a pretentious metaphysical vocabulary.

As a result of all this, and many other currents, including hypnotic experiments in colleges and universities, periodic Ouija board crazes, spiritualistic flurries and the like, it may be said that a new floor of popular acceptance has been built under the spreading advocacy of various forms of psychical research. When, in 1936, Dr. Julian Huxley proposed, before the British Association for the Advancement of Science, that at the present time, "man's so-called supernormal or extra-sensory faculties are in the same case as were his mathematical faculties in the Ice Age," he was only reflecting a broad trend in the Western mentality, of which his latest pronouncement on the desirability of cultivating yoga powers is a further extension.

What Dr. Huxley cannot realize—unless he undertakes a serious study of the relationship, through history, between the psycho-physical practices of the sort he is recommending, and human behavior—is that his endorsement of yoga as a psychological discipline for the West, apart from some solid groundwork in ethical philosophy, might have the most disastrous effects, were it to be widely followed. He apparently regards yoga as merely a technique—at best a means to personal discipline, at worst a bag of psychological tricks. Those who have studied this subject thoroughly in India, for instance, say that there is a most important distinction to be made between Hatha Yoga, based on breathing exercises, and Raja Yoga, which pursues clarity of thinking and purity of moral aim. Raja Yoga has little or nothing to do with breathing exercises, being devoted to the objective of Union—the "yoking" of the individual soul to the universal soul or spirit.

It is doubtless Dr. Huxley's desire to turn the searchlight of impersonal science on the "mystic lore of the East." But he makes no suggestion that the *ethics* of the East be given equal attention. He overlooks the fact that the disciplines of yoga were originally rooted in profound ethical and metaphysical philosophy; that no Eastern Sage advised men to acquire yoga powers before a long course of personal purification and training in religious philosophy. It is probable that the present degradation of the East, from which modern India is mightily struggling to be free, may be traced in large part to precocious development and misuse of precisely the sort of faculties that Dr. Huxley wants the West to cultivate. Gandhi, to whom, more than anyone else, India owes her present renaissance, was no advocate of yoga powers, but of ethical resolve and personal self-sacrifice. He sought and taught the importance of "soul-power," to quote Edmond Taylor—not yoga-powers.

There is still another way to look at this question, involving what may be called the "imperialistic" attitude of mind. Not merely the British Empire, but the entire West is afflicted with it. The imperialistic attitude assumes that it is possible to take what is wanted, and *only* what is wanted, and that the might to take it gives the right. There was the atom bomb. Physical scientists took the secret of atomic force and used it for destructive purposes. Hardly any of them have considered that so vast a power may be rightfully disclosed only if in harmony with a naturalistic ethic of the universe which favors no non-functional destruction. To tear this force from the bosom of Nature was itself an act of ruthless imperialism. Now, we are invited to abstract a psychological power from the ancestral religious system of India, and to use it for our own purposes. We have the supreme physical power of atomic energy, and it is driving us mad with fear. Why not take, by similar irresponsible means, a corresponding psychological power-separated from its original matrix in ethical

philosophy-and find out its "utility" value for Western civilization?

Historians may some day say of our civilization that it destroyed itself by applying efficient techniques to obtain unworthy ends. It is certainly true that we know far more about techniques than ends. Until recently, it could be asserted that our society explicitly despised the study of ends. The evolution of modern science was characterized from its beginning by a deliberate rejection of the study of ends. This was caused, first, by the theological monopoly of all questions relating to the purpose of life; and second, by the resolve of the scientists, once they gained independence of religious control, never to allow the theological dictatorship to resume its power. So we have Dr. Huxley, in the twentieth century, denying not only God, the theological dictator, but also the soul, as a spiritual reality, which makes the successful determination of the ends of human life, so far as we can see, a practical impossibility. Scientists, in other words, are occupationally conditioned to deny any transcendental philosophy of ends, while, at the same time, they would like to have the benefits of a psychological discipline which originated in a philosophy of soul—the discipline of yoga—without the metaphysical foundations on which intelligent use of that discipline depends.

As a consequence, the popularization of Yoga, at this time, can only increase the stock-in-trade of the psychic fakers, and multiply the delusions of the cults. A bright young scientist, eager to analyze the "physiology" of mystical exaltation, might acquire some of the promised skills in concentration—but to what end? Precisely for the reason that yoga is divorced from theology and from even a theory of the soul, Dr. Huxley finds it attractive, and this is logical, not because Dr. Huxley is an unethical man, but because he has three centuries of the agnostic, anti-religious tradition of science behind him. But it is also yoga divorced from

metaphysics and moral responsibility—a separation that can be fatal to the West.

One thing more: A century ago, a great wave of psychical phenomena and interest in Spiritualism broke out in America and Europe, begun by the "Rochester rappings" of 1848. Because of the gross ignorance which then prevailed concerning these manifestations—and which still persists, due to the determination of most scientists to deny even the possibility of such phenomena—the new psychological discovery, instead of gaining cautious investigation, produced only a few bizarre cults and sects of Spiritualism, clustering around their prophet-mediums. The fact that Greek thinkers of the first few centuries A.D. were well acquainted with the phenomena and had written about them extensively was largely ignored, except by an antiquarian or two. As a consequence, the culture of the West was ill-prepared to grasp the meaning of the nineteenth-century wave of psychical phenomena, so that it seemed to present a choice of either blind belief in a new kind of miracle, or ridiculing denial. The same sort of problem, much accentuated, may grow out of the new interest in "yoga." It seems evident that there is something genuine behind the psychological disciplines associated with Eastern religion, but in view of the history of Spiritualism, the necessity for a more intelligent and cautious approach should be equally plain.

Letter from **CENTRAL EUROPE**

VIENNA.—The qualities of a nation are best known to those who have prolonged contact with its people, but any country can be understood, to a degree, by one who will take the trouble to study its history. However, events of the past two thousand years have made the history of every European nation so complicated that a reader, trying to absorb the details, would probably lose the thread of significance. It may suffice to study the history which the present generation, born about 1900, has lived through. Austria may serve as an example.

Austria was ruled before and after 1900 by the Emperor Franz Joseph, belonging to the house of Hapsburg. The first Hapsburger was crowned Emperor of Austria in the fourteenth century. Apart from the fact that the Hungarians, the Czechs, the Croats and the Slovenes—at that time incorporated in the Austrian Empire—struggled, peacefully as a rule, for their respective autonomies, there were no troubles or shortcomings of significance. Numerous families were rich and millions of people were poor, but there existed practically no deficiency with regard to daily necessities, and the word "unemployed" was unknown.

When, during World War I, the prospects for an Austrian victory faded away, it was suggested by Allied propaganda that the Austrians should liberate themselves forever by getting rid of the Hapsburgers. This was accomplished, at last, by means of the Social-Democratic Party, which had grown immensely with the increase of those who wanted to see the war finished.

Peacetime conditions, however, did not develop in the manner people had expected. Although the hardships of the post-war years at first were regarded as consequences of the four-year fight, by-and-by even the average citizen could see that the Peace Treaty, having inaugurated separate states for the Hungarians,

the Czechs and others, had so far amputated Austria that it seemed to resemble a memberless body—with Vienna as a great, enlarged heart, equipped to supply nearly 50 millions with the blood of life, but now expected to supply only seven or eight millions.

As the economic difficulties grew, there came new proposals for the liberation of Austria—the proposals of the National-Socialists of Germany. They gave their propaganda a slow start, so as not to disturb the majority of the Austrian people. After a time, the Nazis stopped the German holiday-makers from spending their money in Austria (thus dealing a heavy blow to the Austrian economy) and took advantage of the stringencies which this measure caused. German radio propaganda did its part, and the "liberation" took place in March, 1938. Not three months passed before the Germans began to build up Austrian industry to an extent hardly seen before. The development seemed not entirely bad. Being now part of mighty Germany, many Austrians began to hope.

Their eyes were opened in September, 1939, the beginning of World War II, when it became obvious that the industrial boom had not been created for the benefit of Austria, but that it formed an important part of the German war-machine. History repeated itself, contrary to the rules and sayings. The Austrian people saw themselves again drawn into a war, and again were the Central Powers victorious during the first two years. At the beginning of the third year, the Allies—anticipating their military successes—began a comprehensive radio campaign directed to Austria.

Hold out in your underground resistance, we are going to liberate you, they promised. Your full sovereignty will be returned to you the moment we enter your country. The agreement, concluded between Hitler and Mussolini, ceding the Southern Tyrol to Italy, will be torn to pieces! We shall not expect reparations!

Again, the Austrian people put their full weight of faith in these words. They hailed the entry of the Allied Armies. When, in 1945, the small country was divided into four occupation zones, each one closed up from the other, people smiled. A typical military arrangement, just for a few weeks, they thought.

But the smiles stopped when, during 1946, no change whatsoever took place and, rather unbelievably, the Allies sanctioned the Fascist-Nazi agreement about Southern Tyrol. The culmination of disillusionment came last year when hundreds of meetings in connection with the promised State Treaty for Austria brought not the least settlement. Contrary to the pledge given, one of the victor nations wanted reparations in cash, another hoped for a practical interest in the remains of Austrian industry, while a third preferred the tearing of the midget territory into still more pieces.

At present, most of the citizens do not care any more. With frightening clarity they have recognized that they have been transformed from subjects into objects. In the meantime, another offer to "liberate" Austria has arrived and is cried louder from day to day. It originates in Moscow and warns those who do not support its ideology that they will be treated as "traitors of the working-class" when the communists take power.

Wherever it comes from—runs a slogan in Austria—another "liberation" will cost our last drop of blood.

CENTRAL EUROPEAN CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW

COOPERATIVE INDIVIDUALISM

IT has long seemed to us that the Cooperative Movement will be of the greatest importance to any future society worth working toward, but not until we had read *Man, Inc.*, by Ed MacLean (Island Press, 1947), did a full vision of the possibilities of Co-ops come within our grasp. We suppose that Mr. MacLean's brief essay (87 pages, paper-bound) was able to do this because it deals with much more than the Co-ops.

We confess that we have had *Man, Inc.* on hand for review for several months. The title seemed forbidding and we kept putting it off. We now find that this title is intended to provide a fresh and richly suggestive conception of human and social evolution, and we regret the delay. Early in its pages, the author says:

The individual stands today amid the confusion of isms, the conflicting propaganda of pressure groups and status quo; between the desire for progress and the ever-present examples of the havoc undisciplined progress can visit upon his life. As yet, there are no *Federalist Papers*, no Thomas Paines, no voices crying dearly of principle and moral vision amid the clamor of self-interest and opportunism. The voices of the present are those of organizations, of groups, of classes; raised in self-defense, for survival or advancement.

Without wishing to lessen the glory of the Founding Fathers, it may be said that they inherited fields of thought already plowed, and that the seed-ideas of the historical epoch they founded came from earlier cultivators of the soil of freedom. In other words, if the present age—or the age now struggling to be born—is to have its great pioneers and leaders, its Paines and Jeffersons, that longed-for fruition will be possible because of the spade-work done by men like Ed MacLean. A Paine has to have an audience of people who can understand what he has to say. We hope for the widest possible distribution of *Man, Inc.*, so that tomorrow's Tom Paine may be understood.

Technically, this work is a study of the impact of the machine upon a handicraft economy. The author shows how the resulting centralization of industry has "created the impersonal tyrants of unemployment, inadequate housing, inefficient utilization of resources, friction between groups no longer separated by definite barriers; in place of the whims of a stubborn king." We have the industrial progress brought by the machine, but the social progress represented by the establishment of the American Republic is rapidly disappearing. The concepts of the American Revolution are as important today as in 1776, but we don't know how to apply them to the contemporary scene. The problem, says Mr. MacLean, calls for "a liberalized economic system, a political and racial unity of mankind, an awareness, through education and example, of the individual denotations of freedom."

It is its intimate sense of the meaning of freedom as a functioning reality that makes this book important. "Systems," Mr. MacLean points out, do not assure freedom. Nothing less can save us than the gearing of the essential processes of our social and economic life to the creative capacities of the individual. This *is* democracy, as the author defines it. His positive proposals are all descriptions of economic mechanisms conceived as means to enlarge individual freedom, individual opportunity, individual responsibility.

He is thoroughly aware of the tenacity of habit, of the enormous task of education in assisting the development of cooperative instead of competitive individualism, of common instead of private enterprise. Indeed, the full account taken of the difficulties of transforming such ideals into facts makes the book sound and believable. The Cooperative Movement has a logical role in this process for the reason that it is distributive as to power, fraternal as to motive, and educative in effect. It avoids the dictatorship of either Finance Capitalism or the State, but it does *not* require the violent destruction and change of a General Revolution. Cooperation involves the voluntary

association of men for their common good, and it is, therefore, a form of enterprise which is both free and non-acquisitive. The machine has made some types of large-scale organization a necessity; cooperative ownership and use of the machine will secure its benefits without the evils of aggressive, profit-taking, labor exploiting enterprise.

While Mr. MacLean may not like the word, there is, we think, a valid mysticism in his thinking—a kind of Yankee mysticism, if you will—which bespeaks a confidence in human beings, in the possibilities of education, and in the logic of human evolution. But there is no sentimentality in his analysis. He is willing to be optimistic about the future because he recognizes the potentialities of all men as represented, in full flower, in the few—the men who have lived by principles of moral integrity instead of under the compulsions of material "necessity."

These men [he writes] have kept themselves strictly focussed on their source. They have been for the most part uneducated in the formal sense, self-taught; their only course of development the undeviating, aspirational flow from root to flower. They have exemplified that purity of being which alone can recognize its divinity, an their lives have been proofs of possibility to all men.

It is greatly refreshing to turn to Mr. MacLean's essay from the brilliant but depressing analyses of men like Harold Laski and James Burnham, both of whom seem persuaded that such freedom as an industrial society can afford is limited to the freedom secured for themselves by various pressure groups. The unorganized individual, according to this "modern" view, is not only "forgotten," but consciously deprived of his freedom—in theory, at least—by processes regarded as inevitable.

Instead of thus rationalizing the loss of individual freedom, and attempting to ameliorate that loss through the representation of the individual by church or labor organizations—to which he is invited to "belong," in order to have a voice in government—Mr. MacLean starts out with the postulate that individual freedom,

unmediated by organizations, is the highest social good, and builds his thinking toward a cooperative society on the foundation of this principle.

We have one critical comment: Although *Man, Inc.* does consider the problem of war, this is only to show how and why a cooperative society will be a peaceful society. Our rejoinder would be that the process of preparation for war—now going on—is directly opposed to the decentralist program. War is the supremely centralized operation, involving *total* control from the "top" of the social order. It seems apparent to us that the tendency to war will do more to frustrate the movement of society in the direction Mr. MacLean recommends than anything else. And, logically enough, the war society will mean the absolute end of individual freedom. This is one phase of the question which, we think, the writer of *Man, Inc.* has not thought through to a final conclusion.

For us, however, his positive thesis remains without noticeable defect. We shall undoubtedly refer to this book, again, as providing an essential perspective for those who would participate *actively* in the development of a society based upon social idealism and practical brotherhood.

COMMENTARY

LETTER TO A FRIEND

LETTERS from Europeans receiving packages from Americans have, we know, been widely published in the United States. We print here a letter that seems to embody the best of many of these communications—a letter that will be long remembered.

* * *

Dear Mr. _____

During 1945, few Central Europeans expected a real peace straightaway. They thought that another year would be necessary for the world to settle down. In the course of 1946, they wondered why no decisive steps toward a mutual and final understanding were taken by the great nations. In 1947, the majority lost hope with regard to any improvement of material and spiritual living; and, in 1948, lots of people are convinced that a quarrel, far more destructive and cruel than the last war, is on the threshold.

We find ourselves precipitated into innumerable events and committed to various obligations, day by day, which carry us along like a tide. As most of our choices are but compromises with custom, ordinary activity frequently results in frustration and dissatisfaction. Too many persons consider the elements of personal living as a sort of grab-bag selection. They pick up the conventions of living whether they are particularly applicable to mankind in general or not.

As nations, so it seems, cannot come to nations—there remains but one possibility: individuals must come to individuals.

You, dear Mr. _____, do not know us, and we haven't met you, either. You have read in the papers how exceedingly difficult it has been, for years, to get here the ingredients and articles which are of absolute necessity for the material existence of man. You have received our address

and you have forwarded part of that which you possess—at least what is available for you over there, and what would not be available for us, should we try to get it here.

I have received two boxes from you, safe and in the best of shape. One contained most valuable provisions: milk, tea, coffee, cocoa, flour, prunes, noodles, chocolate, soap, cigarettes and a lot more of the best nutrition, while the other was packed with clothing, a suit, a pair of shoes, dresses, socks, underwear and neckties.

These gift packages from you not only give us the means for further material existence. They prove to us at the same time that you make full use of that one which is left: individuals get in touch with individuals and show that a better understanding in the world does not depend on contracts, pacts or agreements, but solely on good will. We thank you the more as you do not know us and we should like to express to you our conviction that there could hardly be anything which, in its true cause, is more unselfish than what you do.

Yours in sincere devotion,

Dr. _____

CHILDREN ... AND OURSELVES

MUCH of the learning of self-reliance comes from those self-discoveries in moments of solitude which reveal to us the potential strength of our own ingenuity. Men tend to be ridden by fear of inadequacy to a far greater degree under urban conditions of living than when placed where they are compelled to accomplish certain tasks alone. A pioneer may conceivably be either brutal or kind, but he is a man and he knows it. Being less prone to fear his inadequacy as a single individual, or to fear what others may do to take away his means of livelihood, he has, potentially, at least, more creative energy.

The fact that men of the wilderness days, actively engaged in pushing back a physical frontier, are not usually regarded as contributors to our culture, merely indicates that commonly the footloose and the poor filtered to the forefront of action, not that the wilderness inevitably discourages literacy. We often assume a rigid division between the adventurers of the world and the poets and philosophers, while the qualities most needed by each may exist in both, although unevenly developed. And it seems to us that however well fitted a man may be for literary or artistic or philosophical expression, his capacities will expand and deepen if he is able to live close to soil and forest. Four inspired leaders of the American mind, Emerson, Thoreau, Bronson Alcott and Walt Whitman, all lived in remarkably sensitive rapport with farm or field and stream. It is possible that the universal quality of the appeal generated in their writings indicates that in every human heart there is a place for appreciating what may be called the Religion of Nature.

Memories of childhood should assure each parent that children often live exquisitely in those environs where their sensitive imaginings are focussed upon the simple miracles of natural growth and scenic splendor. The child does not become eloquent on these subjects—instead, he

feels the eloquent harmonies of nature. Perhaps our own cultural wordiness about "Nature" gives evidence of a regrettable remoteness which develops apace with our urban involvements—a separation from everything natural, which we seldom strive to bridge.

When as adults we join in the various adventures which allegedly introduce youth to the mountains and the sea, and when we encourage them to join Scouts or Woodcrafters or Campfire Girls—or when we sacrifice financially to allow them to attend a summer camp—we usually act instinctively on the assumption that "out-of-doors" people have the best chance of becoming the best people. But the greatest value to be derived from contact with nature is that achieved in solitude—not from an institutional encroachment on the wilderness. The "organized" Boy Scout approach to overnight camping is psychologically similar to the "produce-more-jet-planes-than-Russia" approach to World Peace, for between ends and means an abyss widens and confuses. Routines of large-scale organizing interfere. Ideal youth-participation in out-of-door life is that undertaken in company with an equally enthusiastic and appreciative parent, while even this may best be considered simply a prelude to further opportunities.

No matter what section of the country a man is obliged to inhabit, there are times and ways and means for excursions calculated to leave the psychological confusion of cities far behind—and which add better dimensions to youthful imaginings than those supplied by Buck Rogers, Dick Tracy and the radio serials. There is no region of the United States, or for that matter, of any land, which will not repay plans for occasional overnight camping, nor any financial means too abbreviated to render this within the range of the things a child may periodically look forward to. Even an early morning walk through the wheat fields of Minnesota or Kansas will introduce that quality which has in all times made "nature-worship" the most ennobling faith. A habit of this

sort, once begun, will often be a lifelong resource in the difficult struggle against the anxieties and oppressions of a too rapidly speeding century. Both children and ourselves can discover roots in our relationship with nature which need not change with the shifting conditions of competitive life, and perhaps in this realm of experience we come closer to the realization we all *wish* we had—the sense of there being a universal language for all those men who would be brothers in understanding.

The enjoyment of solitude is a mark of psychological fitness and a distinguishing characteristic of all real genius. That solitude which is achieved in peaceful pastoral or mountain surroundings may be expected to bring much in the way of a feeling of irreducible individual integrity. The parent who does plan occasional excursions with a child or children could perhaps minimize the incidental dangers of separation and encourage the child to spend some time entirely by himself, so that the presence of a particular other person—with its reminders of concrete situations of the everyday world—may drop away and leave a wider feeling of appreciation for the wonders of life in general. The man who lives close to all natural beauties has no need for a specific religion, for everything in his environment becomes imbued with religious significance, needing no interpreter.

Perhaps, in the final analysis, it is we, who set ourselves to be educators of the young, who most need to recapture some of the values of simple living. Perhaps, too, there is nothing in our life of economic struggle as important as making time for ourselves to breathe occasionally the air of a "natural" realm, a realm which can be our meeting ground with inspired men of the past who learned not to be fearful and perplexed in the face of annoyance and adversity. And if there were enough adults sensitive to this mutual educative need—one of the most natural bonds between children and adults—institutions such as the Boy Scouts could cease mass marching on the mountains in hatchet-chopping holocausts. A few

children with each adult could learn to tread softly, with the reverence and appreciation for beauty which is latent in every heart, be it young or old.

FRONTIERS

MILITANT SCHOLARSHIP

ONE who wishes to be "informed" about the situation of the Negro in the United States will probably find that Gunnar Myrdal's *American Dilemma* is the best book for him to study. But the man who wants to reckon for himself with the jagged inconsistencies of most discussions of the Negro Problem had better turn to *Caste, Class & Race* by Oliver Cromwell Cox, professor of sociology and economics at Tuskegee Institute.

That Prof. Cox is predominantly Marxian in his approach to race relationships need not discourage the reader. The book is not doctrinaire, but uses the Marxian analysis as an effective tool to expose certain social facts and processes. Just as Marx, seizing upon facts that European bourgeois society had ignored through apathy and complacency, erected them into a revolutionary system which challenged—and still challenges—the sincerity of Reformist movements, so this author, while planning no special revolution, has gathered together and articulated facts which rise up to condemn modern apathy and complacency concerning the Negro in the United States.

Whatever your theory, if you have one, about the right and wrong of the situation of the American Negro, or what can or cannot be done on his behalf, this book will disturb it. Prof. Cox's thesis is that the oppression of the Negroes in America is a phase, a special case, of the class struggle. He is, therefore, consistently impatient with all sociologists who ignore the economic background of race prejudice. He says:

... the race problem developed out of the need of the planter class, the ruling class, to keep the freed Negro exploitable. To do this, the ruling class had to do what every ruling class must do; that is, develop mass support for its policy. Race prejudice was and is the convenient vehicle. . . . In a quite literal sense, the white ruling class is the Negro's burden; the saying

that the white man will do anything for the Negro except get off his back puts the same idea graphically.

He goes a long way toward proving this contention, and even if there be other, more subtle factors involved, any failure at all to admit the economic motives behind cultural subordination of the Negro becomes, objectively, an irresponsible disregard of injustices which ought not to be tolerated. He says, further:

Thus race prejudice may be thought of as having its genesis in the propagandistic and legal contrivances of the white ruling class for securing mass support of its interest. It is an attitude of distance and estrangement which seeks to conceptualize as brutes the human objects of exploitation. It is some such idea Alexis de Toqueville had when he wrote: "The European is to the other races of mankind, what man is to the lower animals; he makes them subservient to his use; and when he cannot subdue, he destroys them."

A little further on, Prof. Cox hints at what may be an origin of this rationalization, saying, "It is likely that not every primitive people would be so confident as were the early Hebrews that God gave man dominion over all the animals of the earth."

A large portion of the book is devoted to the study of caste in India. Prof. Cox has obviously done a great amount of reading on this subject. It is evident, however, that he has always in mind a criticism of the misleading analogies drawn by other sociologists between caste in India and Negro-white relationships in the United States. He makes much of the fact that while the caste system has been a stable pattern of society for many hundreds and even thousands of years of Indian history, accepted without question or revolt by the members of the various castes, Negroes in America have no such satisfied view of their oppressions by the white ruling class. Southern whites are virtually obsessed by fear of losing their position of racial dominance and contrive to fill the atmosphere with continual threats of what will happen if any significant equality is gained by the Negroes. As Prof. Cox says:

The Southern racial system "lives, moves, and has its being" in a thick matrix of organized and unorganized violence. As Myrdal observes, "There exists a pattern of violence against the Negroes in the South upheld by the relative absence of fear of legal reprisal. Any white man can strike or beat a Negro, steal or destroy his property, cheat him in a transaction and even take his life without much fear of legal reprisal." It may not be too strong an assertion to state that such a condition in America could never become stabilized.

There is some excellent comment on the tendency to minimize a condition of social injustice by giving it a sociological label and thereafter treating it as some sort of "natural" phenomenon. Prof. Cox finds that even the best-intentioned sociologists fall into this habit, when, for example, they liken the Negro situation to the caste relationships of Hinduism. Further, when economic exploitation of the Negroes is explained away in an academic manner by comparing it with the stratifications of other societies, Prof. Cox grows bluntly if politely indignant. The fact that there have always been social hierarchies seems to him no justification for telling the Negroes in Georgia that they must expect to be shot at if they dare to go to the polls to vote. Such points are clinched by Prof. Cox, not with plausible argument, but by quotations such as the following from *Time* for Aug- 5, 1946:

In Rupert District of South Georgia's Taylor County, Macie Snipes was the only Negro to vote. The day after election four white men called him out from supper. Macie Snipes staggered back into the house with blood gushing from the bullet wounds in his belly. A coroner's jury solemnly reported that he had been killed by one of his visitors in self-defense.

It is time to stop making excuses for white injustices to Negro citizens of the United States. The more "explanations" white people make for the economic inequality imposed on the Negro, the more "inferior" the whites become. Let political and economic equality be established, first; and then, if we feel the need, will be time enough for controlled scientific studies of hereditary differences, mental testings and the like. Meanwhile, it will take some honesty to admit all

that is valid in *Caste, Class & Race*, and if Prof. Cox seems uncharitable to most modern sociologists, what is important, now, is understanding the provocation which makes his criticisms so sharp.