



CONVICTS exposed themselves to malarial infection.

conscientiously exerted degrees of resistance which the average person "in real life" would not possess.

Meanwhile the idea of asking emptied pacifists to perform endurance feats under test conditions for humanitarian ends had spread to America. In Minnesota's land of plenty, 34 young men were systematically starved until they had lost a quarter of their weight. Then they were fattened up again by various diets to give UNRRA doctors and dietitians a lead as to what foods and what quantities of them it would be best to feed to Europe's hungry people when the opportunity to do so arrived.

Convicts Co-operated

On the Atlantic coast others experimented with drinking sea water and enduring continuous direct sunshine. Another team of 12 were kept awake for one whole week. After 48 hours they could not talk intelligibly. Rather later some began to "see things." Yet physically they were fit enough for baseball even on the fourth day. In America also, some 800 convicts in State penitentiaries voluntarily exposed themselves to malaria so that doctors could study the effects of the disease upon them.

Some of these tests, quite obviously, were really gruelling, and others, though not dangerous or painful in the same way would make their subjects' lives a burden for many months on end. Yet, if one reads (for example) the two books with the same title of *Human Guinea-Pigs*, the one by Mellanby on his own experiments, the other by three Swiss observers on the Nazi experiments, the difference in atmosphere is that between spring sunlight and a bat-infested cave. The Nazi doctors, respectable middle-aged scientific men for the most part, appear to have started out in an attitude of extreme detachment. But, presented with an overwhelming and quite valueless abundance of raw materials for experiments and with a human recalcitrance and individuality in each unit that mere "material" should not possess, they grew more and more recklessly wasteful and actively savage. Priests and pastors—presumably because they most conspicuously represented the unscientific "spiritual" element—were invariably singled out for the worst tortures.

Mellanby, on the absolute other hand, regarded his subjects all the way through as assistants, not "material."

He disagreed with their conscientious objections and political views, and in his book tries to psycho-analyse these away to some degree. But obviously in practice he respected his volunteers' opinions and personal ties.

He believes that experimenting upon human beings under these conditions has proved so worthwhile that it must go on—in fact must be developed into regular techniques and a regular volunteer service. But it is more valuable than experiments on animals only because (or when) the "subject" intelligently and conscientiously co-operates. For quite apart from their disastrous moral effect upon the experimenter, experiments done upon unwilling—or even *uninterested*—persons tend to bring few results, and these as likely as not will be misleading. So Mellanby was convinced two years ago from his own experience. To judge by last week's cable message his investigations into the German experiments have only strengthened his conviction.

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