

Bliss or Discontent?

According to Professor James Shelley, and contrary to popular belief, racial mixing apparently IS necessary for the health and cultural progress of nations.

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there were 47 per cent. bright coloured boys and 37 per cent. bright white boys. From such figures, and there are many more which lead to the same conclusion, we certainly cannot take it for granted that there is any real superiority in the brain power of the white people over that of the coloured.

We must therefore assume that within narrow limits the brainpower of practically all the races of man—of whatever colour—is the same. Now let us go back to our supposed instance and consider some of the effects of race mixture.

First, the communal organisation and feeling of the natives is broken up, because the white man gives individual wages to a native and he begins to feel a desire to assert himself and not look upon his life and goods as belonging to the whole tribe. Now this may be good or bad ultimately, but at any rate for the time being it causes social disruption. The native's attitude of mind is like that of the prodigal son who wished to break away from the community and be independent.

Secondly, the gods and the moral regulations and tabus of the native are not recognised by the white, and yet he seems to prosper and the heavens do not fall—so gradually the native throws over his religious and moral sanctions, and only gets a few superficial tricks of behaviour from the white, so that it seems for the time being that he is a person of lower moral nature, although in most cases this is by no means fundamentally true.

Thirdly, the beautiful arts and crafts of the native—in which so much spiritual value is embodied—soon become mere market produce for the souvenir-hunting tourist, and they become degraded and worthless.

Fourthly, there soon arises in some clever native a realisation of his own power and capacity, and he sees no reason why his people should be thus turned into slaves and forget their native dignity and culture. Many stories are told of the bitter tragedy it is to the old folk to see all the culture they treasured being sold for a mess of pottage. Some patriot arises and tries to awaken the slumbering pride of his people, and political trouble arises.

And so we could go on showing all these immediate effects of this race mixture. But it is more important to consider the long distance results. Does the mixture of races degrade culture ultimately? Does the mixture of races produce human beings of a lower quality than either of the racial stocks as some people maintain?

Should we pride ourselves on the purity of race? To deal with the last question first. We English can't afford to count purity very far back, or we find we are an extraordinary race of mongrels. And indeed there are very few nations at the present time of white population who can boast anything like the purity of many of the coloured races they sometimes despise. This desire for purity of race

is nothing more than an expression of the old tendency of nature to want to stick to the normal—anything that is very much different from our own normal selves we have a feeling of repulsion for. And yet, progress comes from the variations from the normal. And so it is with race. Purity of race frequently produces sterility, and the race dies out. The human race is very like flowers in this respect. Native races of very pure stock—like the Andamanese—even though white man's diseases do not enter into the



Harry A. Barton,

a popular IYA baritone, who will sing two solos on Wednesday, December 7.

—S. P. Andrew, photo.

situation, seem gradually to have fewer and fewer children and then die out completely.

And what about the arts and sciences—the culture of nations? If we look through history we come to the same conclusion. The great periods when man's mind and spirit seems to have reached an extraordinarily high standard of expression—such as with the Greeks in the fifth century, B.C.—seem always to have followed at some little distance after the mixing of races. It is as though the outlook of one type of mind has been fully expressed and then decayed through lack of further vision. Then comes the new blood, with different yearnings—and the mixing of the two is not just a matter of simple addition, but rather of chemical combination—producing a new spiritual outlook with new powers.

And as it is with nations so it seems to be with individuals. If you look through a long list of the world's controlling figures at the present day and in the past, you will not find much purity of blood among them. Perhaps the mixture is not of races as far apart as the Hottentot and the Swed-

ish, but the mixture is nevertheless quite great. Think of the great figures who have come from the borders of countries where races mix. Poets and painters innumerable come from the borderlands of Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Cornwall, where the Celtic blood has mixed with the Saxon. Perhaps that is because these people of mixed blood are more conscious of life's forces fighting in their veins and so become more expressive than their pure-blooded brothers. Or perhaps it is because the more vigorous blooded individuals of one race tend to kick over the racial traces and marry the vigorous rebels of the other race. However, we look at this race mixture problem, we see in the long run the same sort of mixture seems to be necessary for the health and cultural progress of nations. My mind turns to artists and dramatists. Shakespeare was born near enough the borders of Wales to have Celtic blood in him. Goldsmith from Dublin, and how many more famous dramatists from the mixed part of Ireland? Ibsen was a terrible mixture. I looked along the backs of books on British artists and I see—George Morland—English father and French mother. David Cox, probably Welsh and English. Raeburn, of border stock. David Roberts, also of border stock. Thomas Girtin was French and English. Reynolds, near enough to Cornwall to have Celtic blood in him. Romney, from Cumberland must also be a mixture of Celtic and Saxon. Millais, was of Channel Island stock. Rossetti, Italian and English. And so we could go on through the great names in the Arts of all countries. We must then cast aside the unreasoned prejudices that naturally arise in us through strangeness of colour or other racial characteristics. Who knows but that the great culture of the 21st century is not at this moment being prepared for among those heterogeneous mixtures of peoples to whom we are often so cruel in our scorn. Read John Galsworthy's play called "The Little Man," and we see in that splendid little parable that while the nation-prond English, and American, and German and Dutch find excuses for passing by on the other side, it is the little man whose blood is described by the American as being a bit streaky who goes to the rescue of distressed humanity in the form of the poor mother and her babe. Let us start with the beauty common to all races that is symbolised by the mother and her babe, and from that build a new vision of destiny of races and national cultures.

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