



Bliss

or

Discontent?

" . . . or whether the bliss that comes with ignorance is better than the discontent that comes with knowledge

Whether we like it or not, we must face the fact that the world is at the present time disfigured by seemingly incurable sores caused by the friction of peoples of different races " In the following article (a 3YA talk), Professor James Shelley discusses the social and cultural problems arising from the mixing of races.

ONE of the great international problems that will trouble the world during the present century is the social and cultural problem arising from the mixture of races. The problem is largely the result of rapid communication and industrial exploitation. Let us think of some remote part of the world inhabited perhaps by natives having a simple but strict culture different from our own. Some prospector discovers that there is gold in the rocks, or that the soil is excellent for growing some valuable crop. He builds a station and begins to exploit the resources. In a short time he trains natives to do the physical labour because the climate doesn't suit the white man. The natives are thus able to command by their wages a fuller material life than they had before, and all seems to be going well for everybody. But shortly a multitude of troubles arise, and humanitarian politicians and thinkers condemn what they regard as the disastrous effects of the influence of the white man's civilisation upon the happy native life.

We are not now concerned with discussing the rights and wrongs of such a case, or of the comparative happiness or unhappiness of the native, or whether the bliss that comes with ignorance is better worth having than the discontent that comes with knowledge; all we wish to do is to consider what are the chief effects, disastrous or otherwise, which come from the bringing of different races into touch with one another.

Whether we like it or not, we must face the fact that the world is at the present time disfigured by seemingly incurable sores caused by the friction of peoples of different races. We see such sores on a large scale in the negro problem in America, among the many races in India, in South Africa; we see frequent rashes breaking out all over the earth in the persecution of the Jewish people; we see small eruptions in Central Europe, in Honolulu, in the Philippines, in Samoa, in a thousand places; and the fear of an outbreak which some consider would disfigure the fair face of Australia has taken the form of a national policy which others regard as being diametrically opposed to the religion they profess.

However great the problem is to-day there is every chance of it growing to alarming dimensions during this century, unless the races at the present controlling the economic power can be brought to regard other members of the human race with more understanding and less ignorantly superior prejudice—whatever may be the colour of their skins or the shapes of their noses.

The contempt of one race for another is usually based on the quicksands of prejudice, which quickly slip away when they are

scientifically examined. However, the prejudice remains long after our reason has rejected it. How ridiculous now seems to us the contempt of the Nor-

man for the Anglo-Saxon a few centuries ago. But, one may say, the Norman and Saxon were really near akin, and so of course the Saxon would soon mount to the cultural standard of the Norman, since he had just as good a brain; whereas, it may be objected, the American white and the negro are not near akin, and their brains are very different in their power. But is this so? Their kinship is relatively remote, but how different are they in brain power?

ALTHOUGH partisan writers in the Southern States of America make loose investigations with the express purpose of proving the fundamental inferiority of the coloured population, there are no scientifically conducted inquiries which give us any real grounds for assuming such inferiority to exist. For evidence let us look up the documents published by the United States Congress, which surely cannot be considered prejudiced in favour of the coloured man.

Professor Arthur Macdonald gave extensive tests in Washington to thousands of school children in 13 school subjects: Algebra, arithmetic, drawing, geography and so on. Then he divided the children into three groups: The bright ones, the average, and the dull ones, according to their scores. Among the white boys of purely American parents 37.5 per cent. were bright, 42.3 per cent. were average, and 20.2 per cent. were dull. Among the coloured boys examined on the same standard there were 47.2 per cent. bright ones, 33.5 per cent. average, and 19.2 per cent. dull. We see, then, that (Continued inside back cover.)

