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## Creative Thought and Social Service

MANY who listened to the national lecture broadcast by Dr. T. R. Glover on December 19 of last year on the challenge of the Greek must have recalled the plea for courage and magnanimity with which Sir Arthur Salter closed his "Recovery", and that rectorial address of General Smuts at St. Andrews on "Freedom", which should be among the enduring monuments of the literature of 1934. The adventure of the new age, the call to creative thought, to the untiring endeavour to give to every man the physical comfort, leisure and free access to all the world's rich heritage which he possesses the capacity to enjoy, demands courage and vision, but demands above all the individuality and freedom which were among the outstanding characteristics of the Greek.

The note of adventure sounded in these addresses repays consideration. To sustain any civilisation at a high level requires more than learning ; it requires a search for new perfections, which is the element of adventure and avoids the tedium of indefinite repetition and repressing mechanisation. Only the adventure of ideas and of practice conforming to these ideas can save a civilisation from decadence, and the first service that ideas can render is that of mental fertilisation—preparing the mind to receive the ideal of other types of perfection which in turn becomes a programme for achievement.

This is the essential characteristic of creative thought—the provision of new ideas, new ideals, new forms of service. It flourishes in an atmosphere of freedom and of adventure. The real problem indeed is not that of producing great men but of producing great societies who will put up the men for the occasion, as Whitehead truly reminds us. It is just because over whole departments of life to-day the tradition of freedom is steadily weakening and individual initiative is being repressed that the world situation is so dangerous. In the new experiments at government which are being tried out, the individual, as General Smuts pointed out, is more and more at a discount. Individual freedom and independence of mind are essential to all real progress. Without them neither science, art nor politics can flourish.

This issue of freedom, the most fundamental of our civilisation, raised once again by the events of the last few years, cannot be evaded. The new forms of government which have sprung up on the Continent, and are urged elsewhere by political

groups, are based on a denial of liberty, not as a temporary expedient but on principle. It is the false assumptions on which these experiments are based, not the fact of experimenting, despite the risks in experimenting by those who have not been trained in the technique of experience, that is our danger; and the warning given by General Smuts last autumn is as impressive as it is eloquent. Without freedom, "peace, contentment and happiness, even manhood itself, are not possible. 'Happiness is Freedom, and Freedom is Courage.' That is the fundamental equation of all politics and all human government and any system which ignores it is based on sand. . . . The vision of freedom, of the liberation of the human spirit from its primeval bondage, is perhaps the greatest light which has yet dawned on our human horizon. It forms the real spur of progress, the lure of our race in its ceaseless striving towards the future. . . . Freedom should be a creative force inspiring our young men and women to noble action."

The experiments to which General Smuts refers are in some respects reactions from abuses or failures on the part of democratic or supposedly democratic institutions. They are also attempts to save the State from the untoward consequences of such abuse or failure, but in doing so they offer merely a temporary security while jeopardising our fundamental human ideals and our finest heritage from the past. Here, as so often, the deliberate search for security leads to an anaesthesia which conceals the paralysis and decay proceeding beneath the surface, all the more readily when uniformity of speech and conduct steadily limit and standardise thought.

Many dangers attend this standardisation and mechanisation of life, but few are more serious than the opportunity they afford for shallow and specious doctrines to be imposed upon masses of mankind by a few groups the interests of which are served by their propagation. The scientific worker at least should be alive to the danger which threatens him. The limitation of scientific inquiry has been experienced in the past under the domination of theology. The bondage of political theories and expediencies will prove no less deadly to scientific advance than the earlier fetters which science has long since shed, and for his own sake the scientific worker must not tamely watch their imposition. As General Smuts said in his address on February 9, read before the newly founded South African Institute of International Affairs (*The Times*,

Feb. 11), "in these grave developments we see not new life for the world but rather decay, not an enrichment of the European tradition but an impoverishment, a negation of the finest and noblest insights of human spirit, and a falling back rather than an advance in the great cause of civilisation".

The man of science, however, does not stand alone. In these last few years, he has been rapidly learning to view his work in relation to society, to see it not as an isolate but as an integrated part of the functioning of society. He has seen before him whole fields of society in which his method and habit of impartial investigation might be fruitfully applied, and indeed must be applied if society is to be secure under the conditions created by the growing application of scientific discoveries in the mechanical world. These fields of work and these possibilities will disappear if the freedom of the individual continues to be restrained. The direction or rather exploitation of scientific work in the interests of a single class or of existing political theories contains the seeds of its own disaster and downfall.

Nor is this all. If humanity is to reap the full results of scientific investigations, if the knowledge thus acquired is to be turned to account in the service of mankind, above all in the wide fields of sociology and politics, science has to join hands with art. Civilisation requires beauty as well as truth, as well as adventure. Even more than science, if possible, art demands the free expression of individuality. Science, it is true, rests largely on creative thought and individual enterprise, and under modern conditions is evolving a technique of team work which ensures their full play in the concentrated attack on a definite objective.

Progress even here is thus founded upon the experience, the integration of discords, and the social value of liberty lies largely in its production of discords and stimulation of thought. Without such freedom and discord, art becomes impossible. Art is essentially, as Whitehead has said, a finite fragment of human effort achieving its own perfection within its own limits. It heightens the sense of humanity and evolves into consciousness the finite perfections which lie ready for human achievement. In its broadest sense, art is civilisation—the unremitting aim at the major perfections of harmony, the purposeful adaptation of appearance to reality. Its secret lies in its freedom.

To surrender freedom is to dry up the fountain springs of creative thought in science and art alike, and to render impossible that alliance of science and art which is probably our supreme need if the results of scientific knowledge over the widest fields not merely of the physical but also of the biological and sociological sciences are to be applied

wisely and impartially, and integrated into the structure of society. Well may General Smuts's words ring in our ears an insistent call to join issue at once with all those forces which menace so fair a prospect of advance, and jeopardise the noblest traditions and heritage which have come to mankind from the great civilisations of the past.

### Reviews

#### The Anthropology of the Near East

*An Introduction to the Anthropology of the Near East in Ancient and Recent Times.* By C. U. Ariëns Kappers. With a Chapter on Near Eastern Bloodgroups, by Leland W. Parr. Pp. vii+200+3 plates. (Amsterdam: N. V. Noord-Hollandsche Uitgeversmaatschappij, 1934.)

IN 1929 Dr. Ariëns Kappers, director of the Central Institute for Brain Research in Amsterdam, landed in Syria as a visiting professor in the American University of Beirut. There he remained for a year lecturing on "Histology and Neural Anatomy"—for it is as a neurologist that he has made his world-wide reputation. At Beirut he was tempted into a new field of inquiry—that of anthropology. Amongst his students he found representatives of that welter of races which has made the Near East the despair of the modern anthropologist. Near at hand were the peoples of Syria—the Lebanese, the Druses, the Alouites along the coast to the north, the inhabitants of Damascus and of other Syrian cities on the border of the desert and the bedouin Syrians. He had communities of Armenians, Jews and Arabs open to him for observation. Near at hand was Palestine with its puzzling mixture of human types—old and new. He took the field, callipers in hand, and succeeded in measuring 2,500 individuals, representing the more outstanding racial types. To his own measurements he added those made by others. To obtain explanations of the data he collected in Syria, he found it necessary to extend his inquiries until they carried him far beyond the Caspian on one hand and the Persian Gulf on the other. The results of his inquiries appeared as a series of papers in the *Proceedings of the Royal Academy of Science of Amsterdam*. These researches have now been systematised and form the basis of the present work—"An Introduction to the Anthropology of the Near East". A very valuable chapter has been added by Dr. L. W. Parr, of George Washington University, Washington, D.C., in which is summarised the results of an investigation of the blood-reactions of Near Eastern race groups.

Before attempting to indicate the conclusions

reached by Dr. Kappers as to the number of races he has identified in the south-western part of Asia, and the relationships in which these races stand to each other, in an evolutionary sense, it is necessary to touch on the methods he has employed for the discrimination of one race from another. His method has the recommendation of simplicity. He takes two measurements of the head—its length and its width—and relies on the proportion which the width bears to the length to give him an indication of race. He insists, however, and all anthropologists will agree with him on this, that when a group of measurements has been made the result must not be expressed in a single figure as a mean or average but must be tabulated so that the individual measurements are expressed in the form of a 'frequency curve'.

Dr. Kappers regards the form of this curve as being indicative of race. Just because the Turk, the Armenian, the Lebanese, the Druses, the Assyrians, the Uzbeks, the Kirghiz of Turkestan, and the round-barrow people of England have frequency curves which fall on the same range of the cephalic scale, they must be regarded as members of the same race—to which Dr. Kappers proposes to give the name of "Central Asiatic". It would be difficult to find two peoples more sharply differentiated from each other than are the Armenians of Anatolia and the Kirghiz of Turkestan. If we are guided by external appearances we shall assign the Kirghiz to the Mongolian stock and the Armenians to the Caucasian stock.

Dr. Kappers holds that the cephalic index—the relative width of the head—is a more reliable guide to race than are outward appearances. After a lifetime spent in the study of cranial characters and racial traits, I have come to an opposite conclusion—namely, that external traits are better guides to race and to degrees of racial affinity than are the relative diameters of the skull. For example, if we are to judge the race of Charles Darwin according to his head form, then we must assign him to Dr. Kappers' "Central Asiatic Race", but if we judge him according to standards accepted by his fellow countrymen we must regard him as a Caucasian of the English breed.

I am certain the majority of anthropologists