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Esme Wynne Tyson

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By Esme Wynne-Tyson

CHARLESTON (S.C.) NEWS AND
COURIER

Religion And Civilization

(Reprinted from the Jan. 1959 number of The Contemporary Review, one of England's leading monthly magazines.)

If we are to analyse what is known as the Color Problem" in any depth—and only by going to the roots of the matter can we hope to solve it—we shall have to take religion, which has always taught that spiritual evolution was the aim and explanation of human life, into account.

For Paul, who described the



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evolutionary process in the words, "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," (Phil. 3:13, 14), also made a statement relating to this process which is of immense importance but seems to have been almost totally overlooked by the theologians.

It is found in Acts 17:26, 27 where we are told that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him and find him."

In the light of the evolutionary theory this must surely be interpreted to mean that all nations of men are born in the best environment for their further evolution.

It is therefore profoundly to be regretted that Christendom did not give this teaching the attention it deserved before it began so indiscriminately to "colonize" and

otherwise penetrate into alien lands and civilizations, for by so doing it has impeded and dangerously jeopardized the natural evolutionary process.

Paul, who is nowadays sometimes believed to have known a great deal about the Mystery religions of his times, well understood the impossibility of equality on the evolutionary path. Basic to all such cults was the idea of degrees of initiation, from the lowest to the highest, according to the capacity for understanding in the initiate.

LESS REALISTIC than the Apostle to the Gentiles, modern man has a mania for the idea of equality. Yet logic demands that if we are to accept and act upon the idea of evolution, we must relinquish our present unreasoning insistence on egalitarianism.

While, as Paul pointed out, men must necessarily be conceived as being "equally" flesh and blood and equally potentially spiritually minded, in their progress towards the evolutionary mark, or, as so often seems to happen, their regress from it into sheer animalism, they cannot possibly be said to be "equal."

Indeed almost every man is in a different stage of development, and, even more obviously, are nations and races in different phases of evolution.

It is sheer nonsense to affirm, for instance, that an Australian aborigine is the equal of a Tagore or a Gandhi, or that members of the more primitive African tribes can be said to be "equals" of such men as Dr. Schweitzer and the late Professor Einstein. These extreme cases are cited in order to stress the fact of evolution, for, considering them, no one could fail to admit that spiritual evolution is a process going on before our very eyes.

IT IS NOT A PROBLEM that can be solved by any sentimental humanism, or religious insistence that all men are the children of God. Even in families the younger children are kept in the kindergarten, the older sent to advanced schools and the eldest, perhaps, to a University.

They are segregated for one reason only; that they are in different stages of mental development; and if they refused this wise and reasonable grading and insisted on staying together, they would either never emerge from the kindergarten or the youngest children would be transported to an intellectual climate incomprehensible to them.

They would either retard their elders by demanding that they remained at the immature level, or become mentally starved by being unable to digest the too advanced pabulum available to them.

This is like the situation we have in the world today, and markedly, just lately, in England, when, unable to prevent the influx of members of the Commonwealth (which we should never have acquired had we kept within the God-given "bounds" referred to by Paul), we are faced with a situation which has so far defeated the best intentioned of many governments.

THE NATIVES of the West Indies have a legal right to enter England as British subjects, but it is not their biological or spiritual home, and may well prevent their natural evolution which can only take place gradually in the environment and culture native to them.

On the other hand, the instinctive feeling of many inarticulate but intuitive British people that a mingling of races, which is, more basically, a mingling of two incompatible evolutionary streams, is not "right," is a sure one.

Specifically they complain of the coloured races taking their jobs and houses, and being dirty, noisy, or immoral; but these last objections are only the outward and visible signs of a different stage of spiritual development, a lower culture, and it is this which is sensed and resented by numbers of British people who have no personal ill-will towards their coloured neighbours as such.

Their instinct, being basically right, is strong, and they are frustrated by not being able to rationalize it. If they could do so, they would say, in the words of a wise man of the last century: To preach equality to what is beneath, without instructing it how to rise upward, is not this binding us to descend ourselves?

WHAT AMOUNTS TO an enforced intermingling of white with coloured races in this country at the present time is being resented at a deeper level than most people imagine.

The rising generation of British youth is already badly handicapped in its evolutionary struggle by the moral degradation which was involved in, and has resulted from, the last war combined with the wholly unspiritual atmosphere of thought engendered by scientific materialism.

And their parents, observing

this, cannot submit passively to witnessing their further deterioration through mixing with people of a still lower ethic and culture.

The young people of Britain are not themselves sufficiently ethical to instruct their companions how to rise. Evolution is an arduous task. It is far easier to sink than to rise.

We have an object lesson of this in modern America which has badly suffered from close proximity with its less evolved immigrants.

The "hot" music, primitive



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dances, and other sensual practices of the coloured races, have permeated, with their devolutionary influences, every corner of a once-puritan civilization, debasing and obstructing the process of an originally highly ethical people.

Hence the instinctive fear lying at the back of much of the present colour prejudice in this country.

When the evolutionary scales are already weighted heavily against the people of the West, any further weight may well prove fatal. And people intuitively feel this, for the evolutionary urge, unrecognized for what it is and often expressed as simply a desire to better oneself or to give to one's children opportunities lacking in one's own life, is deeply rooted in the human heart.

Were it not so there would be no hope of further evolution for mankind.

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