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COLOUR AND COMMONSENSE

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FOREWORD BY RT. HON. NORMAN MANLEY

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FOREWORD

THE Fabian Society and Commonwealth Bureau are to be complimented on presenting this pamphlet *Colour and Commonsense* at such an opportune moment. Dr. Little offers a factual and unbiased account of the nature and the origins of what is popularly termed 'the colour problem.' He is well equipped for this, not only by his training as a social anthropologist, but by his special study of and interest in this matter.

It cannot be over-stressed how important it is to remove the misconceptions and ignorance of scientific facts which surround this subject and affect the attitudes of even well-meaning individuals. Consequently anything which adds one more grain of knowledge to the admittedly scanty popular storehouse deserves to be widely publicised and widely read. This should not be difficult in the case of this pamphlet as it is readable, interesting and always preserves a high level of objectivity.

As a Jamaican I could not help noticing the omission of reference to the local Jamaican situation as regards race and colour in the body of the pamphlet. Perhaps it is not so well known that in Jamaica (in spite of 300 years of colonialism and the legacy of slavery) a wide variety of races and their admixtures live together at every level of society with a degree of tolerance and mutual self-respect that perhaps surpasses even the most notable examples mentioned in the pamphlet. Not without good reason did the new West Indies Federation choose for its motto the simple statement 'To dwell together in Unity.' But perhaps the omission of special reference to Jamaica and the West Indies is a good thing in that it will help to avoid any impression being created at this time of special pleading in the text of what is a sober and scholarly appraisal of aspects of a pressing problem of immense and world-wide significance.

NORMAN MANLEY.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This pamphlet includes portions of articles entitled 'Culture rules our Way of Life', 'White Superiority is Unscientific', 'The Origins of Racial Prejudice' and 'Facing the Problem of Prejudice', which Dr. Little wrote for the *Scotsman*. Thanks are due to the Editor of the *Scotsman* for permission to reprint these, although the *Scotsman* does not necessarily associate itself with the views expressed in the final section of this pamphlet. The author would also like to thank Dr. N. A. Barnicot, Lecturer in Physical Anthropology, London University, for his advice about a number of the passages in Section 3.

COLOUR AND COMMONSENSE

KENNETH LITTLE

1. WHAT IS THE PROBLEM ?

THE expression 'colour problem' refers to difficulties arising out of the relations between white and coloured people in countries governed or controlled by members of the white race. It is an invidious term because it implies that coloured people are a special source of trouble: the latter might reasonably retort that the problem is just as much a 'white' one!

More objectively understood, however, the existence of a colour problem means simply that notice of racial differences is publicly taken by the members of a particular community or the inhabitants of a particular country. This will be evident if we compare the relative amount of attention paid to the question of race in, say, the Union of South Africa or parts of the United States with its relative neglect in, say, Brazil. Countries like Great Britain and New Zealand are approximately intermediate in this respect. Both English people and New Zealanders are alive to racial differences, but among them a darker skin does not arouse the same emotions as in South Africa or the United States.

The extent of this consciousness of colour and of other physical characteristics varies with the historical and other circumstances in each country.¹ In some cases, the 'colour problem' is largely one of administering not only racially different but (by European standards) culturally backward colonial populations. This applies to a large part of Africa including, to some extent, the Union of South Africa.² In other cases, the coloured group constitutes a minority in a much larger and mainly white population, as in the United States and, to a lesser extent, Britain itself.

Different Attitudes

Again, not only does the actual connotation of 'coloured' itself vary—in Britain, it is nearly synonymous with non-European in origin, in the United States, it generally means Negro, in South Africa, mixed blood—but particular aspects of the problem differ in importance from place to place.

¹ For comparative information see A. Lind (ed.), *Race Relations in World Perspective*, 1956.

² A. E. Hellman (ed.), *Handbook on Racial Relations in South Africa*, 1949.

In parts of East Africa much of the trouble is over land; in South Africa it is largely a question of 'racial' and economic competition; in the United States traditional prejudice as well as economics enters the picture; in Britain it is partly class consciousness, Negroes being socially unacceptable. As a result, each country has its own methods, sometimes legal, sometimes unofficial, and sometimes both legal and unofficial, for dealing with the matter.

Each country has also developed its own system of racial relationships and restrictions which vary, quite often, with the particular nationality involved. Most of the Southern States of the U.S.A. prohibit marriage between whites and Negroes, but a number allow whites to marry Chinese and other non-Europeans. In South Africa people of mixed blood (the Cape Coloured) are allowed to vote, but Africans are not. It is in the last two countries, of course, that racial policies and regulations have reached their most elaborate form, being known as segregation and *apartheid* (separation). In both cases there is legislation enforcing racial separation and limiting the extent to which white and coloured people can come together. Signs and notices indicate which parts of buses, railway stations, etc., are for whites and which for coloured, and it is a criminal offence for a person belonging to one race to use accommodation assigned to the other.

Racial Segregation

The Union government and the Southern legislatures imposing these laws and regulations claim that they are a means of avoiding racial conflict and disorder. They argue that racial segregation—whether in terms of separate districts and localities or of separate schools and other public services—is in the interest of both parties, because it enables them to develop along their own lines.

The idea of separate development, however, is pressed more strongly in South Africa than in the United States. This is partly because of differences in habit and outlook between the various sections of the South African population. Most of the native Africans, or Bantu, still live a tribal life; the Indians are mainly Hindu, or Moslem; and only the Cape Coloured people aim, as a group, at the way of life followed by the European section. Negroes in the United States, on the other hand, have generally the same customs and outlook as white Americans.

The colour problem, then, is rooted in a conscious appreciation of racial differences, and from the examples cited it would appear that the nations mainly involved are English-speaking ones. Allowing for the fact that about half the white population of South Africa speaks Afrikaans, a derivative of Dutch, this is broadly the case.

There are two main reasons for this. The first is that the British and the North Americans have historically been less ready than other Western peoples to accept non-Europeans as members of their own society. The second is that the coloured inhabitants of the British Commonwealth and the United States are, on the whole, politically more advanced than the

coloured subjects of other European nations. If the French, the Belgians and the Portuguese lack a colour problem, it is partly because they worry less about a person's complexion and partly because fewer of their coloured subjects have so far demanded racial equality.

Cultural Distinctions

It is only true in part, however, to say that the French and other Latin-speaking peoples lack a colour *bar*. There is rarely any official regulation of the kind found in South Africa and the southern U.S.A., but there are social restrictions. It would be more accurate to say that distinctions are made, not on grounds of race, but according to culture and education.

In French West Africa there are schools in which European and native African children sit side by side, learning the same lessons and taking the same examinations. This relatively small group—a coloured élite—certainly has the same opportunities as the white Frenchman. Africans and coloured West Indians sit in the French Chamber, hold high office in the government, and are leading figures in French society. But it is only in fairly recent years that the French have tried to bring non-literate Africans into closer association. Broadly speaking, the Belgians and the Portuguese allow Africans citizenship rights according to their education and culture. The Belgians also have a social colour bar and residential segregation in their colony of the Congo. They believe in taking care of the health and general welfare of the African population, but tend to restrict its employment mainly to manual and technical work.

Brazil is another country where a Mediterranean language is spoken, but it differs from the European nations mentioned in that its coloured population is national, not colonial. Since Brazil's neglect of racial difference is of special interest reference will be made to it again on a later page.

The Russian View

The other country requiring further consideration in this connection is the Soviet Union, because the Russians claim that they have no colour problem. The constitution of the U.S.S.R. guarantees its citizens equal rights, no matter what their race may be. The penal codes of the various Republics treat racial hostility as a crime, and even to possess anti-racial literature is illegal. In other words, according to the Russians there is no such thing as racial segregation among them, and neither in education nor in anything else is any difference made between races and colours.

This Russian attitude towards the colour problem and their claim to have abolished the colour bar is undoubtedly a paramount influence in world politics today. It has created a tremendous impression on coloured peoples far and wide and is closely related to their ever-growing demand for a place in the sun. Particularly in the Far East and parts of Africa, there is an increasing desire to throw off European and outside domination and to gain national independence. India was the harbinger of this movement, Indonesia and Viet-Nam are more recent examples; and nationalism

has also developed strongly in West Africa, though not necessarily in the same direction. In other parts of the world where coloured people form a minority, the demand is somewhat different. It is principally for equal civic and other rights. This is the main objective, for example, of the Negroes who constitute about one-tenth of the United States population.

Segregation and Inequality

The political upheaval, especially among the colonial peoples, is largely in protest against racial discrimination, hence their interest in Russia and Communism. There is generally little complaint about racial separation as such: most coloured people have little desire for amalgamation with the white man. What they object to, however, is being denied the same opportunities and privileges. They point out that segregation so often means, in practice, inequality; that, for example, much more money is spent on educating a white child than a coloured one, and that the colour bar does not stop at separate districts and areas. It also debars coloured people from the better paid jobs and prevents their having any real say in the government of the country.

How, then, are we—as the major colonial power and as members of a Commonwealth which is predominantly coloured—to regard all this? It may seem at first sight that the colour problem is really no problem at all, if, as democrats, we believe in every one having his fair share of opportunity. Why should there be such things as colour bars and racial restrictions? What difference does the colour of a person's skin make?

Contrasting Standards

Unfortunately, it is impossible to deal with things in such simple and straightforward terms—at any rate, without the authoritarian means of applying physical coercion. The first difficulty is an economic one. Most Europeans in the colonial countries enjoy a relatively high standard of life, to which they consider their superior technical knowledge and training and the capital they have expended on their farms and industries entitles them. They are afraid of being 'swamped' by the much larger coloured populations around them and of losing their present material comforts and other advantages. Remember, for example, that non-Europeans are nearly five times as numerous in South Africa as Europeans, and that whites constitute less than one per cent. of the population of Kenya. Those Europeans who work for wages are in particular fear of coloured competition. Consequently they demand protection against the possibility of being undercut by living standards so much lower than their own.

There is a further difficulty. This is due to so many white people, particularly in South Africa and the southern U.S.A., having been brought up to regard the coloured man as an inferior being. They cannot forget that their grandfathers owned Negroes as slaves, and they cannot conceive

a coloured person being fit for anything but menial work. To these people the thought of mixing with a dark-skinned person is utterly repugnant—at any rate on terms of social equality. The racially prejudiced white South African or white Southerner has not the slightest objection to black people in his house or on his farm—provided they are there as servants or employees. What he cannot tolerate is the idea of their being admitted to the same clubs and churches and entering his family circle. The fact that these attitudes are ingrained is historically due to slavery.

Clearly, then, we have some very difficult questions to answer before we can arrive at any verdict on the colour problem. How did it originate—how is it dealt with in practice—why is race no problem in some places—what significance, if any, has colour for ordinary life and behaviour?

HOW THE COLOUR BAR BEGAN

Although some writers claim that the Indian caste system originated in racial diversity, there is little evidence of racial feeling in the ancient world. Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans all appear to have mixed very freely with people of different colour, and the spread of Christianity also favoured universality. The medieval Church's doctrine was that all who were Christians were the same kind of men whom it sought to bring together in bonds of common fellowship. However, those outside the Church and Christendom—Jews, Moslems, and 'pagans'—came to be regarded as enemies of the faith, and they serve as forerunners of the conception of alien races which developed out of the Atlantic slave trade. The latter was first justified on religious grounds, as it was supposed to make a Christian of the slave.

Race and Religion

The Africans imported into the colonies were originally treated in much the same way as the white indentured servants. Inter-marriage as well as illicit unions were frowned upon, partly because Negroes were heathen. But the Negro was gradually pushed into chattel slavery, while the white servants were allowed to work off their bond. The difference was reached by substituting a racial justification for the religious one, the argument being that Negroes represented a lower and virtually subhuman order of life. Its effect on the rank and file of English-speaking people was to make all Negroes members of a permanently inferior caste. The public did not know any way to distinguish them from others except by their dark skin. All slaves were Negroes, and to the white people of the English colonies, all Negroes appeared to be slaves or the descendants of slaves.¹

Later came a missionary philosophy which identified the Christian message with western civilisation and which derogated the life and morals

¹ cf. I. C. Brown, *Race Relations in a Democracy*, 1949, and F. G. Detweiler, 'The Rise of Modern Racial Antagonism,' *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 37, pp. 131-2.

of the native African. Use was also made of scientific writings to support the notion of Negro and non-European inferiority. One of them was the *Origin of Species*, which was popularly interpreted in a way quite different from what Darwin had intended. This book appeared, however, in 1859, and so was opportune from the point of view of expanding nationalism because Darwin's theory of the survival of the fittest seemed to accord very well with imperialism and the building of colonial empires. It helped to justify nations not only in their own eyes but before the rest of mankind. As Juan Comas has pointed out: 'That slavery or death brought to "inferior" human groups by European rifles and machine-guns was no more than the implementation of the theory of the replacement of an inferior by a superior human society'.¹

Darwin's ideas were used in this way to imply a hierarchy of races. Since the coloured races could not compare in technical achievements with the European nations—the argument ran—they must also be less advanced from the point of view of biological evolution.

Racist Myths

The inventive talent of the nineteenth century, therefore, was not confined to material things. It was also responsible for a very large number of racial myths, including Gallicism, Nordicism, Kelticism, etc., as the servants of political aspiration. For the best known of them all, a well-known philologist, Max Müller, was initially to blame by speaking in 1861 of an 'Aryan race'.² The idea was rapidly taken up both in Germany and England. It affected a number of the nationalist historical and romantic writers, none of whom had any ethnological training.

There is, indeed, a group or family of related languages, labelled 'Indo-European', or 'Aryan'. Language, however, spreads, and is transmitted from one people to another in various ways, without implying membership of the same biological group by those speaking similar tongues. Müller was later convinced by scientific friends of the enormity of his error and did his very best to make amends. Thus, in 1888, he wrote: 'To me an ethnologist who speaks of Aryan race, Aryan blood, Aryan eyes and hair is as great a sinner as a linguist who speaks of a dolichocephalic dictionary or a brachycephalic grammar'.

Scientifically, race refers to the hereditary physical and physiological characteristics of a group of people. The criteria generally employed are bodily shape and size, colour of the skin, form and texture of the hair and blood groups. The racial myth not only confuses race with language, but with nation. Nationality has nothing to do with race. Still less can traits that are culturally derived be used for racial classification. Despite this the racist does not hesitate to use any criteria that may suit his purpose. Thus, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, perhaps the most remarkable racist of them all, once wrote: 'He who proves himself German by his deed is

¹ 'Racial Myths,' *The Race Question in Modern Science*, UNESCO, 1956.

² cf. A. C. Haddon, J. S. Huxley and A. M. Carr-Saunders, *We Europeans*, 1935.

German, whatever his genealogy',¹ and for Chamberlain's Nazi pupils, the Japanese were 'honorary Aryans'.

The latter quotations show that racism cannot purport, in fact, to be more than a philosophy of race. It is a mystique, epitomised by such phrases as *Mein Blut spricht*, or 'blood tells'; the implication being that this particular fluid of the body actually performs the functions (and a good deal more) more prosaically attributed to the germ plasm. Likewise, 'colour', which has a similarly unromantic basis in skin pigmentation becomes mystically associated with particular qualities of mind and temperament.

Unscientific Thinking

These superstitions have grown because of the meaning that race has acquired since medieval times. In the older civilisations, men divided themselves from other peoples in various ways, principally according to religion or culture; but neither a person's faith nor his manner of life was thought to be fixed by nature. A barbarian might become a Roman citizen; a Jew could be converted to Christianity.

The situation now is altered. Many contemporary beliefs about mankind are not only novel, but less scientific than in the Middle Ages. They deny the flexibility of human nature and assume that group mentality, temperament and behaviour are biologically inheritable and unchangeable. This fallacy regarding the proper meaning of race and racial differences is so much a part of the colour problem that it will be necessary to return to it again.

2. WHERE RACE MATTERS

IT has already been remarked that race matters mainly in the southern United States and South Africa. Many of the general circumstances are common in both lands. Both countries have been settled for about the same length of time by immigrants from north-west Europe and their descendants. The economy in both cases is largely agricultural, and the climate is not dissimilar. In their relationship to the coloured people the white groups in each case claim superiority by virtue of race. The coloured people are largely segregated from the whites; restrained or debarred from the franchise; discriminated against in the enjoyment of public services; treated by white compatriots with a good deal of intolerance, and victimised by violence in flogging and in other ways. In both cases, 'poor whites' living almost as precariously as their coloured neighbours, have been bitterly opposed to the latter making any social or economic advance.

THE UNITED STATES

There are also some important differences. The Southern States contain the bulk of the American coloured population, but constitute

¹ Quoted by Juan Comas, *op. cit.*

geographically and politically only a section of the country as a whole. The wider view taken there does not object to Negroes developing along the same lines as whites. They may have their own schools, colleges, libraries, shops, businesses, parks and recreational centres. They may engage in the same occupations and enter the same professions as whites. Indeed, and again in theory, there is nothing to prevent a Negro becoming President of the United States.

All this is not so paradoxical as it sounds. In the first place, the American constitution entitles all citizens to the same rights without regard to race or colour, and the Federal courts have sometimes over-ridden the South's discriminatory legislation and practices in favour of fair treatment. Further, the coloured people are only about a third of the total Southern population and, except for a brief period after the Civil War, there has been little danger of the whites losing political control. Negroes, moreover, have always played an important part in the general economy of the country. Their background and training is Western, not African, and even before Emancipation in 1865 there was a class of free Negroes and lighter coloured mulattoes doing much of the skilled work of the towns and plantations. This group served the darker population as teachers and religious leaders, passing on their social aspirations as well as their knowledge.

Improved Status

The result is that Negroes have shared to some extent in the extraordinary prosperity of the United States. The well-to-do class is materially better off than a large number of whites, and many Negroes are as well educated as any white American. The Negro is also beginning to play an effective part in politics. One of the obstacles—which has recently been removed—was the restriction of primary elections in the South to whites. Outside the Southern States Negroes already use the vote generally and are sometimes members of the state legislatures, a number even preside over courts as judges and magistrates; a few are also members of Congress. Laws forbidding discrimination in industry have been passed locally, and there is a strong demand for their enactment into Federal law. The American labour movement, as represented by the A.F.L.-C.I.O., has denounced racial discrimination, and many of its unions are remarkably free from the practice. Negro status in the armed forces has also been improved, particularly in the navy.

Almost the whole of the American Negroes' own effort and ambition is directed towards finding a secure place in the overall society. In this regard, an important part is played by the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People, which has repeatedly challenged legal discrimination in the courts. Up to date, however, the Negro's advances have been made largely on his own side of the colour line. His position in the Deep South is still second class by ordinary democratic standards. Inter-marriage continues to be illegal there, and sanctions are strong against any public show of racial equality. The white South, in other words, still refuses

to relax on segregation. But a very substantial proportion of southerners thoroughly condemn practices of violence, particularly lynching, and a large number believe that the Negro is entitled to more political and economic opportunity.

SOUTH AFRICA

In South Africa the trend is otherwise. But, apart from any question of colour, the difficulties are much greater. Not only are Europeans greatly outnumbered, but, as already mentioned, the non-European way of life is quite different. Another point is that the problem of races living next door to each other in large numbers is of fairly recent origin. Before the first World War there was, in fact, virtual separation, the vast bulk of the African population being out of sight on reserved land in the south-east, or in distant Natal.

After the 1914-1918 war, however, there was a tremendous drift of Europeans to the towns and a parallel movement of Africans from farms and from the quite undeveloped and now over-crowded Reserves. The result was a head-on collision between poor whites and poor blacks, the whites being as unskilled and untrained as the blacks. Many of the whites could not find work, and so a series of labour laws was passed to protect them, and the government announced that it would not employ a black man where a white man needed the job.

Meanwhile, South Africa has been passing through a small-scale industrial revolution. New industries have sprung up round most cities and additional Africans have settled there in numbers that far outstrip housing accommodation. The consequence is insanitary slums; shacks and shanties knocked up by the occupants out of bits of wood, corrugated iron and old rugs sprawl alongside new housing estates. The Africans are underfed and have inadequate medical services, their standard of living being for the most part extremely low. What is more, many of them are fresh recruits from tribalism who have had no time to adjust themselves to the different rules and conditions of an urban life.

The Apartheid Policy

Professedly, the Nationalist Party's policy of *apartheid* tries to solve these problems as well as to avoid the possible friction of races living and working in close contact with each other. The plan is to provide separate areas for the various groups, i.e. 'European', 'Native' (African), 'Coloured', and Indians. Only persons belonging to the ethnic group for which the group area is proclaimed can occupy land there.

The Nationalist argument, which is sincerely believed in by its Christian and intellectual supporters, runs somewhat like this. Religion sanctions the segregation of the children of Ham from their fellow Christians. It would be unjust to the African to allow him to develop as brain worker and skilled craftsman in white areas and then pay him less

than the whites and deny him the right to inter-marry. The African may advance, when he emerges from his present largely primitive state, along all the paths open to Europeans. To have a fair chance of doing this he must enjoy a living space of his own. The alternative is to let him become a doctor, a lawyer, a priest, a trained mechanic among white men, who are bound either to keep him in a state of bitterly resented inferiority or to surrender their own hope of survival as a race.

In the meantime, therefore, Africans are to be educated mainly according to 'their own way of life', are to have their own tribal councils, and are to be represented by Europeans in Parliament. Indians are not to have any political representation and are to be treated as an immigrant population. The Cape Coloured are looked upon as intermediate between Europeans and Africans. They have an increasing share in local municipal government; but they have been removed from the common franchise to a roll of their own.

How can it be Done?

It must be pointed out that *apartheid* does not signify any radical change in the South African approach to the colour problem. It is merely a more logical and more specific application of the principles which also guided General Smuts' party some years ago. The ideal way of realising it would be for Africans to have their own self-contained economy in a 'Bantustan', which would come into being and flourish on terms of mutual respect alongside the white part of South Africa. Some Nationalists envisage this. But a large number of highly difficult and practical questions arise. Where is the extra land to come from? The existing Reserves only contain some 65 per cent. of the African population and they are already over-crowded as well as agriculturally under-developed. How are the mines and factories to carry on? It is generally admitted that the country's commercial prosperity depends upon the supply of relatively cheap non-European labour, which would no longer be available under complete separation. And how is the expropriation of European land and the building of farms and factories in the Reserves to be paid for?

Without an effective answer to these questions it is difficult to see how the ostensible aim of *apartheid*—'the assurance of the continuity of the European civilisation and way of life'—can be distinguished from a simple desire and intention to maintain white domination for an indefinite period.

African Suspicions

South Africa being a member of the Commonwealth, *apartheid* has greatly increased suspicion among Africans of what is in store for them in the territories controlled by Britain. Feelings are strongest, not surprisingly, in Central Africa and Kenya where, already, certain areas are separately reserved for Europeans and Africans. A particular complaint is that the Europeans settled in the latter country have very much more than their fair share of the land and that land policy gives rise to a form of serfdom. The settlers retort that Africans spoil the land allotted to them by their methods of grazing and agriculture. With Europeans comprising

such a small fraction of the population, the African fear is that South Africa will be brought in eventually to maintain central Africa as 'white man's country'. Fortunately, the independence of Ghana has largely dispelled doubts about British policy on the West Coast.

THE ORIGINS OF PREJUDICE

It is sometimes argued that racial prejudice is innate in human beings—that there is an instinctive aversion to an individual of different complexion from oneself. It is quite true that many people have a deep and unreasoning repugnance and cannot bear physical contact with a dark-skinned person. But this does not mean that they were born with such feelings. The most likely explanation is that such inhibitions are acquired, for the most part unconsciously, during childhood.¹ If his parents and friends already hold strongly the belief that Negroes are unclean, unhealthy or inferior, etc., it is not surprising that an individual brought up in such an environment comes to gain the same sort of feeling about a coloured man as he does about dirt and disease. In much the same way, some of us learn to look down upon a person who has the 'wrong' kind of accent.

If feelings of repugnance were innate, it would obviously be very difficult to explain how it is that in some parts of the world millions of men and women manage to work and mix together quite freely without regard to racial differences. It would be even harder to account for the fact that miscegenation frequently goes on even in countries with severe penalties against it. The spectacle of racial prejudice, as in South Africa and the Southern States is familiar, but the fact that people of different colour are able to meet and mingle freely without feeling in the least bit peculiar about it is less well known. That is why the example of Brazil as well as the West Indies is so important.

Mixed Blood in Brazil

Brazil was settled by the Portuguese in the first half of the sixteenth century at a time when Portugal, although under-populated herself, already held large territories in the East. Consequently, few Portuguese women migrated to Brazil in the early days, and in their absence inter-mixture went on freely with the aboriginal Indians. In fact, Brazilian society of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century came to be founded largely upon families in which Indian, or part Indian, women were the consorts and mothers, the Church giving such unions its blessing. The State also sanctioned inter-marriages, and the custom was continued when Negroes were imported to replace the decimated and disease-ridden Indian population as labourers. It became the rule for the well-to-do class to employ black or mulatto girls as household servants and to have children by them; in fact,

¹ In this connection, Lapière and Farnsworth comment as follows in their *Social Psychology*: 'Since the date of J. B. Watson's classical experiments on the new-born, data have accumulated which indicate that few if any defensive or other responses characterise the infant at birth. . . . The behaviour in the main is generalised and diffuse, being particularised at a much later date.'

concubinage with coloured women has existed down to the present day. The women themselves had a desire for a 'whiter' child because it improved their position. Plantation owners, too, cohabited frequently with their slaves and illegitimacy was generally tolerated, illegitimate children of mixed blood being accepted by the upper classes and taken under the wing of their patriarchal families. In addition, many of the immigrants from Europe were too poor and ill-educated to obtain a white wife, and found it convenient to set up with a coloured woman. A further point is that emancipation was effected gradually in Brazil, and the special enmity which followed the abrupt ending of slavery in the United States was avoided. There was no real challenge to the white people and their position was left secure.¹

Philosophy of Toleration

It is not surprising, therefore, that racial tolerance in Brazil has become a kind of philosophy which seeks to bind together a wide variety of racial and ethnic groups. The Brazilian population includes Japanese as well as many European nationalities. A popular slogan is, 'We Brazilians are rapidly becoming one people. Some day, not far distant, there will be only *one* race in our country'. There does, in fact, appear to be a progressive 'whitening' of the population. This is because of the general tendency over inter-marriage. Lighter shades of colour are the mark of the upper section of society, and so the unconscious aim in seeking a wife or husband is to marry someone fairer than oneself.

The result, apparently, is that the predominantly European element is 'absorbing' the lighter mixed bloods, and the mulattoes are absorbing the darker shades. Marriages occur mainly between individuals of approximate colour because social position and ownership of wealth grade down, for historical reasons, from light to dark skin colour. The upper classes consist mainly of the descendants of the original Portuguese settlers. They are followed in wealth and affluence by the mulattoes, and the darkest shades provide the base of the pyramid. But there are some black people among the upper classes, just as there are some whites at the base. In other words, the Brazilian population is differentiated by social class rather than by race.

Discrimination does Exist

It is not the case that racial discrimination is completely absent from Brazil—even if the influence of North American residents and visitors is excepted. In the southern part of the country, darker people are in a minority, and there is a certain amount of prejudice which has brought Negro organisations into existence to fight discrimination on the basis of colour. The fact is that persons of lighter shades are more favoured. Men and women of mixed blood contribute largely to the literary and artistic life of the country, and many of them are leading lawyers and doctors. Mulatto men hold superior rank in the army and are admitted into the most exclusive clubs; many of them have white wives. But it is worth noting that a coloured person, whether black or mulatto, wins esteem

nationally for his qualities, not merely from his own group. That is not so in the United States, for example, where a Negro's achievements are rarely known outside the coloured community. In Brazil, if he has ability, and shows evidence of personal worth, his racial origin will, at least to a considerable degree, be overlooked.¹

Where Black is White

The position can be summed up best, perhaps, by saying that there is a good deal of social consciousness in Brazil and that it centres largely in colour. A darker skin is unfashionable. This does not preclude friendship between whites and blacks, but it does mean that there are subtle ways and etiquettes for keeping a darker-skinned person at a distance. The term 'Negro' itself is seldom used, not because it implies racial inferiority, but because it is connected with the racial characteristics of those at the bottom of the social scale. In other words, prejudice exists in Brazil, but it is associated with colour and class rather than race, and it is fully explained by the saying in Bahia—one of Brazil's oldest cities—that 'a rich Negro is a white man' and that 'a poor white man is a Negro.'

3. COLOUR AND CULTURE

WHAT light does the biology of colour throw upon our problem? The fact is that we speak freely about white races and coloured races without, perhaps, realising the very arbitrary nature of such a classification. Europe, for example, is supposed to be populated exclusively by white men; but in reality there is a wide variation in colour from the fairest Norwegians and Swedes to the sallow-complexioned inhabitants of Portugal and the Mediterranean islands, many of whom are swarthier than Arabs and Berbers of North Africa. Other characteristics used to distinguish so-called races are just as variable, and the idea of racial purity is a myth.² Separate races cannot be differentiated even by blood typing. Instead of finding that special inherited characters are peculiar to special groups of people, we discover that the same characters are scattered all over the world, but with different frequencies in different places. For example, in Japan thirty per cent. of the population have blood antigen B, in England only about ten per cent., and among the American Indians hardly any. An Englishman, a West African, and an Australian aborigine may all have the same blood type. It may be quite safe for a European to have a blood transfusion from a Chinese when it would be lethal for him to receive blood from his own father or mother.

¹ Donald Pierson, *Negroes in Brazil*, 1942.

² cf. UNESCO, *The Race Concept*, 1951; and M. F. Ashley-Montagu, *Introduction to Physical Anthropology*, 1945.

The fact is, if we look at the matter physiologically, that virtually all mankind is 'coloured', though to a varying degree. Most human beings possess a larger or smaller amount of pigmentation in the folds of their skin. The only exceptions are individuals known as albinos, who have only minimal amounts of pigmentation. A complete albino is devoid of colour or pigment in any part of the body, including the eyes, the pink appearance of which is due to the blood behind the iris being reflected.

This colouring matter or pigmentation is known technically as *melanin*, from a Greek word meaning 'black'. *Melanin* consists of very dark brown granules closely packed together. It is secreted within the layers of the skin, and the relative amount of it, together with the blood supply and the transparency of the outermost layers of the skin, and the amount of oil, dirt, or even sweat on the surface, determine the colour of the skin. If there is very little *melanin* in the outer layer the skin appears white, or, if the blood supply is abundant, ruddy. When the *melanin* is more abundant the skin appears brown or black. Another chemical substance, *carotene*, gives it a yellowish tinge, although the contribution of *carotene* to the total colour is small. In Europeans there are only a few granules of *melanin* in the cells of the skin, but in the very dark races the cells are stuffed with granular pigment in the outer layers. The granular pigment individually varies from yellow to black; but in the main, skin colour is determined by the amount rather than by this variation in the colour of the granules.

Mixed Marriages

On the whole, the average amount of pigmentation in the children of any cross is the same as the average in the two parents, though it is subject to a certain amount of unpredictable variation. There is no reason to suppose that racial crossing produces any ill effect; nor is there any evidence that the offspring are sterile. On the contrary, when Europeans have mated with North American Indians their children have been observed to be taller than their parents and to give birth to even more offspring in the next generation. Conversely, however, it is possible for matings between members of the same racial group to be incompatible. Certain antigenic substances, if inherited from the father, can cause serious damage to the child because of the mother's production of antibodies to them which then damage the foetal blood cells. The most dangerous of such antigens is the Rhesus factor. Circumstances might arise when it would be safer for the children if the parents came from different races but had compatible blood, than if they came from the same race but were incompatible.

It is true that children of racially mixed parentage are often described as less intelligent, unreliable and lacking in initiative, but the most likely explanation is their environment. Prejudice against mixed marriages is frequently strong, and the so-called half-caste often has extra obstacles to surmount.

If a person is aware of other people's reaction to his race or colour his personal behaviour may be affected. However, race and colour have no direct importance in deciding the way in which people behave. It is a

person's upbringing and associations, not the shade of his skin, which mainly determine his outlook, ideas and general habits.

Even physical appearance, physique, movements of the body and its physiological functioning, are greatly influenced by the social environment. A person's facial expression and his gait, for example, are both unconsciously copied, to some extent, from other people; as anyone who has studied deportment will agree. That many mental and bodily diseases and disorders have a social basis is equally evident.

The ability of human beings to learn to communicate with each other, and to transmit 'learned behaviour' from generation to generation outside the germ plasm means that man has a social heredity as well as a biological heredity. The term technically applied to this social heredity is culture.

Man's Social Heredity

As a general term, culture means the total social heredity of mankind; while as a specific term, culture means a particular 'strain' of culture, e.g., 'Western culture', 'Greek culture', 'Bantu culture', 'Malayan culture', etc. Culture, in other words, is the man-made part of the environment, and it implies something very much more comprehensive than the popular use of the term. It includes all the elements that man has acquired from his group by conscious learning, or, on a somewhat different level, by a conditioning process. Culture comprises techniques of various kinds; the material things, like bridges, boats, machines, houses, etc.; social and other institutions; beliefs, ideals, religion, art; and customary modes of behaviour, including all the capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.

It follows, then, that culture has a dominant role in shaping the new individual whose birth within a particular society brings him under its influence. The child is born without a distinctive personality, but in the course of his maturation one develops in him through the interaction of his inherent potentialities and his external surroundings. Through personal contact, instruction, and imitation he acquires the culture of his society.

The implication of this is very important for the present problem. It means specifically that were a child of, say, European parentage to be adopted into a Chinese community by Chinese foster-parents, it would remain recognisably 'European' (Caucasoid) in physical appearance. However, in its ideas, outlook, attitudes and general way of life, such a child would in all likelihood (stating it conservatively) be very much more 'Chinese' than 'European'. In other words, it would remain racially 'European' (Caucasoid), but would become culturally 'Chinese'.

Capacity for Change

This proposition need not be confined to a hypothetical case. There are, literally, very many racially distinctive groups associated historically with a particular culture who, either through the migration of their ancestors or as a result of rapid changes in their native social environment, have

become members of an entirely different culture. The very large coloured population of the United States, which to all intents and purposes lives and behaves like 'white' Americans, is an obvious example. However, since most of these people, although classified officially as 'Negro' have Caucasoid as well as Negroid ancestry, it may be argued by protagonists of heredity that American Negroes are culturally 'American' because of miscegenation.

Let us, therefore, take an alternative example; say, Hawaii, where more recently arrived immigrants from Japan, China, Korea and other non-Caucasoid populations are already following very largely the American way of life. Or take Haiti, where the dark-skinned upper classes of African descent are largely 'French' in outlook. Finally, all over sub-Saharan Africa there are groups of educated Africans now living in a Western way, who were born and even brought up in a tribal home.

The latter point—that a people's own culture is apt to change considerably over the years—needs to be stressed. There was a time when Scandinavians were extremely war-like, and, as Vikings, were the terror of the North Sea. Danes and Norwegians, today, are among the most peace-loving of men, and their countries are a model of law and order. Consider also the Japanese, whom Europeans in the nineteenth century used to speak of as "butterflies flitting from flower to flower", incapable of the 'sterner drives' of western civilisation. The more recent history and industrial development of Japan does not require repetition; but the racial appearance of its people is the same as in the previous century.

Comparing Racial Intelligence

Differences in culture and environment also make it impossible satisfactorily to compare racial intelligence because of the difficulty of finding a fair test. Most of the people who differ from each other in race also have different languages, forms of conceptualization, and methods of bringing up children. A test devised by one group, say, Europeans, may be quite unfair for application to another group living, like Chinese peasants or African pygmies, in a wholly different way. Similarly, a test made up by Chinese or pygmies might show Europeans to be inefficient and lacking in mental aptitude. There is also the problem of the subjects' attitude towards the test itself. Some American Indians, for example, consider it improper to reply to a question unless they are certain of the answer.

Difficulties of this kind cannot be overlooked even when the racial groups compared have grown up as members of the same culture. An often quoted instance is the intelligence test given to the American Expeditionary Force in the First World War. Negroes made a lower score than whites; but the test also showed that Northerners, *black and white*, had higher scores than the Southerners, *black and white*. The only way of explaining this is that in 1917 the Southern States' *per capita* expenditure for schools were only fractions of those in the Northern States, and housing and diet and income were also very different. In other words, the difference

did not arise because people were from the North or the South, or because they were black or white, but because of differences in income, education, cultural advantages and other opportunities.¹

Size of the Brain

Nor, contrary to popular belief, has the relative size of the head or the brain any significance in the matter. Europeans often have larger heads than Africans, but there are some European populations with smaller average cranial capacities than some African series. Except for abnormal individuals, the small size of the brain is no indication of inferior qualities in its owner. It is possible that in a statistical sense, brains from different races might be distinguishable, for example, by the details of fissure pattern. However these differences, such as they are, probably reflect merely differences in head shape and are most unlikely to be correlated with differences in intelligence. Nor do other physical features signify whether one race is biologically more primitive than another.² Primitive in the evolutionary sense merely means showing most structural resemblance to an ancestral form and carries no necessary implication of inferiority or inefficiency. On the basis of their external characteristics white and coloured stand in about the same relationship to man's ape-like ancestors. White people are most like the ape in the nature and texture of the hair on their heads, in the quantity of it on their bodies, and in their thinner lips. Coloured people are closer to the ape in the hues of their skin and, in the case of the Negro, the forward projection of the face.

If a satisfactory means of defining and assessing 'innate intelligence' could be arrived at, it would probably be found that mental qualities vary in the same way as those physical characteristics, such as height, which can already be adequately measured. In many measurable characteristics the variation within any one group is larger than the difference in the average between the groups; there is therefore a good deal of overlap and many of the individuals of the two groups cannot be sharply distinguished. The difference between the groups is a statistical one. In other words, every race or so-called race has its share of specially gifted men and women, just as every race has also its quota of dullards.

THE CLAIM OF 'WHITE SUPERIORITY'

Despite this, cultural differences between human groups and nations are sometimes held to signify difference in innate ability. The creation of Western civilisation by Europeans, the argument runs, represents a greater achievement than anything culturally attained by the coloured races, and is proof of 'white superiority'. Although this claim is not supported by science, it is difficult to refute in the terms stated.

¹ cf. UNESCO, *The Race Question in Modern Science*, and Otto Klineberg, *Race Differences*, 1935.

² These matters are discussed in Otto Klineberg, *op. cit.* pp. 77-89, and M. F. Ashley-Montagu, *op. cit.* p. 213.

One needs to know, for example, what is meant exactly by 'western civilisation'. A civilisation or a culture, as it is technically styled, comprehends the totality of a particular society's way of life. It is not limited to the arts or to material equipment, but includes social and other institutions, beliefs, ideas, religion, and customs in general, as well as science and technology. If, therefore, by 'western civilisation' is meant the total way of life that has developed in Western Europe, it is necessary, primarily, to establish two things. One is that this totality does, in fact, represent a culturally superior achievement; the other, that it is truly the accomplishment of European peoples.

The difficulty of proving the first of these two propositions will be obvious from the start. It is possible, perhaps, to compare different cultures in terms of material traits, such as size of cities, extent of economic production, number of schools, hospitals, miles of railway, standard of living, etc. But how does one assess for comparison less material and abstract things? Is it the case that, in addition to generating more units of horse-power and atomic energy, western civilisation is also superior in respect of art, kinship and family life, religion, friendship, politics, and the thousand other scientifically immeasurable phenomena which make or mar happiness in a human community?

Doubtless, most people already committed to a western way of life are convinced of its superiority in terms of quality as well as quantity; but their votes might not be significant in a universal show of hands.

In fact, historically, western civilisation has not been popular outside Europe and the lands that Europeans colonised. The Chinese, to take only one example, went to a great deal of trouble to prevent it spreading into their country and had to be forcibly persuaded to open their doors. Nor is it likely that western ideas and institutions would have made substantial progress elsewhere had they not been supported very strongly by the sword. Not only the militarily stronger non-European societies, but many non-literate peoples, too, have resisted to the best of their ability. Some of them, like the Caribbean Indians who refused to exchange their simple nomadism for the routine of plantation labour, suffered virtual extermination rather than submit to customs which they regarded as disagreeable or undignified.

Recent Development

Apathy towards, or dislike of, a materialist philosophy, rather than lack of innate ability, therefore, is probably one of the main reasons why societies based upon Islam, Buddhism, and other Oriental religions have not kept pace with western civilisation in the scientific sphere.

At the same time, it must be remembered that the latter's special development of invention and technology came at a very recent date in relation to world history. The broad outlines of western civilisation in contemporary form can hardly be said to have been laid down until at least the seventeenth century. This was after sixteen centuries of slow accommodation and growth; and some of its most prominent features have made

their appearance only in the course of the last 100 years. In particular, western civilisation has benefited from diffusion—the transfer of culture elements from other societies—which helped cultural development as a whole by removing the necessity for every nation to perfect every step in an inventive series for itself.

What we call western civilisation, therefore, is the type of life which has resulted from the fusion of the Greco-Roman, mainly Teutonic and Western-Oriental cultures, which began to develop in Western Europe at about the beginning of the modern era. Among the many important inventions diffused to Europe were writing, and, much later, printing from movable type. This was known to the Chinese before it was taken up by Europeans, eventually reaching England in 1477.

‘Primitive’ does not imply Biological Status

Isolation is undoubtedly the main reason for Western Europe’s slow start, and it is tempting to speculate about the cultural progress of these islands had natural barriers of land and sea actually prevented the arrival of the Romans and of any subsequent invaders. It is doubtful if ‘our’ society would have become as complex and as materially advanced as some of the African territories brought under British control between 1850 and 1900. The general picture, perhaps, would have been of a relatively primitive culture.

In other words, the fact that races and peoples vary a great deal in their respective cultural attainments has very little significance for this particular question. It so happens that most of the ‘primitive’ people of the world are coloured. But this only means that they lack elaborate machines and tools and that their methods of economic production are less specialised than those of civilised peoples. Actually, their family and kinship organisation is often much more complex than ours. For example, Australian aborigines, whose technical equipment is about as meagre as any, have a marriage system that only a mathematician can disentangle.

Like us, of course, all primitive peoples have religious beliefs, observe rules of order and morality, have methods of rearing and training children, practise art, music and poetry, and have forms of recreation. In fact, the only general distinction of kind rather than degree is that they do not possess written records or the means of making them. They lag behind in mechanical skills and material culture mainly because of their isolation from the rest of the world. Unlike Western and other civilised societies, they have not had the benefit of countless inventions and discoveries already made and handed on to the present generation.

Racial Consciousness a Passing Phase?

Taking the long view, the colour problem represents a particular phase of history which will be superseded in due course by further stages of development. To future generations it may seem extraordinary and unbelievable that a slight difference in the chemical composition of their skin should have caused men to hate, despise, revile, and persecute each other,

But in the meantime the danger remains—and it is a very grave one—of that same reason becoming part of the main issue between political democracy and communism. That is why it is so important to appreciate what lies beneath the subjective surface.

What is fundamental to the present problem is the enormous difference in relative prosperity between western people and most of the rest of the world. Most North Americans and Europeans have a standard of life which is many times higher in material comforts and social security than that of most Asians and Africans. There is the kind of gap that obtained between rich and poor during the Industrial Revolution. The analogy is appropriate for several reasons, and particularly because the world has shrunk for political purposes to a tenth of its former size. The same kind of social and economic revolution is still going on, but the new factor today is that the *under-privileged class is of different race from the privileged*.

Seen in this perspective, the future of the colour problem is bound up with the whole reorganisation of world affairs. Something very much more effective than atom bombs, or even a more liberal outlook on the question of colour, is required. What is needed is an international effort to help the coloured countries over their immediate handicaps—principally illiteracy and malnutrition, as well as general poverty. Along with this must go the opportunity for coloured peoples to manage their own affairs as equal partners in world society. That they are fully capable of governing themselves is shown by the advance of Ghana, at one time a so-called backward member of Britain's dependent empire.

4. THE PROBLEM IN BRITAIN

IN many respects, the recent disturbances in Nottingham and Notting Hill were similar to race riots which broke out in London and other cities in 1919. There were the same cries of 'Kill' and 'Lynch', the same taunting of the coloured man, the same accusations, and the same demand for repatriation. If anything, the conflict in 1919 was more intense; the soldiers in full fighting order were called out to assist the police in Cardiff.

What is different, today, is that the national conscience is more disturbed and the political status of the coloured peoples has substantially advanced. In 1919, no doubt, it was possible to write off racial violence as a local incident. In 1958, a riot in the Mother Country, particularly its capital city, is immediate news throughout the 'coloured' Commonwealth.

This, one imagines, is as fully realised by the government as by thinking members of the public. The difficulty, however, is to persuade both the government and public to look closely at the trouble. That it was started largely by gangs of youthful hooligans and that unemployment and housing shortages also played a part is agreed. These facts, however, tend to conceal

the underlying issue which is that Negroes in this country are, more than any other stranger group, a permitted object for antipathy.

The law cannot be blamed for this situation because a coloured member of the Commonwealth has as many rights as other citizens. His position is not legally, but sociologically inferior.¹ This is because Britain shares the same general culture as other Anglo-Saxon peoples, including North Americans and white South Africans. It means that—as a result of slavery, colonisation, and imperialism—we have a fairly common heritage of popular ideas about the coloured races, particularly the Negro. The effect can be seen in many children's books being riddled with grotesque representations of the coloured man; in a good many school texts being anthropologically out of date or tendentiously written;² and in stereotypes of the Negro which rarely depict him except as a mission convert or as a popular entertainer.

Colour and Class

The result is that some people do not need to be involved in any actual contact with a coloured person which might, theoretically, engender prejudice. They have already caught it out of an atmosphere full of implications of coloured inferiority. Their reaction often takes the form of colour-class consciousness.

That is not to say that the individuals concerned necessarily feel less kindly towards a coloured person than they do towards their own kith and kin, their business acquaintances, the butcher, or the boy who delivers the milk. All are equally regarded as human beings. However, strongly as a person may believe in Christian brotherhood or in 'Democracy', he does not automatically invite the milkman to pay social calls, to stay in his house as a guest, or to become friendly with his daughter. Quite apart from lack of common interests, it might place the family's social position in jeopardy.

This, broadly speaking, is the reason why coloured people often fail to find favour, even when of relatively high educational status, such as university graduates. In a recent extensive inquiry in London, only about one landlady in ten was normally willing to accommodate a coloured student, and the answers of informants made the situation plain; principally it was fear of losing either business or social 'face'.³

¹ For the position of coloured people in Britain see M. P. Banton, *The Coloured Quarter*; S. F. Collins, *Coloured Minorities in Britain*, 1958; K. L. Little, *Negroes in Britain*, 1948; and A. H. Richmond, *Colour Prejudice in Britain*, 1951.

² cf. A. I. Polack, 'Teaching on Race Relations in Great Britain'. *UNESCO Expert Meeting on the Promotion of Teaching of Race Questions in Primary and Secondary Schools*, 1955. For examples of children's books see Enid Blyton, *The Three Golliwogs*, 1951, and Katherine Tozer, *The Wanderings of Munipie*, 1955.

³ A. T. Carey, *Colonial Students*, 1956.

Clauses prohibiting the leasing of a house to coloured tenants are a symptom of the same conditions because 'better class' neighbourhoods, too, are anxious to preserve their tone. Also, many owners of property fear its depreciation if a coloured group moves in. 'Respectable' working class families, also, are alive to similar implications. Factory girls, for instance, may be concerned about how their associations with coloured work-mates will affect their standing with boy friends, and male workers in industry have their cliques as well,

Rationalisation of Prejudice

Resistance to a coloured individual, therefore, is frequently rationalised, although unknowingly, by people who prefer to keep out of his way. Rationalisation occurs because, particularly among educated persons, prejudice itself is regarded as derogatory to the intellect, if not to ethics and religion. Rationalisation takes many forms, but it draws largely upon racist myths of the previous century. These have to do with the supposedly superior qualities of the white race.

Colour-class consciousness is not the only explanation of prejudice. There are also more complex psychological mechanisms, including personality difficulties, as well as economic competition, to be considered. Nor should it be supposed that many people deliberately adopt a racist position. On the contrary—and this must be stressed—attitudes in this country are as yet quite fluid. A section of society is without prejudice at all, and many others—perhaps the majority—have no decided opinion.

The fact that many 'waverers' exist, however, raises a special problem because of the activities of certain groups who want to rid Britain of its coloured inhabitants. These more extreme opponents of migration have already started their propaganda which, unlike the crude slogans of Notting Hill, is couched in pseudo-scientific terms. If they have their way these chauvinists will convert public opinion to a racist point of view. They will also sow the seeds out of which Fascism itself is easily born.

Racial and Cultural Differences

What can be done to break the vicious circle? Colour bar, as well as their relative poverty and somewhat different habits, is the reason for the migrants congregating largely in more dilapidated areas of the town. So long as they remain there the conventional stereotype will be difficult to dispel. It puts opponents of migration in a position to argue that the coloured group's poor conditions are proof of their inferiority and of the disadvantages of racial mixture.¹ The difficulty is the greater because contact with a more educated class of coloured person tends to be rare in such districts.

The solution is partly administrative and economic. There is also need, however, to alter public attitudes, and this requires a comprehensive explanation of racial and cultural differences.

¹For an example of the latter argument see the Eugenics Society's recent broadsheet, *West Indian Immigration*, No. 1, 1958.

The first and most obvious step is to clear up misunderstanding of the biological situation. This should be tackled both in the schools and in educational institutions in general. There are, however, a number of technical difficulties because race itself is a very much more variable concept in man than in other animals and separate races are not empirically distinguishable, if at all, without considerable overlapping. For this and other reasons opinion differs as to the usefulness of the term 'race' itself. A committee of well-known anthropologists and geneticists, convened by UNESCO, decided to retain it, but some biologists and anthropologists prefer to speak about 'ethnic groups' instead of 'races'.¹ The main thing to stress, however, is that both expressions involve a biological concept which is not to be confused with groups based upon nationality, language, religion or any other non-biological criterion. It should also be pointed out that the hereditary characteristics, such as skin pigmentation, shape of head, blood groups, etc., used in classifying 'races' have no significance for group mentality or culture. Some of these characters are more subject to the adaptive influence of environment than others. Thus, the indigenous inhabitants of tropical countries have darker skins than those of the cold or temperate zones, there being a gradation in skin colour from equatorial Africa through the Mediterranean region to northern Europe. Analogously, broader noses are correlated with hot damp and narrow noses with hot dry, or cold damp climates.

Training in School

It is also very important for the teacher to stress that there is no reason for believing that the groups of mankind differ in their innate capacity for intellectual and emotional development. He can also point out that the only ill-effects of racial mixture scientifically known are social, and that these can be improved by social change (elimination of prejudice, etc.). In view, however, of the general complexity of the biological matter, it is very desirable that the teacher should have been specially trained, preferably in physical anthropology.

There is the same need for expert training when dealing with cultural differences. It is obviously desirable that children should be told more about the way of life of non-European peoples; and travelling exhibitions would be useful to illustrate it and to arouse curiosity. The actual exposition, however, requires extra care. This is because the ordinary school curriculum lays strong emphasis, not unnaturally, upon the culture to which the children themselves belong, and so there is a logical tendency to judge other people's habits and customs by British criteria. This does not mean that children should be taught to look upon all cultures, including their own, in an objective way. That kind of approach is only suitable for maturer minds. It might, however, help racial understanding and lead to toleration if the *raison d'être* of alien practices and institutions could be properly explained.

¹ See *The Race Concept* (UNESCO), 1951, and A. C. Haddon, J. S. Huxley, and A. M. Carr-Saunders, *op. cit.*

Take, for example, polygyny which is the custom of a man marrying a number of wives. The teacher could point out that this institution is not favoured by our society, but some peoples find it a normal and necessary means of dealing with their environment. He could explain that in their eyes polygyny was perfectly moral and that it provided all the wives concerned with the same legal status. He could then go on to show, for instance, that polygyny enables women to satisfy their desire for children; that it is the means whereby widows and orphans are taken care of; and that it provides an essential basis for farming and other forms of livelihood in societies which, lacking machines, depend entirely upon manual labour.

Historical Basis of Culture

In the latter respect, it is also very important to show that differences in cultural attainment are the result of history rather than race. The immense achievements of western society—unprecedented development of tools, tool technology, efficient organisation, scientific invention—stand out in convincing contrast to what is popularly known and understood of non-civilised and non-European peoples. It should therefore be pointed out with special care that the basis of western advance in these respects was already laid in other civilisations and societies, and that western peoples have benefited most profoundly from learning, experience, and invention diffused to them from outside. This point has been made with especial clarity by the late Ralph Linton, an American anthropologist, in the following passage:

Our solid American citizen awakens in a bed built on a pattern which originated in the Near East but which was modified in Northern Europe before it was transmitted to America. He throws back covers made from cotton, domesticated in India, or linen, domesticated in the Near East, or wool from sheep, also domesticated in the Near East, or silk, the use of which was discovered in China. All these materials have been spun and woven by processes invented in the Near East. He slips into his moccasins, invented by the Indians of the Eastern woodlands, and goes to the bathroom, whose fixtures are a mixture of European and American inventions, both of recent date. He takes off his pyjamas, a garment invented in India, and washes with soap invented by the ancient Gauls. He then shaves, a masochistic rite which seems to have been derived from either Sumer or ancient Egypt. . . .

Before going out for breakfast he glances through the window, made of glass invented in Egypt, and if it is raining puts on overshoes made of rubber discovered by the Central American Indians and takes an umbrella, invented in south-eastern Asia. Upon his head he puts a hat made of felt, a material invented in the Asiatic steppes. . . .

He begins breakfast with an orange, from the eastern Mediterranean, a canteloupe from Persia, or perhaps a piece of African water-melon. With this he has coffee, an Abyssinian plant, with cream and sugar. Both the domestication of cows and the idea of milking them originated in the Near East, while sugar was first made in India. After his fruit and first coffee he goes on to waffles, cakes made by a Scandinavian technique from wheat domesticated in Asia Minor. Over these he pours maple syrup, invented by the Indians of the Eastern woodlands. . . .

When our friend has finished eating he settles back to smoke, an American Indian habit, consuming a plant domesticated in Brazil in either a pipe, derived from the Indians of Virginia, or a cigarette, derived from

Mexico. If he is hardy enough he may even attempt a cigar, transmitted to us from the Antilles by way of Spain. While smoking he reads the news of the day, imprinted in characters invented by the ancient Semites upon a material invented in China by a process invented in Germany. As he absorbs the accounts of foreign troubles he will, if he is a good conservative citizen, thank a Hebrew deity in an Indo-European language that he is 100 per cent. American.¹

TOWARDS GOOD RELATIONS

This kind of approach might be useful in providing older children with a special course in human relations. They could be asked to prepare charts showing whence the people of Great Britain have come, and the development of our civilisation through contacts with other peoples in the ancient and modern worlds. They would be set an enquiry into the origin of various skills, such as the domestication of animals, grain, cotton and maize, tomatoes and tobacco, the use of bronze and copper, the smelting of iron, weaving, pottery, writing, wheels, sailing boats, astronomy, city architecture, glass, mathematics, philosophy, natural science, etc. They could also be asked to show how these skills and discoveries have been diffused from country to country, and at what date they are thought to have reached Great Britain. Similarly, the pupils could be asked to find out which past civilisations discovered the great landmarks in ethics and religion, what countries pioneered in political institutions, where was primary schooling first developed and in what countries do we see different races and religions living together in harmony, etc.?

A further exercise might include a survey of the contributions made by different peoples to the welfare of this country as a whole, and, if material is available, to the district in which the school is placed. This could be followed by a discussion, under the teacher's guidance, of what sometimes goes wrong between groups. He could point, for example, to the emotional and irrational power of group feelings—stereotyping, scapegoating, clanishness, propaganda, and the growth of rumour. The children could then be invited to look for examples of these things in newspaper reporting, advertising, etc., and to discuss the main causes of political tension and group hostility in this country and abroad. The information gathered during such a session could be compiled in a report and illustrated by charts, maps, photographs, etc.²

Ways of Removing Prejudice

Younger children are rarely colour-prejudiced and so the less said about racial differences the better, unless the question is raised. Nor is there any point in referring directly to their racial relationships in school. When, however, the subject does come up with older children it should be the teacher's task to show them how they gain their particular feelings and

¹ *The Study of Man* pp. 326-7.

² The two latter suggestions are taken from *A Suggested Course in Human Relations in Secondary Schools* issued in mimeographed form by the Council of Citizens of East London. These papers also contain appendices and a bibliography which will be useful to teachers.

ideas about 'colour'. He could point out, for example, that a person's racial attitudes are derived to a large extent from the group to which he belongs. If, for instance, the group has an idea that Negroes are lazy or Chinese shifty, then the likelihood is that the person who is a member of that group will share its views. Obviously, the attitude of parents is an important factor in this respect. With older children, too, the explanation may be taken a step further by showing how racial attitudes are rationalised. Thus, as already mentioned, an individual may have no personal objection to Negroes, but may find an excuse for avoiding them in order to retain the approval of friends. The pitfalls of crooked thinking, and the habit of arguing from the particular to the general, can similarly be explained.

Success of an Experiment

The exchange of teachers between British and Commonwealth schools falls outside present discussion, but this seems to offer a personal means of removing prejudice.¹ Thus, in an experiment made at a secondary modern school, it was arranged that two West African teachers should spend a fortnight teaching there with a view to testing the children's attitudes both before and after their visit. The effect of this contact appears to have been electric. Not only were the children's former prejudices against Negroes largely removed, but they began to think more favourably of other groups as well, such as the Indians and Chinese. Subsequent interviews suggested that this new and more friendly attitude had come to stay.²

All these points, including the problem of 'ethnocentricity', also have a special bearing on other relevant institutions which are concerned directly or indirectly with public attitudes. The obvious case is the B.B.C. It is appreciated that the corporation has other tasks to perform than instructing its audiences about race. Nevertheless, it is the major cultural medium in a country which heads a predominantly 'coloured' Commonwealth, and so the B.B.C. has a real responsibility in these matters.

How the B.B.C. Could Help

Admittedly, the B.B.C. produces some excellent talks. These, however, are mainly on the Third Programme whose listeners generally are already well informed. The material provided in school broadcasts also reaches a high standard, and the B.B.C. generally tries to present other races in a sympathetic light. The drawback is that its methods are haphazard and unprofessional, particularly where systematic treatment is needed. Thus, it tends to handle the colour problem as a piece of news, reporting it journalistically, rather than subjecting racial behaviour to detailed analysis. Views and opinions are doubtless well suited to a popular programme,

¹ The exchange of older children themselves might also prove helpful. A beginning has already been made by sending English children to help in social welfare work in some Commonwealth countries.

² H. E. O. James and Cora Tenen, *The Teacher was Black*, 1953,

but they are more likely to increase people's racial consciousness than enlighten them about the basis of their feelings.

A panel of biological and social scientists would be more helpful. They would be in a much better position to dissect the body of prejudice and to hold its components up for inspection in a cold-blooded way. Thanks to the large number of enquiries which have already been made into coloured-white relations in this country, information is plentiful. This material could be used for a scientific discussion of subjects in which the public is naturally interested, such as mixed marriage, so-called racial mentality and temperament, etc. The B.B.C. has already experimented quite extensively with psychiatry on the screen. There is no reason why it should not also try its hand at applied social psychology, provided the stage is carefully set.

Colour as a Normal Thing

In this respect, too, rigorous scrutiny is required of some popular programmes which convey a misleading and biased impression of non-Europeans. If practices which are abhorrent or disagreeable to western taste are to be depicted, it should never be without their anthropological interpretation. Thus, human sacrifice and cannibalism, although relatively rare as social institutions, generally have a religious significance.

What is positively more important, however, is that the B.B.C. should represent racial relationships themselves as a normal part of human experience. This, it goes without saying, should be done as unobtrusively as possible. One method would be to include a coloured family in the popular serials which deal with every-day life and problems, like *Mrs. Dale's Diary*. This would be a means of showing that West Indians are ordinary people with the same hopes and fears as the rest of us. It would also indicate the kind of situation in which colour prejudice is generated and would illustrate the personal obstacles that have to be overcome, including the pros and cons of relationships between the sexes.

The B.B.C. could also make increased use of television to portray Negro personality in a different light from boxing and music hall entertainment. The inclusion of an occasional coloured scientist, or man of letters, in a brains trust or other high-brow group would facilitate this. He should be there, however, as an ordinary member of the intellectual team, and *not* to talk about race. Nor should he necessarily be associated with religion, which is the only role usually allotted to an educated coloured man.

It would be a further advantage if the B.B.C. could work more scenes from the West Indies, Ghana, and Nigeria, into its popular television programmes. These would show how coloured communities are developing into modern nations on their own account, including the technical accomplishments by which western opinion sets so much store. They would provide, at the same time, a concrete example of coloured individuals as leaders of society in politics, law and medicine, by showing Africans and West Indians as administrators. It would probably be a new experience

for most British viewers to see a coloured man handling European staff and to hear a white subordinate saying 'Sir'.

Toning Down the News

Finally, the Press could assist by treating 'racial' items with more discretion. Admittedly, a fight between a West Indian and an Englishman may be 'news' in certain circumstances. Ordinarily, however, coloured individuals get into trouble with the police in the same way as anyone else. If they are convicted and sent to prison it is because their actions were criminal, not because of their race. The fact that they are African or West Indian is incidental, and so there should be no necessity for either magistrates or newspaper editors to draw attention to their colour. It is equally bad for race relations if the Court declares itself more lenient than it would be to a white man.

As the latter points imply, special surveillance of printed matter in books, magazines and advertising as well as in journalism, films and television is required. It would be better, however, if this could be informally organised rather than brought officially under censorship.

The implications of what has been said about teaching in the schools and for the B.B.C. naturally hold good, also, for adult education in the formal sense. The difficulty there, however, and—indeed—throughout the educational system is that an adequate supply of suitably trained teachers is lacking. It must be emphasised that *expertise* in this regard means not only requisite biological and anthropological knowledge, but of the sociological conditions to which the academic information is to be applied. There is an immediate need, therefore, for more facilities for teaching the teachers and to encourage research in race relations. Students are not forthcoming because, at present, there are virtually no means of financing their research.

Teaching the Teachers

The way to remedy this deficiency would be for the universities to provide special courses, inclusive of Social and Physical Anthropology and Sociology, for students who are intending to be teachers or who are already in training for the profession. A beginning has been made with such a course in one or two universities, but it is generally lacking. A course of this kind would also be very useful to future social workers whose subsequent careers are likely to take them into racially mixed communities, and it might also be offered as a 'refresher' to men and women already employed in this sphere of work. Possibly, arrangements of a similar kind could be made as well for teachers already engaged in school through the extra-mural departments of the universities.

These suggestions for improving public attitudes towards persons of different race and culture are in line with proposals already made by spokesmen of all the political parties, including Labour's National Executive Committee. They attempt to show some of the possibilities as well as the technical requirements of such an education. They also assume that

the aim is to integrate coloured people within our society. The alternative—letting things slide—means that coloured groups will be obliged to build their own communities. A balance of the sexes among the West Indians is gradually being attained, and so temporarily there may be less friction. In the long run, however, exclusiveness spells racial segregation and the likelihood of coloured ghettos. These would be a permanent reproach to the British name.

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