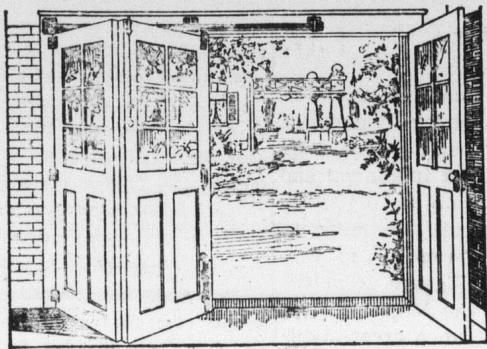




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**RELIGION AND THE
RACE PROBLEM**

(By John M. Cooper)

Man is a wolf to man,—but not always nor to all men. The wolf of the market-place may be a lamb at his own fireside. The ruthless exploiter of labor, the rapacious ringleader in cutthroat industrial competition, may be a kindly, affectionate and unselfish husband and father. The wolf in man comes out more in his relation to those of groups other than his own,—to those of other social and economic classes, of other nations, of other peoples, of other races. His wolfish fangs are particularly apt to be bared to those of other racial groups. It is the wolfishness of race to race, especially of the white race to the Negro race in our country that I wish to discuss this morning.

Underlying racial wolfishness are many factors. I shall take up two of the chief ones,—the white man's assumption of racial superiority, and his tacit or explicit acceptance of the double moral code.

First, the white man's assumption of physical and mental superiority to the Negro. Which of the two types, white or Negro, is superior in the sense of being physically farther removed from the animal? The narrower and more projecting nose and more upright forehead of the white man are less animal like than the Negro's broader and flatter nose and more receding forehead. On the other hand the thinner lips and less tightly curled hair of the white man are more animal-like than the full red lips and the woolly hair texture of the Negro. These contrasts could be multiplied, but, all in all, as regards nearness to or distance from sub-human animal forms, the total scores of the two races seem pretty nearly even.

We of the white race seem to prefer our bleached skin,—although we are not quite sure of ourselves and preferences, to judge from the pains we take at our summer resorts to acquire

a skin color that will bring us closer in shade to that of the African. In any case it may be said of skin bleaching, what has been said of the removal of areoids, that is not automatically followed by a rush of brains to the head.

Those Intelligence Tests

Intellectually is the white race on the average superior to the Negro race? We have a number of comparative intelligence tests of whites and Negroes. The majority but not all of these tests reveal higher gross average scores for the whites. But are these higher scores due to higher racial ability or to ampler opportunities for higher education and advancement? The rapidly accumulating evidence is pointing more and more unmistakably toward the conclusion that difference in the scores are due, certainly very largely and not improbably quite entirely, not to difference in racial ability between the white's and Negroes but to difference in racial opportunities. And we have further to recall that in some of the tests it is the Negro and not the white who has come out with the higher score.

It may be said, however, that at any rate the Negro in his native Africa has not achieved much in the way of scientific and cultural advance. It is undoubtedly true that Negro Africa has not exerted a profound influence on the development of western civilization. One very simple reason for this, however, is that Negro Africa was until relatively recent centuries almost completely isolated from the area of western civilization. The Negro in Africa has developed a very remarkable civilization of his own. He is no wandering savage. He is an expert farmer and herder and a highly skilled craftsman. He has his own well developed arts of music and carving. He has worked out most advanced types of social, economic, legal and political institutions. He has an unwritten literature that is often characterized by exquisite beauty as well as by brilliant creativeness. It should be sobering to all of us who are descendants of white races of northern and northwestern Europe to recall that for many thousands of years,—ten thousand years at least,—up to

(Continued on page 4)

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