



Ways of the Ant

WAR at sight is not the rule in the ant world but rather the exception, despite widespread belief to the contrary, declares Dr. Laurence J. Laffleur of New York. When two stranger ants meet, instead of instantly beginning battle, they usually merely back off, turn aside a little, and go their respective ways.

"Except when slave-making ants make raids on their neighbors, and when spring competition for extra land causes wars, the ants of the northern states are a peaceful lot," he states (*American Naturalist*, January-February).

Even the slave-making species are not necessarily murderous in their raids, Dr. Laffleur points out. He cites the observation of the late Prof. William Morton Wheeler of Harvard University, who watched such a raid in progress. Slave-making ants in such raids are concerned only with the pupae or immature infants of the species they kidnap and carry off to be their servants. In the attack described by Dr. Wheeler, the marauders, much bigger and stronger than their victims, nevertheless did not kill them but only carried the defenders out of the nest and set them down outside, uninjured.

Another struggle described by Dr. Laffleur was over a herd of aphids or "ant cows," whose sweet body-secretion is much prized by many species of ants. Although two rival ant armies were staging a rough-and-tumble contest, they refrained from tearing each other to pieces. Some of them even took time out to go and "milk" the aphids.

In still other cases, groups of stranger ants, even of different species, were forcibly mixed to see what they would do. Sometimes they fought for a while, then became a united, cooperating group. Sometimes the cooperation en-

sued without any preliminary fighting.

There is something rather ridiculously human about the relative pugnacity of ants. The bigger they are the more good-natured they are likely to be. It is the smaller ants that seem to find it necessary to assert their egos through aggressiveness and truculence.

"Among men," comments Dr. Laffleur,

"the pacific nature of the powerful and intelligent arises from their sense of security, while the truculence of the physical, mental or economic underdog is the product of an inferiority complex. There is every appearance that this is true of dogs and ants as well as of men, and I see no reason to disbelieve these appearances."

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PSYCHOLOGY

Morale-Building Should Be Eliminated for Morale

THE BEST way to keep up American morale is to eliminate morale-building programs—letting high morale grow naturally from the successes of an efficiently organized nation, it was suggested by Dr. Robert E. Lee Faris, of Bryn Mawr College, to the Eastern Sociological Society meeting in Asbury Park, N. J.

A newspaper dispatch less than six months before the fall of France was quoted by Dr. Faris to show what attempts were made to build morale there. The report said: "It is realized that in this strange war, the morale of the troops may depend on the number of footballs available for distribution as much as on wholesome food and esprit de corps."

"It is doubtful," Dr. Faris commented, "that history will account for the defeat of France, however, by noting an insufficient number of footballs."

Three types of confidence were cited by Dr. Faris as to success: (1) a feeling that leaders, officers, and officials have the required ability to direct the effort (2) team spirit, or the conviction that those you are working or fighting with will also do their part adequately and (3) confidence in proper coordination.

"When the cooperating functionaries agree on the aims, trust one another, and coordinate their actions well, the collective sentiment that is morale emerges," Dr. Faris concluded.

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Our Way of Life Is Rural

THE AMERICAN way of life which we are defending is in many of its most basic human manifestations still the rural American way, Dr. Adolph S.

Tomars, of the College of the City of New York, told the meeting.

The wide variety of things, from fan dancers to social workers, educational activities and race-relations research, which are denounced by congressmen as "frills" have one thing in common—they are all city products, Dr. Tomars pointed out.

"Again and again," Dr. Tomars said, "we have seen rural prejudices and biases serve as stumbling-blocks for progressive measures, impeding the development of new collective social machinery and social reforms important in peace time and even more important in wartime. Here our rural survivals are a source of backwardness in facing the problem of war and war morale in an urban civilization.

"But we should recognize another side of this picture. Some of our complex urban and intellectualized values must recede into the background in wartime and may even become sources of weakness in morale, while many of the simpler rural elements, especially the rugged values of our frontier heritage, will come to the fore and become sources of strength. Thus we may confront a crowning paradox of our urban world. It may well be that in the severe ordeal before us, it will be the rural element surviving in our culture that will play a major role in seeing us through the crisis."

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Young rabbits, raised for meat, are ready for market three months after their parents are mated.

According to old Talmudic tradition, the only light on Noah's Ark was a *carbuncle*, which may have been a ruby, zircon or garnet.