

nation seems in the grip of the mental disease paranoia.

In this serious state of man's affairs, the average person would not expect help from apes and monkeys. But in the zoo and animal laboratory anthropologists seek important basic information for understanding human behavior. Studies of these primates shed light on the extent to which body characters predetermine distinctive behavior.

Chimpanzees, whose personalities and habits have been studied most closely, have about the same keenness of sight, hearing, and smell as man, very similar emotional expressions, not nearly so much imaginative power as man, apparently. Chimpanzees show altruism by sharing food, they do social service work by cleaning and grooming one another. Chimpanzees vary widely in personality, from the lazy to the industrious, bright to stupid, bold to timid.

The great apes, says Prof. Hooton, all stand on the threshold of human behavior. He adds, perhaps they are wise in forbearing to enter.

If humans do not turn their boasted intelligence to biologically reclaiming man, civilization will perish, warns the anthropologist. Birth control and sterilization he rates helpful in man's biological salvation, but negative measures are not sufficient.

Vastly more important than eliminating the inferior, urges Prof. Hooton, is the need for medical, biological, and social scientists to join forces for intensive research. After perhaps a million years of life on earth, man still has not determinedly tried to find out what the human capacities in the individual are, and by what means individuals can be improved by better breeding.

Along with billions for defense, Prof. Hooton would have nations spend a few millions to find out how to improve the quality of the human organism.

Science News Letter, January 18, 1941



In a Changing World

ECONOMIC and social problems faced by American farmers and ranchers are the main theme of the new U. S. Department of Agriculture yearbook, *Farmers in a Changing World*. (Reviewed, SNL, this issue) Hon. Henry A. Wallace, who was Secretary of Agriculture when the preparation of the book was started, and Hon. Claude R. Wickard, who had succeeded him in office by the time it was completed, both stress the fact that changes are still going on—all the more rapidly because of the new crisis in our national life that has arisen in the past few months—and that nothing in its chapters is to be taken as final.

Because of the strengthened trend toward national unification that has marked the coming of the crisis, unusual interest will attach to two chapters in the book's second section, "The Farmer's Stake in Greater Industrial Production," by Louis H. Bean, and "The City Man's Stake in the Land," by Arthur P. Chew. Mr. Bean calls attention to the strain placed upon the interdependence of industry and agriculture by their contrary behavior during depressions: in agriculture, production re-

mains essentially stable while prices decline heavily, whereas in industry prices remain essentially stable but production is drastically reduced. Yet cutting prices of industrial products will not tempt farmers to buy at such times; volume of agricultural purchasing, says Mr. Bean, is more likely to follow the farmers' cash income than the prices of commodities offered in his market. He calls attention to a "middle way" that has been proposed, involving simultaneous encouragement of private capital outlays and increasing public investment, together with an expansion of community consumption to supplement private consumption.

Mr. Chew looks closely at the urban problems created indirectly by distress on the land. Depressed agricultural prices force farmers to mine their soil in order to meet debt and tax payments; this in turn exposes the soil to erosion and reduces farm productivity and value, and thus a vicious downward spiral is started, that ends with the crowding of dispossessed farmers into cities to compete for jobs in overcrowded industries

Absentee ownership of the land, as Mr. Chew sees it, is harmful to urban interests rather than beneficial to them, as might appear at first glance. Measures to restore and maintain operator ownership, he contends, will work for the long-range good of cities as well as of the farm population.

Other chapters in the yearbook look through the economist's spectacles on problems usually thought of primarily from the viewpoint of the natural sciences: soil conservation, forest resources, rangeland management, rural electrification.

Not all the opinions expressed in the book are in perfect agreement. Gove Hambidge, the editor, sees in this a healthy expression of democracy at work. He says:

"A certain unity of viewpoint will be evident throughout most of the book, but there are also a good many differences. The book does not represent official policy; it makes no claim to final wisdom; it simply explores agricultural problems, and the reader will sometimes find official policies treated with skepticism, controversial viewpoints defended, and things discussed that do not enter into any policy. It would have been possible to avoid such differences. But the great merit of democracy, we Americans believe, is that it not only permits but encourages the expression of different viewpoints."

Science News Letter, January 18, 1941

SCIENCE NEWS LETTER SUBSCRIPTION COUPON

To Science News Letter, 2101 Constitution Avenue, Washington, D. C.

Start 1 year, \$5
 Renew my subscription to SCIENCE NEWS LETTER for 2 years, \$7

Name _____
 Street Address _____
 City and State _____

(No extra postage to anywhere in the world)