

# EXPERIMENTS IN STYLE

By Ollie Cox

## "On a friend" in three styles

There are many advantages in a man's having a true friend. Such a friend will not hesitate to tell a man of his faults, so that he can correct them and get along better in the world. A true friend will remind a man of his strong points in order to give him confidence to get a job done well. A man is able to face defeat without giving up, if he has a friend who cares about what happens to him. Finally, a true friend makes it a point to see that a man lives fully, that he laughs, that he produces, that he is aware of a true friend, so that he himself, can enjoy being a true friend.

The man who gives apt thought to the unmeasurable value of a steadfast friend is said to be wise, for the advantages of having such a friend are numerous. It is such a one as the true friend, feeling at liberty to do so, who will quickly point the caution finger should his friend be amiss in any department; as a result the man, like a porpoise on leveled moss, treads smoothly along. Friend that such a person is, he will remind another of his stronger blends, of which he sometimes forgets, but which, stand him in good stead for the challenges he may encounter. If such a man falls short of the mark, then the true friend is nearby who makes it easier to bear. Truly, and life and history show it to be the recurring case, this true friend labors as constantly as the building bee, to see that the other finds life's depths; and in the process, that he knows laughter and that he cherishes togetherness, so that he too, can share the fruits of being a good friend.

That one who holds affinity with you, unlike the webs that spiders weave, but molten put like the monoth rock, he is the one that man calls friend. Hail the name of Patrochus, whose mocking brought the blade to him, and Achilles, his nobleness turned terrible when mocked, Achilles will be-moan it; salute Antony, now that Caesar knows of the ideo of March, and Caesar will markedly pleased; burst in song for Robin of Locksley and a thousand men in green will give the song no ending. Those varied and sundry folk inclimes far and near will give the eye to the few so blessed, timely blessed because of one who held out the faithful hand. One must needs be favored in another's bosom, such another as he who is desirous of caring, and in whose eyes, the unanswering oath always dwell. Such another will rightly tell a Caesar his better and his worse, that he may remain aright and lay his palm in many more hands, his art on every chore; and when a Caesar traipses only half the towering mount, when fair Indus' sun evades his view, when his rounded table sheds the bread, when there is no echo of his laughter: such another will tarry and linger and the other will know.

## "On birdlore." two styles

When the bird sings, he rouses the man who hears him and makes him feel better about what he is doing. The bird's song makes the man feel that the world is all right, that peace and good fellowship exist. The bird's song brings music to the man, causing him to sing and whistle, as if he were in communication with the bird, and through the bird, as if he were in communication with his God. This helps the man to talk better and clearer with his fellow man and to come closer to the GREATER FORCE.

The bird makes gleeful melody and to that man, embroiled in the hum drum of existence, the melody resounds in his ears like a monsoon burst loose over feverished palms. The bird's bright song pierces the man like an echo, throbbing through the veins on an enchanted lad, and brings him serenity in earth and sky. The bird sings and man answers him in all the ways he can; for to him, the bird's voice is another's voice, like the strength of strong winds is the strength of a STRONGER STRENGTH, unseen but not unfelt. The bird sings and the man is closer to man and the STRONGER STRENGTH.

## The kind of student whose soul I must win

I propose to describe the kind of student that I teach, within the framework of three major classification, background, intelligence and psychological variables. Background includes his economic, educational, religious and social environs. Intelligence pertains to native ability, competence and performance, intelligence, quotient, receptivity and communications. Psychological variables touch on goals, point of view, physical and mental health and human values. I will give a descriptive analysis of these component influences as they effect my student, then form a definitively suggestive conclusion.

In the main, the student comes from families of small economic means. The area is dominately a farm one and is in jeopardy should nature either overruns her course or stops short. Other modes of employment, except small professional groups, are few and pecuniary rewards are low. The average annual family income is about twenty-seven hundred dollars. This all means that along with his normal study problems, the student has the additional worry of whether he will remain in school or not.

Public schools in the state suffer from lack of space and equipment, and sufficient and specified personnel. One finds too many instances of the science or math teacher "sitting" with an English class. My student comes from such schools and is pitifully weak in the fundamentals of language.

The region is overwhelmingly protestant. Couple this with its provincial air and many antique and puritan notions prevail. These do not act as a boon to his essentially rural nature and in this era of untold progress and technological advance, he suffers some in the non-taking!

The student possesses native ability which would occasion him to survive, but his intelligence quotient averages only about eighty-eight. There's a competence within that is never equalled by the performance without. Although his intelligence quotient is low and he is weak in the fundamentals

of language, he shows a flair for language and can, to a fair degree, express himself orally and in writing. He usually responds well, but when he does not, once he sees the teacher's sincere intent to help him, he cooperates freely.

The student's point of view is puzzling. It may suggest the influence of even more puzzling times. He aspires to a successful position of employment, but sometimes he does not care whether he's suitably prepared or not. Too often he seeks something for nothing. Socrates would not assent, for then, he is not truthful.

The area of physical health is perhaps the area in which he is best blessed. He seems in the main, a superb specimen. There are intermittent health problems, but nothing acute.

Where mental health is conceded, he is no doubt bothered with the irritation of a fast-moving world, overly embittered. To a degree not measurable, he has to be a shade more bothered with historical perspective traditionally and the prevailing currents that seek to bring all men to the NOW. He does not, however, seek refuge on the psychiatrist's couch!

In the realm of human values, the events of the last decade have left him a bit perplexed, more intense - maybe a trifle angry. Now he is spurred on to greater effort in the threat of machines; now he proclaims himself lord of himself, augments the cry with bold countence but not with apt vigilance of himself!

One can see that the students are below average in almost all the major and minor classifications. Almost any measuring variety of aids. To become an effective citizen, that native ability and inner competence he does have must be extracted to the fullest measure. Every available method, particularly where the humanity of the teacher is concerned, must be used, administered to do this, so that in turn, he will have proper vision for his balance and assurance.

## INSIGHT: WHILE MANY APPROVE OF THINGS THAT ARE BAD, NO ONE DISAPPROVES OF THAT

SCOPP: Good morning Jimm. If you have a moment, I'd like to talk with you. Mr. Thom has approved your work aid program. This means that your money problem has been eliminated. You must feel relieved? Now, how about your study problems? It seems that you have some others than those presented by the course itself?

JIMM: It is true that I have not done as well as I should have, sir. Somehow I can't seem to find time to do all that I have to do.

SCOPP: All your test scores show that you have the ability to do far better. I would suspect that your weak work has something to do with the way you look at things, what some people call a point of view. Tell me, do you have any idea what your particular problem might be?

JIMM: I can think of at least three reasons for my poor showing. The first reason is that I did not give the course the proper attention in the beginning. The second reason is that I thought there was an easier way of passing the course than the way that you explained. The third reason is that I was thinking like some of the others who were satisfied in just "getting by."

SCOPP: Oh I see! Then it was the way you looked at things that accounted for the poor work? One reason is enough to offset you, and since you stated three reasons, we will have to look closely at each as a distinct barrier to your doing better work. Let's analyze each reason separately to see how you got the idea. If we can do this accurately, what we see may help you to shed the notion. Have you any idea why you did not give the course proper consideration in the beginning?

JIMM: Well, I just figured that all English courses were dull, at least that's the way they were in high school. I thought we would have the usual reading, writing, word study and spelling, just like we

did at Hawk High. Since I always did these my way - I spent about an hour a week on each - and passed, I thought it was good enough in college. Nobody at home ever asked me to do more.

SCOPP: I suppose many people, too many really, are accustomed to things only half done. They simply think it's the way to perform. Take the others that you mentioned; they probably never reminded you of your poor work, but they would be quick to recognize it, if you suddenly showed a great improvement. Do you remember the day that we discussed synonyms in class, Jimm? Everyone seemed pretty eager to recite. You were the most excited of all the students, Jimm. Was that a dull class?

JIMM: I will had to admit sir, that I was pretty pepped up that day. Say - wait a minute! I guess, then, any class could be interesting and alive if the teacher and students got together like we did that day, wouldn't you say?

SCOPP: As correct a statement as I've ever heard, Jimm, and you have no idea how it makes me feel to hear you say it. Now, what you called not giving the course the proper attention is another way of saying that you did not look into the nature of the course. If you never looked into the nature of the subject you could never have found out such a fact as you just mentioned. Success in a course, or anything for that matter, depends upon a knowledge of its nature. Suppose you tell me what caused you to look for an easier way of getting your lessons; you know, the second reason that you gave?

JIMM: I thought I could save some time, sir. You see, I'm in the Drama Guild, I'm on the track team and I'm a member of the "Inkrollers." If I had studied the way that you suggested to the class, I would have spent nine hours a week on grammar and composition alone. I would not have any time for extra-curricular activities.