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The Growing Consciousness

This title can have a triple meaning—and does. First of all, it refers to the Individual Consciousness; second, to the Composite Consciousness of the English-speaking world in regard to scientific conjecture; third, and specifically, it refers to the Growing Consciousness of scores of thousands of readers of Astounding Stories, who are becoming aware of the tremendous influence of science-fiction on a prosaic world.

The good workman never scorns his tools. He takes whatever leverage may come to hand, and pries the obstructing boulder from the path.

The pioneer does not let shallow water stop his progress down the river. He takes his canoe on his shoulders and breaks a trail through the forest until he faces deep water again. He does not stop because the travel is hard and slow, or because the burden is heavy, for his mind is fixed upon a goal, and he knows that somewhere ahead the river will be wide and deep.

So science progresses through a matted jungle of experiment—knowing that the clear, deep water of achievement lies at the end of the discouraging portage.

And to science-fiction is given the mission of encouragement. Looking ahead, through a tangle of test tubes, high tension wires, geological strata, and biological phenomena, we see a vision of mankind once more gliding smoothly on the cool, green waters of the river of achievement. His canoe is a space ship; his river is a rift in time; his power is the power of the atom. Luna has become his toy, and Jupiter his colony. He manipulates the secrets of the universe into strange revelations.

Do we go too fast and too far in our projections? I think not, for we are pointing the way to a distant goal. Do we mingle too much of love and adventure with these projections? I think not, for we do not emphasize them—but simply recognize their part in the human equation.

And always we are groping for a thing worthwhile, trying to hold a torch of encouragement for those whose lives are bent on extracting the secrets from test tubes and from distant nebulæ.

It is not given to all the world to understand. Hence ours is an exclusive reading circle. Knowing that, I count on the loyal support of those who are able to appreciate—who have the faculty of understanding and are able to enjoy Astounding Stories.

We cannot expect every one to recognize or understand the impelling interest which grips us. But here and there we will find a kindred soul who has been starving for the very reading matter you and I take for granted.

For there is a Growing Consciousness throughout the English-speaking world—a slowly dawning recognition of science-fiction. And somewhere among your friends will be one or two—or perhaps three who will thank you heartily for introducing them to the reading circle of Astounding Stories. Will you try to discover them?

The Editor.