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The Utopia of Oz

By S. J. SACKETT

NOW that the third generation of American children is being raised on the Oz books, by L. Frank Baum, it is perhaps time to look over the series and see what can be found in it. There are many qualities that can be found in these stories and many approaches that can be made to them. They can be considered purely as literature; they can be examined as exercises in morality; they can be explored to discover why their appeal has endured.

I choose here rather to consider the Oz books as examples of Utopian fiction. Certainly they represent an ideal country, even though their creator never indicates how it would be possible to bring the ideal conditions to actual existence, or even whether it would be desirable so to do. Certainly they have influenced the generations of children who have read them in certain attitudes toward government and society.

The Land of Oz, after Princess Ozma came to the throne, was a confederation of four separate kingdoms. That of the Winkies, to the west, was ruled over by Nick Chopper, the Tin Woodman; that of the Munchkins, to the east, by a mysterious king who was never a figure in the stories about Oz; that of the Gillikins, to the north, by the good witch whom Dorothy Gale met when she first came to Oz but who had no further role in the history of Oz; that of the Quadlings, to the south, by the benign sorceress Glinda the Good. Over them all ruled Ozma.

Oz was never a thoroughly civilized and mapped country; it always had a permanent frontier in the form of vast unexplored areas where no one ever traveled and where all sorts of strange beings might (and did) live. To a certain extent this condition was owing to a philosophy of *laissez-faire* on the part of Ozma and the other administrative officials. "That government is best which governs least"—such a motto might have been inscribed over the façade of Ozma's palace. Neither Ozma nor anyone else wanted to meddle in the affairs of the citizenry, who were free, within extraordinarily broad limits, to do anything they wanted to.

That the individual citizen was so free as this is more surprising in

view of the tremendous power which Ozma herself, to say nothing of her counselors Glinda the Good and the Wizard of Oz, could wield. As one reads the chronicles of Oz, however, one is struck by the fact that Ozma seems almost deliberately to have refrained from exercising her vast powers. She came to the throne, it is true, only in 1904; and the last book by the first Royal Historian of Oz appeared in 1921. From this it might be argued that Ozma had had by that time only seventeen years to function effectively as a ruler. On the other hand, she was an absolute monarch with unlimited power and no restraint except self-restraint; and viewed from that standpoint, in those seventeen years she had done remarkably little. A few bridges are mentioned in later books over streams which had had no bridges in earlier books, and presumably Ozma had wished these into existence with her magic belt; yet even by 1921 many of the main thoroughfares of Oz were broken by unbridged rivers. Apparently one of the earliest acts was the abolition of money, for the use of money is referred to in the first two books and is not mentioned, except occasionally as something that the inhabitants of Oz knew about, after 1904. Aside from these two matters, Ozma's reign has been, by the standards of the outside world, a do-nothing reign. It may be that Ozma fears to meddle in her subjects' lives so much that she leans over backward to avoid taking action; it may be, as indeed is hinted in the books themselves, that she is an adherent of Frederick Jackson Turner's theory that the challenge of the frontier was important in developing the strengths of the American character and thus attempts to maintain primitive conditions as a deliberate policy. Life, one gathers from the Oz books, isn't much fun unless you can have adventures, and you can't have adventures when things are too civilized, orderly, and expected. But whatever the reason for her unwillingness to take action, Ozma's powers are so great that she must be highly complimented on her restraint in not using them.

The limits imposed on the broad freedom enjoyed by the citizens of Oz were really only two. First, individual communities, which had by our standards a startling degree of independence from the central government, were not to fight each other, as the Flatheads and Skeezers once did (*Glinda of Oz*) and as the Horners and Hoppers seemed to do almost perennially (e.g., in *The Patch-work Girl of Oz*). Secondly, no unauthorized person could make use of magic. Violations of this rule were recounted in *The Patch-work Girl of Oz*, *The Lost Princess*

of Oz, and *The Magic of Oz*. Aside from these two restrictions, everything else was legal.

People in Oz were suspicious of laws. The Tin Woodman once remarked, “. . . laws were never meant to be understood, and it is foolish to make the attempt” (*The Land of Oz*, p. 174). But if Oz had had a constitution, it probably would have been expressed in one sentence: Do what you like, unless it hurts somebody else. (The reason why magic was prohibited was that so many people, like Ugu the Shoemaker, used magic for evil instead of for good.)

The reason for so much freedom is that life is more fun if you are free to do whatever you want. Absolute freedom, however, has its drawbacks, as the King of Bunnybury discovered in *The Emerald City of Oz* (pp. 210-224). The King was weary of taking responsibility and wanted to be free of it; but he learned that responsibility brings with it so many privileges that it is far wiser to live with responsibility than to live in the irresponsibility of anarchy. If freedom is essential, but absolute freedom is disastrous, then the solution to the problem of government must be in a *via media* of voluntary acceptance of responsibility. And this, in effect, is the principle which underlies government in Oz. It is voluntary co-operation that turns the trick; and in Oz voluntary co-operation can perform wonders, even as thousands of mice, working together, can pull a cart carrying a lion (*The Wizard of Oz*, pp. 72-79).

Oz is a monarchy; there is no question about that. Obviously what is needed is a vigorous command to maintain freedom under these conditions; and under these conditions the nature of the commander is all important. Absolute power in the hands of Jinjur is tyranny; absolute power in the hands of Ozma is benevolence. The character of the political leader is of the highest consequence. And too often in less ideal places than Oz, political leadership is of low quality. In *The Wizard of Oz*, after the Scarecrow had been made ruler of the Emerald City, the people boasted, “. . . there is not another city in all the world that is ruled by a stuffed man.” “And,” commented the Royal Historian with a dry irony which undoubtedly escaped the youngest of his readers, “so far as they knew, they were quite right” (p. 169).

While royalty was necessary for the maintenance of authority—and, one suspects, because Baum was working in the tradition of the European fairy tale—it was a highly democratic royalty. Even the aristocratic Princess Langwidere of Ev darned her own socks (*Ozma*

of Oz, p. 95); and Ozma, the supreme ruler of Oz, was really a merry little girl who enjoyed playing with her commoner girlfriends.

Under Ozma's beneficent rule, based as it was on as much absence of law as possible, there were of course very few criminals. How can you break a law when there are no laws to break? For this reason crime and delinquency were not problems in the Oz state. But when laws were broken, the inhabitants of Oz had a philosophy ready to meet the problem. In this respect, it is worth quoting at some length from the scene in which Ojo, the first lawbreaker after Ozma came to the throne, found himself in prison.

Ojo was imprisoned for having picked a six-leaved clover, contrary to the law of Oz, which forbade unauthorized magic. (Six-leaved clovers were used by magicians.) His jailer, a motherly lady named Tollydiggle, welcomed him to the prison and then asked him what dinner he would prefer. After he made his choice, she left him alone while she prepared it.

Ojo was much astonished, for not only was this unlike any prison he had ever heard of, but he was being treated more as a guest than a criminal. There were three doors to the room and none were bolted. He cautiously opened one of the doors and found it led into a hallway. But he had no intention of trying to escape. If his jailor was willing to trust him in this way he would not betray her trust, and moreover a hot supper was being prepared for him and his prison was very pleasant and comfortable. So he took a book from the case and sat down in a big chair to look at the pictures.

This amused him until the woman came in with a large tray and spread a cloth on one of the tables. Then she arranged his supper, which proved the most varied and delicious meal Ojo had ever eaten in his life.

Tollydiggle sat near him while he ate, sewing on some fancy work she held in her lap. When he had finished she cleared the table and then read to him a story from one of the books.

"Is this really a prison?" he asked, when she had finished reading.

"Indeed it is," she replied. "It is the only prison in the land of Oz."

"And am I a prisoner?"

"Bless the child! Of course."

"Then why is the prison so fine, and why are you so kind to me?" he earnestly asked.

Tollydiggle seemed surprised by the question, but she presently answered:

"We consider a prisoner unfortunate. He is unfortunate in two ways—because he has done something wrong and because he is deprived

of his liberty. Therefore we should treat him kindly, because of his misfortune, for otherwise he would become hard and bitter and would not be sorry he had done wrong. Ozma thinks that one who has committed a fault did so because he was not strong and brave; therefore she puts him in prison to make him strong and brave. When that is accomplished he is no longer a prisoner, but a good and loyal citizen and everyone is glad that he is now strong enough to resist doing wrong. You see, it is kindness that makes one strong and brave; and so we are kind to our prisoners."

Ojo thought this over very carefully. "I had an idea," said he, "that prisoners were always treated harshly, to punish them."

"That would be dreadful!" cried Tollydiggle. "Isn't one punished enough in knowing he has done wrong? Don't you wish, Ojo, with all your heart, that you had not been disobedient and broken a Law of Oz?"

"I—I hate to be different from other people," he admitted.

"Yes; one likes to be respected as highly as his neighbors are," said the woman. "When you are tried and found guilty, you will be obliged to make amends in some way. . . . But now we have talked enough, so let us play a game until bedtime." (*Patch-work Girl of Oz*, pp. 198-201.)

This makes it clear that the dominant philosophy of penology in the Land of Oz is that progressive one which holds that it is more important to rehabilitate the criminal and restore him to a productive place in society than it is to inflict on him society's vengeance for his act.

One of the reasons why there is no crime in the Land of Oz is that there is no money and therefore no temptation to rob anyone. The trouble with money, as the Shaggy Man once remarked, is that it "makes people proud and haughty; I don't want to be proud and haughty. All I want is to have people love me. . . ." (*The Road to Oz*, pp. 22-24). And fittingly the medium of exchange in the Land of Oz is love. The Tin Woodman once explained the system as follows: "If we used money to buy things with, instead of love and kindness and the desire to please one another, then we should be no better off than the rest of the world. . . . Fortunately money is not known in the Land of Oz at all. We have no rich, and no poor; for what one wishes the others all try to give him, in order to make him happy, and no one in all Oz cares to have more than he can use" (*The Road to Oz*, pp. 164-165). The only way to acquire goods or services, then, is to be so lovable that other people want to give them to you. True, you might steal goods

(though you cannot under this system compel services); but there is no need to steal goods when one has only to be loved and they will be given to him. Why give of your goods to someone else? Because you love him and find pleasure in helping him.

It is true that Oz was not a heavily industrialized nation. It was chiefly agricultural, with only one city (its capital, the Emerald City); there were a few towns and villages scattered over the countryside, but the bulk of the land—that of it at least that was not wilderness—was under cultivation, and the bulk of the inhabitants were farmers. Most of them were self-sufficient; they raised their own food, spun their own cloth and made their own garments, and built their own houses. In a society like this there is little need for money anyway.

Yet, surprisingly enough, there was conspicuous consumption. There were palaces, for example; and there were servants. Palaces, however, could be built by magic and thus required no manpower; and only those had servants who were so beloved that there were people who wished to do nothing but serve them, as for instance the Scarecrow. And we must confess that this kind of hero-worship is a common human trait.

Most Utopias imply a wish to implement them in the real world; and while there is no doubt that L. Frank Baum would have agreed to the general proposition that the real world would be a better place if it were more like his agrarian paradise, there is real reason to doubt that he ever seriously thought that the world could ever be made more Oz-like except perhaps in small details like the adoption of progressive prison reform. And, in truth, one might well scoff that the Utopia of Oz was made possible by the existence of magic and that human nature is too corrupt for so perfect a fairyland.

On the other hand, however, we have ourselves more magic than we well know what to do with. We have what Baum himself considered the magic of electricity. We have magic that even Baum at his most inventive never dreamed of—the magic of atomic energy, the magic of solar power. Our mastery of such magic is already so complete that there is nothing—literally nothing—that the human race might want to do in the way of rearranging its physical environment that would be impossible of accomplishment. All that is wanted is the will to do it. Surely even Oz never had such power as this.

And so far as the unchangeability of human nature is concerned, Baum has provided us with an answer for that, too. The key to the

problem is epistemology. You must assume with Locke that the mind at birth is a *tabula rasa*, an empty page; that there are no innate ideas, no Jungian archetypes or other inherited memories. According to this theory the individual's environment will completely mold his personality, for he has no inherited psychological characteristics. Each experience that he has will form his personality, little by little. If his environment is Utopian, if he experiences nothing but love, his personality will be molded in the direction that this environment and these experiences indicate to him. He becomes, then, a person who is at home and at ease in the Utopian society. The only reason, according to this theory, that human nature is what it is is that the Utopian environment has never been tried. By establishing a Utopian environment, you change human nature.

It is not far-fetched to say that in the Oz books Baum subscribed to this theory. The problem of language aside, it would be difficult to imagine a better description of the awakening of a new mind, the first initial marks made upon the *tabula rasa*, than the following account, told by the Scarecrow to Dorothy, of his early moments:

My life has been so short that I really know nothing whatever. I was only made day before yesterday. What happened in the world before that time is all unknown to me. Luckily, when the farmer made my head, one of the first things he did was to paint my ears, so that I heard what was going on. There was another Munchkin with him, and the first thing I heard was the farmer saying,

"How do you like those ears?"

"They aren't straight," answered the other.

"Never mind," said the farmer; "they are ears just the same," which was true enough.

"Now I'll make the eyes," said the farmer. So he painted my right eye, and as soon as it was finished I found myself looking at him and at everything around me with a great deal of curiosity, for this was my first glimpse of the world.

"That's a rather pretty eye," remarked the Munchkin who was watching the farmer; "blue paint is just the color for eyes."

"I think I'll make the other a little bigger," said the farmer; and when the second eye was done I could see much better than before. Then he made my nose and my mouth; but I did not speak, because at the time I didn't know what my mouth was for. I had the fun of watching them make my body and my arms and legs; and when they fastened on my head, at last, I felt very proud, for I thought I was just as good a man as anyone.

"This fellow will scare the crows fast enough," said the farmer; "he looks just like a man."

"Why, he is a man," said the other, and I quite agreed with him. The farmer carried me under his arm to the cornfield, and set me up on a tall stick, where you found me. He and his friend soon after walked away and left me alone.

I did not like to be deserted in this way; so I tried to walk after them, but my feet would not touch the ground, and I was forced to stay up on that pole. It was a lonely life to lead, for I had nothing to think of, having been made such a little while before. . . . (*Wizard of Oz*, pp. 30-33).

Even more detailed is the description of the bringing of the Saw-Horse to life. It is too lengthy for extensive quotation; but it is well worth reading as an account of the way one sensation after another marks the empty page of the mind at birth (*The Land of Oz*, pp. 47-51).

If this process does really accurately describe the way the human mind is formed, then it is perfectly feasible to change human nature by changing the environment in which human nature exists. This is, after all, the method used by the Soviet Union. And while we may feel that the environment of the Soviet Union is far from Utopian, the Soviet outlook on some things is so different from our own, and we find it so difficult to understand the so-called "Russian mentality," that perhaps the creation of a Communist environment actually has effected some changes in human nature. Even so basic a drive as sex has been altered and suppressed by the Soviet government. If this can be done, then perhaps a more perfect society could create more perfect human beings.

Two more points need to be made here concerning the reasons why the social structure of Oz worked as well as it did. The first is that the inhabitants subscribed to a philosophy given verse form by Johnny Dooit:

The only way to do a thing,
Is do it when you can,
And do it cheerfully, and sing
And work and think and plan.
The only real unhappy one
Is he who dares to shirk;
The only really happy one
Is he who cares to work. (*The Road to Oz*, p. 134.)

There is no question that there is a deep psychological satisfaction in work well done. Our own society faces some of its current problems because the proletarians—whether they were serfs or industrial laborers—have always seen as the principal distinction between themselves and the more wealthy orders of society that the poor work and the rich are idle. Therefore they have adopted as the ruling principle of the proletarian Utopia—the Land of Cockayne—that it is a land where no one works. But this, if it could ever be accomplished, would be an unsatisfying country in which to live; if they could ever attain it, they would miss work because they would miss the satisfactions, the pride in accomplishments and even the pleasure in muscular action, that work gives. Work becomes degrading and stultifying only when you are doing someone else's work, especially when you are doing it under conditions where you cannot feel proud of the finished product, and you cannot feel proud of the finished product unless you have participated in all stages of the job from design to completion. The truth of this assertion can be seen in the success of the do-it-yourself movement in the United States today, in which thousands of men are performing tasks for fun that they would find onerous if they had to perform them at someone else's direction. We are living in an industrial society where work is often degrading because it must be done at an employer's command; thus our industrial workers have fought for a five-day week, now a four-day week, soon a three-day week, and one of the problems of our society has been to find things for people to do in their spare time. Oz, on the other hand, was an agricultural society where nearly everyone was nearly self-sufficient, and its inhabitants had learned from joyful experience that "The only really happy one/Is he who cares to work." Perhaps when automation has made leisure the possession of nearly all our people, we can begin again to discover the satisfactions in work.

The last point that should be made about the success of the unique socio-economical system of Oz is that it was based upon a set of values which are totally foreign to us. We measure success—sometimes we try to claim that we don't, but without conviction—in money. Ozma, however, very early in her reign established a whole new standard: "the only riches worth having," she said, are "the riches of content" (*The Land of Oz*, p. 287). That man who is most contented is most wealthy. If that is their measure of success, it is no wonder that the inhabitants of Oz have done well in their Utopia.

Thus far we have been discussing the general principles upon which the Utopia of Oz was founded. It is time now to take up a few of the specific principles of the Utopia.

To begin with, nonconformity was prized, as might be expected in so free a society. As the Scarecrow remarked on one occasion, “. . . I am convinced that the only people worthy of consideration in this world are the unusual ones. For the common folks are like the leaves of a tree, and live and die unnoticed” (*The Land of Oz*, p. 188). While the Scarecrow, who was unusual himself, might have exercised some pardonable pride in framing this statement, still we must take it as the considered judgment of the wisest man in all Oz.

Another issue taken up in Oz was the relationship between the human (or quasi-human) and the mechanical. At one point, for instance, the Tin Woodman and Tik-Tok, both made of metal but the first alive while the second was mechanical, discussed which was the superior. Tik-Tok was quick to concede defeat: “I can-not help be-ing your in-fer-i-or,” he confessed, “for I am a mere ma-chine. When I am wound up I do my du-ty by go-ing just as my ma-chin-er-y is made to go” (*Ozma of Oz*, p. 115). It is the fact that the machine cannot initiate policy, then, according to this line of reasoning, which makes man superior to his creations, however ingenious the latter may be.

The status of women was at one time at least, prior to Ozma’s accession to the throne, a major issue. Jinjur’s successful rebellion, recounted in *The Land of Oz*, was a rebellion of the women against the men. While there is no question that the Royal Historian deprecated the act of rebellion, it is also clear that he sympathized with the impulse behind the revolutionaries, that of bettering woman’s lot—though he felt that Jinjur had gone too far. The effect of Jinjur’s feminist revolution can be observed in the following scene, describing what the Scarecrow and his party saw as they re-entered the Emerald City in a counter-revolutionary move:

As they passed the rows of houses they saw through the open doors that men were sweeping and dusting and washing dishes, while the women sat around in groups, gossiping and laughing.

“What has happened?” the Scarecrow asked a sad-looking man with a bushy beard, who wore an apron and was wheeling a baby-carriage along the sidewalk.

“Why, we’ve had a revolution, your Majesty—as you ought to know very well,” replied the man; “and since you went away the women

have been running things to suit themselves. I'm glad you have decided to come back and restore order, for doing housework and minding the children is wearing out the strength of every man in the Emerald City."

"Hm!" said the Scarecrow, thoughtfully. "If it is such hard work as you say, how did the women manage it so easily?"

"I really do not know," replied the man, with a deep sigh. "Perhaps the women are made of cast-iron." (pp. 170-171).

Such a scene indicates that perhaps there was really a problem in the relationships between the sexes in the Land of Oz. The accession of Ozma seems to have settled the difficulty, however, for there was no sign of it in any of the narratives dealing with events after she came to the throne.

War was never much of a problem in Oz, and there was not a military tradition. The customary pattern for military organization, however, was to have several officers and only one private; this was the pattern followed both in the Royal Army of Oz itself (*Ozma of Oz*) and in the Army of Oogaboo (*Tik-Tok of Oz*). Part of the reason was that, because of the freedom of the entire society, the individuals who entered these armies were free to select their own rank. Since the privates did the actual fighting, there were very few who were willing to accept a private's job; the titles and uniforms of the officers' ranks, however, as well as their comparative safety, attracted many to the upper echelons of military life. This suggests that if, in the outside world, those who are in a position to cause a war were also under the obligation of fighting it, there would be many fewer wars; whereas the attractions of militarism are such that men can always be found to embrace it so long as they are under no necessity to face the unpleasant realities of warfare.

Oz was free from many of the fads which have attracted much attention in the outside world. At one time, however, Dorothy was taken by an idea which was rather close to vegetarianism. She was shocked by discovering that Billina, the yellow hen, ate "horrid bugs and crawly ants," but, as Billina pointed out, human beings eat the chickens that ate the bugs. Thinking this over "almost took away her appetite for breakfast," the Royal Historian reported (*Ozma of Oz*, pp. 32-35). The word "almost" is significant here, and there is no sign that Dorothy ever thought further along this line; but I feel certain that at that point she rather inclined toward vegetarianism.

Perhaps the greatest problem in the Land of Oz was education. Some there were, including Ozma herself, who doubted the value of education at all, suspecting that the search for education was only an excuse used by those who wished to evade responsibility outside the academy. "You see," Ozma once explained to Dorothy, who had asked her about Professor Woggle-Bug's College, "in this country are a number of youths who do not like to work, and the college is an excellent place for them" (*Ozma of Oz*, p. 258).

On the other hand, it is notable and significant that the character who boasted that "the only school we need is the school of experience. Books are only fit for those who know nothing, and so are obliged to learn things from other people" (*The Road to Oz*, pp. 78-79) was a grey donkey. And one wonders whether the Royal Historian did not intend some irony when he chronicled Professor Woggle-bug's explanation of his famous School Pills in the following words: ". . . You see, until these School Pills were invented we wasted a lot of time in study that may now be better employed in practising athletics. . . . They give us an advantage over all other colleges, because at no loss of time our boys become thoroughly conversant with Greek and Latin, Mathematics and Geography, Grammar and Literature. You see they are never obliged to interrupt their games to acquire the lesser branches of learning" (*The Emerald City of Oz*, p. 98). This is so devastating a self-indictment, in fact, that one suspects that the Royal Historian felt that such branches of study as mathematics and literature had some value which had escaped not only the Woggle-Bug but also Princess Ozma. Or perhaps—to clear the Princess from an ungallant imputation of obtuseness—her tart remark was directed not against colleges as colleges but against colleges where the students waste time on frivolous pursuits.

It is probable that the low repute of learning in Oz, in some circles at least, was owing to the excessive pedantry and incomprehensibility of the members of the learned professions. The Shaggy Man on one occasion even suggested that college lecturers and ministers were much like the long-winded and verbose inhabitants of Rigmarole Town (*The Emerald City of Oz*, pp. 235-236). And the Royal Historian himself once let slip a comment which perhaps indicated his agreement: "All donkeys love big words" (*The Road to Oz*, p. 70) perhaps may be taken to mean that all who love big words are donkeys.

So much concern was shown for the problems of training the

intellect, in fact, that it should not surprise us to learn that perhaps the central philosophical problem in the Land of Oz was whether the intellect or the emotions were more desirable attributes. Certainly it was the many long disagreements which they had over this issue, some of the most interesting of which were reported in *The Wizard of Oz*, which paradoxically made the Scarecrow and the Tin Woodman such firm friends. (Their friendship, by the way, may suggest that the Royal Historian felt that the best answer to the problem was the uniting of the intellect and the emotions in a harmonious relationship.) And on one occasion Dorothy confessed that she did not "know which of her two friends was right" (p. 44).

The Scarecrow's problem really was that he confused knowledge with intellect. Knowledge is an accumulation of facts; intellect is the ability to accumulate facts and to use them to solve problems. The Wizard of Oz himself explained this distinction to the Scarecrow: "A baby has brains," Oz said, "but it doesn't know much. Experience is the only thing that brings knowledge, and the longer you are on earth the more experience you are sure to get" (*The Wizard of Oz*, p. 153). Thus the Scarecrow, even before the Wizard supplied him with brains, was intelligent; he merely lacked knowledge.

Once we have clarified this matter, we can determine the nature of intelligence, as it was viewed in Oz, by examining the Scarecrow's actions as those of a person in whom the intellect is dominant. Viewed from this standpoint, it is clear that intelligence is valuable. As the Scarecrow himself once remarked, ". . . I consider brains far superior to money, in every way. You may have noticed that if one has money without brains, he cannot use it to advantage; but if one has brains without money, they will enable him to live comfortably to the end of all his days" (*The Land of Oz*, p. 206).

Certain it is that on Dorothy's first trip to the Emerald City the Scarecrow's intelligence was invaluable for solving problems which the travelers met. Time and again he applied the cool force of logic to the situations with which they were confronted, and in nearly every case his suggestions were successfully adopted (*The Wizard of Oz*, e.g., pp. 55, 58-61).

The disadvantage of intellectuality is that it makes its possessor cold and unfeeling. Thus the Scarecrow once remarked to Dorothy, "I cannot understand why you should wish to leave this beautiful country and go back to the dry, gray place you call Kansas." Dorothy replied,

in her innocence, "That is because you have no brains." Ironically, it was really because the Scarecrow had nothing but brains, as Dorothy's explanation makes clear: "No matter how dreary and gray our homes are, we people of flesh and blood would rather live there than in any other country, be it ever so beautiful. There is no place like home" (*The Wizard of Oz*, pp. 29-30). This is clearly an emotional appeal. The important result of the Scarecrow's adventures with Dorothy was not that he got brains from the Wizard; the important result for him was that he developed his affections.

It was because he felt that he had no brains that the Scarecrow directed all his attention to intellectuality and was on the verge of becoming an unemotional thinking machine. Similarly, the Tin Woodman, who felt he had no heart, directed all of his attention to the life of the emotions and was on the verge of becoming excessively sentimental. Thus "he walked very carefully, with his eyes on the road, and when he saw a tiny ant toiling by he would step over it, so as not to harm it. The Tin Woodman knew very well he had no heart, and therefore he took great care never to be cruel or unkind to anything" (*The Wizard of Oz*, p. 52).

That emotions are desirable things to have we learn from the Scarecrow's case as well as the Tin Woodman's. The latter's own argument for benevolence and kindheartedness actually is weak: "you must acknowledge that a good heart is a thing that brains cannot create, and that money cannot buy" (*The Land of Oz*, p. 286). While this is true, it still does not establish benevolence as a desirable characteristic. This is done rather by the whole moral tendency of the Oz stories, which are set in a benevolistic framework much like that found in the sermons of the seventeenth-century English latitudinarians, Barrow, South, and Tillotson, whose philosophy remained popular well into the nineteenth century.

The disadvantage of emotionalism is that it leads sometimes to excessive sentimentality (which the Royal Historian uniformly treats with ridicule) and to sorrow, as the Wizard of Oz once tells the Tin Woodman (*The Wizard of Oz*, p. 154). On many occasions the Tin Woodman weeps so much that he rusts his jaws and cannot speak.

If a great deal of attention was paid in Oz to the problems of the intellect versus emotion, very little was given to artistic problems. In the preface to *The Wizard of Oz* the Royal Historian pointed out the superiority of fairy tales which are not gory to fairy tales which are;

and that was the extent of the literary interests shown in the Oz books. None of the little girls who are the heroines of most of the Oz series—Ozma, Dorothy, Betsy Bobbin, and Trot—spend much time reading; their favorite recreations are listening to stories, talking with each other, going to parties, and playing games.

We have rather more information on the state of music in the Land of Oz, particularly in various conversations with a live phonograph which the Royal Historian recounted in *The Patch-work Girl of Oz*. In the course of these conversations various judgments are stated or implied. Classical music, according to the phonograph, "is considered the best and most puzzling ever manufactured. You're supposed to like it, whether you do or not, and if you don't, the proper thing is to look as if you did." The Royal Historian used the term "dreary" to describe the classical music which the phonograph played (p. 88). Rag-time, on the other hand, was described by the Royal Historian as "a jerky jumble of sounds" and as "bewildering." Scraps commented, "That's the other extreme. It's extremely bad!" while Ojo exclaimed, "It is, indeed, dreadful" (pp. 88-90). Popular music, according to the Royal Historian, was "a strain of odd, jerky sounds"; the phonograph itself defined a popular song as follows: "One that the feeble-minded can remember the words of and those ignorant of music can whistle or sing" (p. 136). That there was music in Oz we have the Royal Historian's word; yet if it was not classical, rag-time, or popular, one wonders what it was. Probably it was composed principally of two-steps and waltzes and closely resembled such songs as "By the Light of the Silvery Moon" and "Down by the Old Mill Stream." A few light classical numbers, much like those written by Victor Herbert in this country, might also have found favor.

But these are minor matters, serving only to round out our picture of life in the Utopia of Oz. The important thing, the matter which I set out to consider, is how American young people would have been affected by their exposure to the chronicles of this Utopia. I leave aside matters of morality; the morality of Oz was a conventional one with no startling innovations to offer, the general tendencies of which were benevolent, and we can say simply that children who read the Oz books would be influenced to be good children in the conventional sense of the word, with an especial disposition toward charitable or benevolent actions. But we can say also that they would have been

influenced to believe in the freedom of the individual, in the voluntary acceptance of responsibility, in progressive prison reform, in the proposition that money is relatively unimportant in life, in the possibility of making a better world, in the pleasures of work, in the significance of contentment, in nonconformity, in the superiority of man to machine, in the need for permitting both sexes to share equally in the good life, in the folly of war, in reverence for life, in a truly substantial education, and in the need for the intellect and the emotions to be brought into harmony.

If we had enough people who believed in these things, our world would be almost as good for us as the Land of Oz was for its inhabitants. The attitudes listed above are all positive ones, and among them you can find practically the complete roll call of the attitudes desirable to insure the continuance of democracy, of civilization, of life—of everything that we in the United States hold valuable. A third generation of American children is now having the Oz books read to it or is reading them for itself. We can all say, "Thank God."

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

I have used only the books in the Oz series written by its originator, L. Frank Baum, although about twenty have been written since his death by various authors. Baum's books are the most important of the series; they set the pattern for all the others; and they are the only books in the series which contain any great deal of material of the type I have considered here.

Page numbers in the text refer to volumes printed from the plates of the original editions, which appeared as follows:

- The Wizard of Oz*, 1899.
- The Land of Oz*, 1904.
- Ozma of Oz*, 1907.
- Dorothy and the Wizard in Oz*, 1908.
- The Road to Oz*, 1909.
- The Emerald City of Oz*, 1910.
- The Patch-work Girl of Oz*, 1913.
- Tik-Tok of Oz*, 1914.
- The Scarecrow of Oz*, 1915.
- Rinkitink in Oz*, 1916.

The Lost Princess of Oz, 1917.

The Tin Woodman of Oz, 1918.

The Magic of Oz, 1919.

Glinda of Oz, 1920.

In addition, *The Royal Book of Oz* (1921) was written by Ruth Plumly Thompson from notes which had been made by Baum before his death.

All except the first Oz book were published by Reilly & Lee, Chicago, which still has all the books in the series, including the first, in print.

To My First-Born

IF you can bear to view it, truth is fair.
 Look at the sunrise from the mountain top;
 An epitaph cannot inclose you there.

Fearful we watch you as you bid adieu
 To childhood in a lonely rendezvous
 On the far ski trail with the steepest slope.

With your father sometimes I do not agree:
 The whistling buoy is a long way out at sea.
 Haunted forever by the cry of a child
 At night our hearts beat guiltily and wild.
 The world is not always there to touch and see.

Encounter the dragon at the fork of the road;
 With the smile of a fop he will try to eavesdrop
 While a tough web of lies protects his abode.

Turn to the sunrise with heliotrope.
 If you can bear to view it, truth is fair;
 An epitaph cannot inclose you there.

—SARAH WATSON EMERY