Myopia

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could not tell with the rain and eyes bloodshot from long days and nights of fighting. They did not care to look closely to see a man cry. It was not fear and they knew it. He sat beside the body and after waiting a while, the three turned back to the trail. They walked over the dripping springy grass of the grove, then up to the mud of the road and the trail. The rain did not come in sheets anymore and there were minutes when there was no rain at all and they would look up at the sky, watching the clouds. They were out of sight when he finally stood. “I’ll have to catch up with them,” he thought. “I’ll have to hurry.”

—Roger C. Kezar, Sci. Sr.

M OLE stopped short. He retreated a little from the new discovery and rubbed his bruised snout. “There’s always something blocking progress,” he thought as he brushed some of the dirt from his face and settled down to relax for a moment.

Mole liked to think of himself as ‘progressive’. He was almost always spearheading some drive or other. Only recently he had, on self appointment, carried out a drive to rid the area of grub worms. He liked that kind of work. The personal returns weren’t too spectacular, but he always had plenty to eat. And, what is more, with that kind of work, Mole always felt that he was going somewhere in this world.

Mole was now engaged in a drive to sample and evaluate all root types in the area, but he had just run into familiar opposition. The stone was the latest of the “stand pat” conservative factors that blocked almost everything that Mole tried to do. Last time it was the Humane Society with some silly argument about grubs being living creatures too, and now it was this stone.
“Thank goodness I’m a liberal,” he thought, “I can still change my course.” He smugly complimented himself on his flexibility as he once again hunched his shoulders and began tunneling around the immobile stone.

A few feet away, Gopher strolled leisurely through one of his long dark hallways. “This is what I call solid comfort,” he said, giving one of the walls a sound rap, and “solid comfort” with its solid punctuation echoed down the corridor. The earthen wall, worn smooth by long years of use, didn’t give a bit. “Solid as the earth itself,” he said, and . . . “the earth itself” echoed into the depths.

Gopher’s home had been occupied for a long time. He inherited it from his father years ago, and it had been old even then. Of course Gopher did a little expanding when the quintuplets were born, and he did spend a lot of time keeping the place in good repair, but everything was still the same substantial style of the original.

“If it just weren’t for the free loaders and fellow travelers this world would be ideal,” he said. “. . . ideal-ideal-ideal” rolled down the hall. He referred to those young liberals, the earthworms and ants, who made a habit of working over and tearing down the mounds of dirt from his repair and building projects. “If they would only settle down in one place and make an effort to keep a decent home, they wouldn’t have to come around here and make my life miserable.”

A strange grating, grinding rumble interrupted him, and chunks of dirt began to fall from the ceiling further up the hall. “An atomic invasion!” he shouted, and he chased his echo up the passageway. He arrived just in time to see Mole come crashing down through the ceiling.

“God help us, the Russians are coming!” said Gopher. And then, “And what, may I ask, do you think you’re doing?”

“In the interest of Science I have been trying to find out a little something about our fair earth,” said Mole who apprehensively eyed the hole in the ceiling from whence he had come.

“Well, I must say, you don’t have to do it in my home.” Gopher drew closer and started coldly Mole. “If you liber-
als would go below the surface of things once in a while, you could really find out what underlies our fair earth. If you could learn to stay in one place for more than five seconds, you wouldn’t be getting yourselves into such embarrassing situations all of the time. If you would settle down you’d find that there is more than enough, just in one locality, to keep you interested and satisfied all your life.”

“On the contrary,” Mole interrupted, pushing his dirt-dappled face closer yet to Gopher’s, and poking him authoritatively on the chest, “if you were not so damn narrow-minded you might discover that we live in a world of many diversified interests and pleasures. If you would pull yourself out of this moldy hole once in a while you might discover some of the real beauties of the world.”

“Pray tell me, kind sir,” the enraged Gopher enunciated slowly and precisely, “what could be more beautiful than the comforts of home and family, unmolested by the forces of evil of the outside world, like you?” He hissed the last two words. “And, if you would care to step outside and refer to my beautiful home again, in the uncouth manner in which you just did, we will settle this little matter once and for all.” He moved toward the door and motioned Mole through it.

“Gladly done!” Mole returned, stepping out into the bright sunlight. “Getting you outside is an accomplishment in itself, and maybe I can even get you to see the light.”

“And now,” said Gopher, emerging into the blinding glare, “if you will....”

BANG!

“Gee Dad, you got two of ’em with one shot!”

—Ted Doty, Ex. ’56