

THE PROCESSES OF CHANGE

Is there any justification at all for regarding our time as an ugly duckling among civilizations? Is there any hope that from the weakness and folly of the age can arise a form of human association and enterprise that will be worth the attention of historians a thousand years hence?

These questions are prompted by the feeling that we live in a period heavy with child—pregnant with life as well as twisted by pain and self-disgust. There have been historians in plenty who have compared this age with the declining cycle of other civilizations. But is there a parallel with some period which combined death with rebirth? We may be wrong, but it seems that there is a distinct lack of precedent for the strange combination of both good and evil tendencies which characterizes the time in which we live. Conclusions of this sort are difficult, but who among those who brood about the meaning of the world's condition has failed to experience feelings of both fear and hope? There is an air of doom about, but also one of promise, even if the grounds for hope seem far less tangible than the gruesome clowning that marches us along the road to disaster.

What must be remembered, in any such analysis, is that revolutionary changes for the better are never solely the result of heroic efforts on the part of self-sacrificing leaders and men of reforming vision. For such labors to have effect, there must be an entire web of responsive attitudes on the part of the people at large. The people must be *ready* for the changes, and this readiness involves a willingness to break with the past in many of the ordinary relationships of life. Recognition of these factors in the successful transformation of the patterns of culture is fundamental to any prediction concerning how the efforts of reformers will turn out.

What sort of readiness for change is already apparent, in the modern world? Readiness for change may be thought of as having two phases. First, there is the feeling of intolerable frustration which arises from living in the midst of situations which no longer support the hope of a better life. The second phase encompasses all those desperate wonderings which rush through the mind when hope begins to die and the affirmative currents by which human beings live from day to day can find no outlet or channel of expression.

So far, the readiness for change in the Western world is still limited to the first phase, for all except very few people. Take for example the economic side of modern life. In the past year or two, various students of economic processes have pointed out that never before have the American people enjoyed so much prosperity, luxury, and material convenience, and never before in history have all these material advantages been so evenly distributed among the people. While there are still great disparities between the classes, in terms of actual wealth, it remains a fact that standards of living which once were possible only for thousands are now taken for granted by millions.

The point, here, is that there is little or no psychological enjoyment of all this prosperity. Instead, what used to be luxuries have been redefined as "necessities," and the need to live at the new, artificial level of material comfort is as much a source of anxiety as was actual poverty only a few years ago. Culturally, we have experienced a vast expansion of the middle class. The expression, "working man," is outdated, today. No important class division separates industrial labor from the so-called "white collar" worker. In many cases, the man at the bench makes more money than the man at the desk, while both are confronted by the same spiral of living costs and taxes. The old idea of ownership

of private property as a source of economic security for one's declining years has very largely lost its reality. Today, a man has to hedge his future with expensive insurance policies. The idea of a secure relationship with nature has been replaced by a secure relationship with financial institutions. The high wages a man with moderate skill can command are sucked away by the requirements of "survival" in conventional terms. The "country" is rapidly being devoured by real estate developers who are causing land values to skyrocket beyond the reach of the man who has looked forward to a little farm somewhere beyond the city limits.

In addition to all this, the individual wage-earner is a target at which the cleverest salesmen that a highly competitive system of merchandising can produce are continually aiming their most effective appeals. This bombardment never stops. The maintenance of the national economy depends upon the unbroken continuity of the effort to move goods from the manufacturer to the dealer to the consumer. A great deal of "science" goes into this process of distribution, by means of which the buying public is taught to keep on spending its last dollar on the goods and services of modern industry.

This process cannot help but produce endless strains in all its participants. For a time, it was possible to hope that some stopping place for all this acquisition would finally be reached. But now we begin to realize that "obsolescence" is meant to overtake everything that does not wear out from actual use. Relaxation from the incessant exertion to produce and consume is against the principle of our economic system. The anxieties of production and consumption are a "natural" part of the health of our economic life.

The same sort of futility overtakes the small business man. With some exceptions, the spread between his costs and his selling price is not quite enough to give him a moderate income and provide for normal expansion. He is not able, nor has he the knowledge, to make money through the

capital manipulations characteristic of big business operations. He is no better off, and often more difficultly placed, than the man who works for an employer.

Central to these conditions is the fact that we have a permanent war economy, under which an enormous portion of the national income is turned into implements of destruction. There is little or no prospect of reducing this literal *waste* of the wealth of the people, while, at the same time, the productive capacities of the nation are so extensively geared to the making of weapons and munitions that any significant stoppage in the industrial preparations for war would bring unprecedented economic disaster.

In a situation of this sort, only the gross appetites and the superficial forms of pleasure are given satisfaction by material prosperity. Men are not animals, and when they behave like animals and are encouraged to think only of their material needs, deep-seated dissatisfactions begin to develop. The normal desires by which a man is led to work to support his family and supply them with the needs of a healthful, happy life are caricatured by the terrible urgencies of our economic system and its manifold compulsions. The man may *imagine* that he is fulfilling natural obligations by conforming to the requirements of the system, but he is bound to feel the effects of this self-betrayal somewhere in his being, and, sooner or later, he will rebel. It is the rebellion of the common man which brings the second phase of readiness for change.

There are, however, many more aspects of the first phase to be considered. Primary among these is the inability of average, decent people to maintain their self-respect in a society which hides its face from human suffering in other parts of the world. Books which report the toll of radioactive poisoning in Japan, as aftermath of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki explosions, and of the Bikini test shot, are filled with the horror of human disfigurement and death. Little by little, knowledge of these things filters down into the

awareness of ordinary people, creating a moral uneasiness. The press, of course, conspires to keep these unpleasant facts hidden, so that the awakening is being delayed—delayed somewhat in the fashion that the Nazi government held back from the German people what was going on in the concentration camps and the death camps. Eventually, however, the Germans were made to discover what "they" had done, or what had been done in their name. And eventually, the American people will have to accept responsibility for all that has been done in their name in the name of their "freedom" and "way of life." Meanwhile, the suppressions and deceptions practiced by the commercial press contribute to a hot-house growth of self-righteousness and synthetic virtue which can only sicken the people when they begin to open their eyes.

The younger generation—children and youth of high-school and college age—are inevitably affected by the uncertainties in the lives of their parents, and also have problems of their own. For the boys, there is the prospect of the draft—not so disturbing, perhaps, since it has now become a universal expectation, but nonetheless an interruption of their lives during the formative years. The more sensitive youngsters cannot help but be depressed by the rigidities of society they are soon to enter as young adults. There are not even radical clubs and societies on the campus, as there were twenty-five years ago, for him to join, throwing his energies into projects for change and reform. Then there is the indecision and superficial controversy among his teachers as to what is "wrong" with modern education. A number of critics are able to assess the shortcomings of the schools and colleges, but no one seems to have much of an idea on what to do about them. The system itself is so heavily institutionalized, the traits of mediocrity so closely integrated with administrative requirements and routine, that any real change on a large scale is hard to imagine. What seems necessary, before there can be any notable improvement in education generally, is the stimulus of a

revolutionary vision—the development of an enthusiasm that is strong enough to make a clean break with the short-term thinking that has confined education to unimaginative patterns of conformity. Not the least of the needs is a complete end to the intimidation of teachers by political demagogues and investigating committees.

There may be those who feel that the controversy among educators is far from "superficial," that it touches the heart of human problems. We say that it is superficial to the extent that it fails to grasp the overwhelming failure of our time to conceive of a life that is worth living for human beings. The ideals of educators may still be filled with the rhetoric of great teachers of the past, but those ideals have no real field of operation in modern society. You cannot set high ideals to work through channels which lead nowhere worth going. In a world where men of vision, sensitive moral perception, and artistic integrity must choose between either alienation or compromise, there is no possibility of genuine education except outside the conventional forms of mass education, or in spite of them.

You cannot teach respect for man in a system of education which is obliged to remain silent about, if not to praise, behavior that is in fundamental contempt for man. You cannot encourage a high and ennobling view of human beings and foster the delicate emergence of human potentiality in an atmosphere loaded with fears and recriminations. Our trouble is not with our system of education, but with our system of life, and, sooner or later, our best teachers will begin to make this plain. Teachers will undoubtedly be among the leaders in the passage from the first to the second phase of readiness for change.

Something should be said about the role of the artist in our society. The artists of our time are either captives of the system, rebels against the system, or hermits immune to the system. This word "system" is probably not the best term to use, but it will do if taken to mean a complex of

attitudes toward life rather than any specific socio-political structure. The captives of the system are artists who are paid to make the system look good. They draw the pictures for advertisements and suggest all manner of pleasant experiences to result from wholehearted participation in the economic carousel—a carousel at the upper level, a treadmill down below. They make the subtleties of modern design and color harmony grace the manufacturing, merchandising and consuming process, hiding from view the peonage of men to money which results from its operation. The rebels, on the other hand, portray the mutilation that they feel all about them, in the people they know and the people they don't know. Their work is an agonized cry of pain. The hermits are self-contained units of harmonious individuality who are able to make some kind of adaptation to our society without succumbing to its influence. Novelists and poets can probably be placed in the same categories, although the verbal medium of the writer complicates the matter with another dimension. It is probably more difficult, however, for the writer to be a "hermit." It is more difficult for a writer to avoid engagement with the evils in the world. The subject-matter of the writer is the inner life of human beings, so that the writer may be less able than the painter to give expression to a self-contained or self-generated harmony. He reports on a wider canvas and his pigments are squeezed from human hearts.

There is a certain difficulty, however, in discussing the predicament of the artist. In any kind of society—in even the best imaginable society—there are varying ranges of artistic perception, each with its authentic value and corresponding moral awareness. Large generalizations of social or cultural content tend to be clumsy instruments of analysis when these ranges are ignored. By this we mean that there are men who are artists, honest, perceptive members of society, employed in each of these ranges of perception. Work that would represent decadence or compromise for one may be a complete expression for another man of perhaps

more limited vision. You realize this when you take the big generalization about a period or epoch and try to make it apply to individuals. Too often, the judgments do not really touch many of the people they seem to be directed at. It is here that a phrase of Ortega's helps to clarify the problem. Ortega spoke of the men who live at "the height of the times." These are the men who tend to become symbols of their age—who represent its true temper and direction. And when generalizations are made, as for example, about "The Artist," it is such an artist that is held in mind.

So it is the Artist, in this sense, who feels that the present world is closing in about him, who senses the heavy-hearted pain of the humanity which shares his bewilderments, and who does what he can to articulate for better understanding the moral circumstances of the time.

Thus the artist—the artist and the writer and the musician—is one who feels before others the impact of the first phase of readiness for change. And he fills his medium with anticipations and wonderings.

One broad area of influence remains to be mentioned, covered by the word "food." Our food, like our wealth, is unsatisfactory. This is the discovery of specialists, of diagnosticians and experts who have made a lifelong study of nutrition. Just because food is a physical matter, we have available a great body of information about it, and here the readiness for change has become a minor sort of movement, with considerable knowledge, also, about what should be done. When enough people who have this attitude toward food begin to recognize that the quality of our food, like the quality of our education, cannot be separated from the more general quality of our lives, the momentum of change will begin to gather in earnest. Here, perhaps, should be mentioned also the growing attention paid to mental health and the associated problems of alcoholism and drug addiction. Again, the problem is not specific, it only *seems*

specific. As the best minds of our civilization more and more recognize that the problems of physical and mental and emotional health cannot be solved piece-meal, or one by one, but require changes so far-reaching that it is not possible, at present, even to say what they should be, and as such leaders begin to speak out boldly, the transition to the second phase of readiness for change should be virtually complete.

Many more aspects of human dissatisfaction with the present could be catalogued. A number of people, for example, are beginning to feel the onset of the law of diminishing returns from sensate pleasure. They are getting what they wanted, or thought they wanted, and it is not much good. They continue to seek this kind of pleasure because they don't know anything better to do. Meanwhile, the profounder hungers of their being remain unsatisfied. There is the shame of the parents who realize how much they have contributed by default to the weaknesses and shallow lives of their children; there is the private agony of honest statesmen and other leaders who dare not tell their fears, yet go on leading the people when they are themselves without direction; there are the military men who silently recoil from the horror they are preparing for the world, or a large part of it, and for reasons which seem senseless when examined in the momentary light of sanity.

The motives of modern man, we find, are but shadows of yesterday's beliefs, pursued simply by habit, justified by Epimethean fears, and defended with anxious fury or in hollow distrust.

This is the sketch of our civilization as an ugly duckling. It represents, one hopes, an interlude of waiting—a waiting for both death and rebirth.

REVIEW

AUTOMOBILES AND THE AMERICAN PSYCHE

ON three occasions MANAS has indulged in asides on the Great American Symbol, the Automobile. While some readers no doubt wondered just where such material fits into the MANAS outlook, others have liked these articles and expressed an interest in more of them. Apparently S. I. Hayakawa, editor of *Etc.: A Review of General Semantics*, thinks the subject important, too, for he recently contributed two analyses of automotive "psychology" to that magazine, the last appearing in the Spring issue.

Mr. Hayakawa is especially interested in the strange "karma" which seems to be befalling the automobile industry as a result of reliance upon the motivational researchers. The Ford Motor Company's new production, the Edsel, is neither a financial nor styling success, but the motivational researchers employed by Ford confidently assured management that it would be both. Why? It is Mr. Hayakawa's opinion the American public is not quite as unbalanced as the Motivational boys make it out to be; or rather, the susceptibility to be psychologized into elaborate purchases is not to last forever.

To begin with, however, we ought to recognize the extent to which advertising men and car designers have been able to make a success out of irrational associations. Mr. Hayakawa writes:

The automobile is certainly one of the most important nonlinguistic symbols in American culture. As the advertisements keep telling us, it is one of our ways of telling others who we are, from Cadillac as a "symbol of achievement," to Ford as a symbol of "young-mindedness," to Plymouth, which says, according to a recent ad, "We're not the richest people in town, but we're the proudest. We're the kind of family that gets a big bang out of living." Even those who simply want transportation, with no fads or frills or nonsense, can buy a Jeep and "say" so. The automakers are therefore the grammarians of this nonverbal "language," and shortcomings in the

"language" are necessarily shortcomings in the range of expression available to the consumer.

So, for the past several years, the manufacturers who built the most extravagantly designed, lowest and longest automobiles came out very well. Enough of the public wanted to identify themselves with "young-mindedness," or with the lines of the space ship of the future, to make the motivational researchers seem extremely wise in the ways of unwisdom. When Plymouth tried to build a modest automobile, in 1954—short, more maneuverable—Chrysler Corporation went into a dangerous slump. But now, in 1958, the American motors experiments with a similar conception are highly successful; the Nash Rambler, for example, boasted sales leadership in California during the early part of 1958.

This, one could say, is the result of the operation of "Free Competition" in industry—but only because European cars entered into competition successfully. While the researchers still hopefully maintain that the American public will pay more money to be able to indulge or fulfill a fantasy, an increasing number have indicated a preference for common sense. A four-hundred horsepower Mercury "Marauder" is not the most logical answer for commuting to work in congested areas at thirty miles an hour, nor for stopping at the supermarket for a few items. A Chevrolet, always in the past a reliable car for practical day-to-day chores, has during 1957-58 become considerably lower, broader, longer. Garages that would hold earlier Chevys will not hold the new ones, and female shoppers who seem to have difficulty with lining an automobile with the garage doors are causing outlandish outlays on fender repairs.

Mr. Hayakawa derives great satisfaction from the fact that the manufacturers of fabulous dream-boats are now stuck with hundreds of thousands of unsold cars. Meanwhile, every day sees an increase in the number of pleased owners of Volkswagens, Volvos, etc. Hayakawa summarizes the "little car" trend:

The consumer rush to the little foreign cars does not appear to me a passing fad, although Detroit is trying to reassure itself by saying that the foreign-car trend has reached its peak. The Morris Minor, the English Fords, the Hillman, the Simca the Volkswagen, the Volvo, the Fiat, and all the other lovely little bugs that we see today in increasing numbers are cheap to operate. As for what they "communicate," they give out simple, unassuming messages devoid of delusions of grandeur. Their popularity indicates a widespread reassertion of an orientation towards reality, which says that \$1600 is less than \$2800, that 30 miles per gallon is cheaper transportation than 8 to 13 miles per gallon, that a 155" Renault is easier to park than a 214" Dodge. The very people who are writing the ads for Plymouth, Ford, and Chevrolet are driving DKW's, MG's, and Triumphs, while their bosses, the agency heads, ride around in Jaguars and Bentleys. It will take the American auto industry five years, if not a decade or two, to regain the respect and confidence of their best friend, the American consumer.

Mr. Hayakawa continues:

The trouble with car manufacturers (who, like other isolated people in underdeveloped areas, are devout believers in voodoo), is that they have been listening too long to the motivation research people. Motivation researchers are those harlot social scientists who, in impressive psychoanalytic and/ or sociological jargon, tell their clients what their clients want to hear, namely, that *appeals to human irrationality are likely to be far more profitable than appeals to rationality*. This doctrine appeals to moguls and would-be moguls of all times and places, because it implies that if you hold the key to people's irrationality, you can exploit and diddle them to your heart's content and be loved for it.

The Great Gimmick of the motivation researchers, therefore, is the investigation of irrationality, of which we all have, goodness knows, an abundance. What the motivation researchers failed to tell their clients (perhaps because they hadn't thought of it themselves) is that *only* the psychotic and the gravely neurotic *act out* their irrationalities and their compensatory fantasies. Motivation researchers seem not to know the difference between the sane and the insane. Having learned through their "depth" techniques that we all have our irrationalities (no great discovery at this date), they fatuously conclude that we are equally governed by those irrationalities at *all* levels of consumer expenditure—although it doesn't take a social science

genius to point out that the more expensive an object is, the more its purchase compels the recognition of reality.

Some day, perhaps, what is now only a constructive fantasy may come true—the dream of American manufacturers agreeing to specialize in entirely different types of vehicles, so that the public will be able to buy American automobiles intelligently, according to specifications, performance and economy.

Not only do the light, maneuverable, economical European cars offer a refreshing contrast to over-sized American automobiles—they offer genuine variety among themselves. At a price only matched by the "stripped" U.S. model in the lowest cost range, you can have your option of cars with motors mounted in the rear, such as the Volkswagen and the Swedish Saab. (There once was much talk about the great advantages of rear-engine design, with no drive shaft to worry about, less cost in construction, etc., and if the manufacturers had dared to think that even part of the public might be ready for variety or innovation, we would have them now, U.S. made.) The Saab offers a three cylinder valveless engine, like the popular German made DKW, and, in addition, furnishes convertible sleeping room. The Volkswagen has an "opposed four" engine design which is extremely durable as well as economical. The Swedish Volvo provides, at slightly more than two thousand dollars, ample room for the average American family with much greater economy and maneuverability—snappy performance made possible by the elimination of excess weight and furthered by precision engineering. Citroen supplies an excellent front wheel drive. So the foreign-car buyer is extended a strong invitation by all these options to study his particular transportation needs; he can buy *what* he needs and no more, and therefore do the most with the least.

A strong argument in favor of diversity of design and performance seems to us to lie in the safety factor. Very few American drivers are

capable of making use of the high horsepower ratings of American cars without endangering life and property on the highways. Few should travel, any time, in excess of sixty-five miles an hour, but if "everyone" boasts a monster in the garage of two hundred or better horse power, the dubiously proud owner is apt to feel a little un-American if he fails to ever make use of the top two-thirds of his automobile's potential. Equipped with a more modest vehicle, he would perhaps feel no shame driving at the speeds suited to his capacities. The almost fabulous uniformity of the productions of American manufacturers precludes all but the most cursory interest in the mechanical peculiarities of one's vehicle, while interest and pride in a car one drives are obviously important factors in "proud" and thoughtful driving.

About the only complimentary thing one can say about American automobiles, from a practical standpoint, is by way of the station wagon—increasingly popular, and for good reason. Many American families can use this sort of spaciousness to good advantage, but even here, less than twenty-five per cent of the drivers need more than fifty per cent of most horse power ratings offered, while all could make use of a twenty-five per cent saving in operation cost.

COMMENTARY

"REQUIREMENTS OF HUMAN BEINGS"

AMONG the Indian tribes visited by Nicholas Guppy in his botanizing explorations in British Guiana (see *Frontiers*) were the Wai-Wai, said to be legendary "white Indians" of South America. More impressive to this scientist, however, were the manners and personal behavior of the members of another tribe, the Mawayans, who greeted his approach to their village with flute-playing. Speaking of one of this tribe, Mr. Cluppy writes:

. . . his eyes lighted, with an instant and flickering change a smile spread across his face, he waved, elegantly, and was transformed—an Ariel, whose every move was an arabesque. He was extraordinary—it was hard to believe that such cultivation could exist in the jungle. It was something only found, surely, in old civilizations?

He speculates as to the origins of the tribe:

Other travellers have surmised, from the perfection of their manners, that the Indians of the remotest South American forest are refugees of higher cultures driven into their fastnesses by barbaric, more warlike and materially successful tribes—and perhaps they are. Yet there are so many different groups, apparently unrelated, with graceful manners, that to postulate the former existence of a higher culture for each is absurd: it is more profitable to look to the environment. What could there be in common between life in those civilized circles where manners are held at a premium, and in those inaccessible forests? Most likely, it seemed, a relative stability—for everywhere, whatever their degree of polish, good manners must be based upon consideration for others, and therefore upon at least some lessening of the struggle for personal pre-eminence; and if there was one profound difference between the world of the forest Indians and that of our civilization which will soon overwhelm it, it was that while in the latter ambition is so important that it is hard to conceive of existence without it, in the former it is almost absent. And it was precisely this lack of struggle between men, I believe, that produced the happy, beautifully mannered societies of the forest depths.

Another interesting thing about these people was their amiable adjustment to a stranger's failure

to observe their customs. "Rigidity," Guppy says, "would have been much more likely near a mission, where an alien morality has been forced on the people."

These are the people whom the missionary in the region calls "a shameful lot."

The experience of living with these Indians led Mr. Guppy to say: "What seems axiomatic is that the closer we return, compatible with civilization, to the natural requirements of human beings, the stronger we shall be. . . ."

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves FIGURES OF TRAGEDY

JOHN CALDWELL'S *Children of Calamity* (John Day, 1957) is a book about which every reader will feel strongly—and lastingly. This is a factual account of the dispossessed children of the world, including 400,000 illegitimate babies produced in the wake of recent wars. But the facts turn into tragic drama in the telling at times, not so much through Mr. Caldwell's design, as because, despite a horrifying indifference on the part of many of those guilty of child neglect or desertion, there are those others who awaken to a sense of responsibility in regard to *children in general*, and who do something about it. And there is something else which occasionally transforms statistical accounts into the material of drama—the fact that in our hearts we all—every one of us—feel responsible for *any* waif in distress. The helpless child in trouble leaves us in no doubt as to our sharing of the human bond. But the most tragic figures of childhood, today, are not those encountered in America, nor would we encounter many abroad while following ordinary paths. It is Mr. Caldwell's task to introduce us to those hundreds of thousands whose distress we shall never see, in the hope that the emotional response *in the presence* of a child's suffering may be transformed into compelling ethical concern, leading to corrective action.

To assist the growth of a sense of moral responsibility among Americans, Mr. Caldwell indicates just what curious mixtures of callousness and prudery we have exhibited. American troops landed in Japan in September, 1945. The first mixed-blood child was born in May of 1946, though announcement of the event over a Japanese radio station resulted in the dismissal of the newscaster through pressure from American military authorities. Estimates as to the number of mixed-blood births had, several years ago, reached the figure of 100,000. According to a kind and

talented Japanese noblewoman who supervises a home for children left with her by shamed female parents, fifty per cent of such children are the result of "chance encounters." The father's name never being of record, the country girls who "loved" them are unable to procure any assistance save through a few private channels. On this point Mr. Caldwell says:

Too few Americans are interested, perhaps because the whole problem has been hushed up by American and Japanese authorities. It is interesting to note that among the several nations responsible for mixed-blood children in Asia, only the French in Indo-China show a sense of responsibility. Hundreds of French-Vietnamese children are being shipped to France each month, traveling as French citizens on French passports. The United States Government has even refused to cooperate with the Christian Children's Fund in a project to resettle Japanese mixed-bloods in Hawaii.

The strange—or not so strange situation seems to be that mere displacement of children, even under the most adverse economic circumstances, seldom creates protracted homelessness; those deprived of homes because of the death of parents have often, as in Finland, found another home and gained the sense of being cared for which is so vitally important. Mr. Caldwell relates how it was that the whole of Lapland, in Finland, was literally burned to the ground on the occasion of the German withdrawal. Although classified by the Russians as "German collaborators," the Finns had simply endeavored to preserve themselves as a nation, giving in to the presence of German troops only because they had no alternative. Then, after 80,000 people were killed during the German retreat and as a result of mines intended for the Russians, the Russians imposed a tremendous levy of reparations. Each Finlander was, in effect, forced to pay over thirty per cent of his earnings to Russia during an eight-year period. Yet in that time the fifty-thousand orphans occasioned by the ravage of Lapland were given government help, and, whenever possible, placed in homes. In comparison with the treatment of the displaced

Japanese-American foundlings, the Finlanders seemed to have proved that it is not so much the resources of government but the sense of responsibility that counts. The Americans who fathered Japanese-American children, and who should consequently have felt at least financially responsible, have seldom accepted their obligations—perhaps because of a sense of guilt the Finns had no reason to feel.

Mr. Caldwell tells dramatic stories involving courageous individuals who endeavored to do something for dispossessed children—and the backdrop is the planet. From Syria and Lebanon to Malaya and India, from Turkey to China, the same sad story of "the lost children" is repeated. As the publisher's note puts it, "orphans of war, illegitimate children of soldiers, unwanted children of mixed marriages, homeless outcastes—the children of our world who have next to nothing in the present and little more to hope for in the future make up a staggering total of innocence betrayed. It is heartening to see that an individual here, a family there, an organization there, even one or two governments are doing something about them. Statistics and data are almost overwhelming."

Pearl Buck writes in the foreword to *Children of Calamity*:

When the natural environment of family and society is destroyed by war and catastrophe, and above all by war, the children are the ones who suffer most. Then the treasure is wasted and the loss to mankind is severe.

This book, then, is about the world's wasted treasure, the lost and unwanted children, the lonely, the desperate children. They roam the streets of cities. They hide in the ruins of bombed buildings, they maraud the countryside, they live a life of innocent crime. Most of them are orphaned by war, many are fathered by soldiers who desert them or do not even know of their existence, some are the somber fruit of indigenous or accidental poverty.

Whatever the reason for their being, these children exist. They are in our world without their own wish or will, they struggle for life upon our globe. John C. Caldwell has undertaken to find them

for us. He has made a journey to discover them and he presents them in their heartbreaking innocence and need. Because they are children he presents them with hope. A few people, he tells us, are doing a great deal to save the lost children. We are inspired by these few, and we are made ashamed because they are so few. Where are all the other people? Why are we not all helping the children?

Reading *Children of Calamity* may have an unsettling effect on complacent parents. With our nursery schools and beautifully appointed primary schools, with our over-abundance of food, clothing and toys, the "children of calamity" not only seem to be, but *are*, inhabiting a different universe. Realizing this, one might think, "How lucky is my child!"—a rather despicable conclusion—or he might say that there is a sense in which no child has a right to indulgence when other children are in positive need. In principle, at least, a greater strictness with our own children in regard to order is required, and less of an over-supply to them of any commodity, which together may help bring us—and the children, too—closer to an identity in human brotherhood.

Last but not least, *Children of Calamity* disabuses us of the notion that "Eurasian" or "Amerasian" children are bound to get along all right because Rudyard Kipling's "Kim" managed to do so. These little people are real people in a real—and tough—world. It happens to be our world, too.

FRONTIERS

A Look at Missionary Zeal

THE impact of one culture upon another—the familiar case, for us, being the impact of Western, industrial civilization upon the apparently "primitive" societies of the world's backward areas—is always a fascinating study. But it is also disheartening, since we of the West have so little to give that such peoples can use, while the other effects of our influence are almost always disastrous.

The puzzling side of this question is the lack of resilience on the part of races and tribes which have so much stability and harmony within their own way of life. Western anthropologists spend much time examining and reporting on simple tribal cultures, and in some instances acquire a great deal of respect for the intuitive wisdom practiced by peoples of this sort. The studies of the Hopi Indians, for example, by Laura Thompson and Alice Joseph, reveal a manifestly superior attitude toward many aspects of life, and the Hopis' capacity to maintain a moral elevation and sense of responsibility is seldom found in entire communities populated by Caucasians. Ward Shepard's article, "Our Indigenous Shangri-La," published in the *Scientific Monthly* for February, 1946, provides an excellent brief survey of Hopi culture, with emphasis on the abundance among the Hopis of qualities seriously lacking in Western civilization.

The explanation of the vulnerability of such cultures to Western influence seems to be that traditional societies are unable to cope with the aggressively individualistic habits and attitudes of Westerners. There may be some exceptions, however. India and Indonesia represent traditional societies which have suffered invasion by the West—invasion, conquest, and economic exploitation, as well as the discrimination of an arrogant racism—yet now show signs of being able to adapt themselves to some sort of blend of the cultures of East and West. It is true that much

that we see in India is a mechanical mixture rather than a synthesis of the two—and nothing pains a sensitive Westerner more than to hear echoed in the East the slogans and clichés which have brought superficiality and even degradation to the West—but there is also evidence of an effort to find an intelligent balance between Eastern traditionalism and Western "progressivism."

But by far the great majority of traditional cultures are mortally affected by Western influence. Recently Nicholas Guppy, an English botanist, explored an unknown region of British Guiana, near the Brazilian border, in search of rare plants. While on this expedition, he found the time to observe closely the life of a forest tribe, the Wai-Wai Indians, and some others as well. His book, *Wai-Wai*, published this year in the United States by Dutton, is filled with accounts of arts, customs, and attitudes of these people. Already, due to contact with the whites, their lives are changing. Mr. Guppy (his grandfather was the famous ichthyologist who gave the "guppies" their name) writes:

It will be interesting, if saddening, to see what changes take place in the next few generations. Very likely almost their entire artistic productivity will come to a stop, for civilization and the missionaries are on their doorstep, and the shock produced by them often so shatters a primitive people's reality and inhibits their thinking that, for a while at least, despair, secretiveness, suspicion replace their former charm and extroversion, and their minds are frozen in a profound, slow, inward searching, before, after a generation or two, they begin to recover—though by that time their culture is lost.

Early on this trip Mr. Guppy contacted a missionary family devoted to conversion of the Indians and questioned them about their activities. The man, an evangelical Protestant worker, explained that they were concentrating on the women, trying to make them cover their bodies, since "they are the cause of all the sin." When Guppy asked him why he didn't work on people closer to home, the missionary pointed out that people in New York have been baptized and are, therefore, presumably "saved," whereas there in

British Guiana "souls are in danger." Mr. Guppy reports his last question:

"Tell me," I said, "do you respect these Indians as people?"

The answer was conclusive:

"That is completely beside the point. We *love* them—we love them in Christ. Our object is to save souls. Nothing else matters."

This interchange helps the reader to understand what Mr. Guppy says much later in the book regarding the missionaries. Writing of the pathetic condition of one tribe—the Karardanawans—he comments:

It is hard to say, of all those who form the vanguard of civilization—prospectors, balata bleeders, traders, officials, ranchers, missionaries—which are the most destructive. Probably the missionaries, for even when they view their flocks with love, as human beings and not as sinners and outragers of decency, their aim is to overthrow everything that is fundamental in the heathens' beliefs and ways of life. Old-style missionaries would search for things the natives revered, and destroy them, and stop their ceremonies, but public and governmental opinion have been raised against such behavior and modern missionaries have to be subtler. Their approach is often economic. They introduce new wants, turn their missions into labour exchanges, and make their flocks subservient before beginning to exert pressure to produce that perfect society which they cannot achieve in civilization. . . .

Usually, hidden to avoid trouble, the debased relics of the old customs continue, but many turn to the missionaries and accept their faith. Indeed, it is only after the destruction that the missionaries begin to build. Yet the effects of conversion may be quite different from what they expect, for in Guiana (as also, one hears, in Africa, Asia, and the South Seas) it often liberates the natives from moral restraint. The Indians believe that if a man breaks the laws of his tribe, or harms others, he will suffer because others will in turn do him harm, or will not like him, and that he will go on suffering after death, because in the next world he will find all the people, enemies included, whom he knew on earth, and have to continue to live with them. Every man has thus to accept responsibility for his own actions and their consequences for all time—but these consequences are comparatively minor. Christianity inflates them

into heavy burdens of Sin and Guilt when it introduces its advanced, unified concepts of a single great force of Evil (far more appalling than a few malevolent spirits or men, who can be dealt with as individuals) and a God infinitely good and wise, who are fighting for control of the world. It exalts man's importance, so that he becomes not merely distinct from the animals, but the end and purpose of creation, and puts him in a position to bargain for the surrender of his soul. To the Indians the choice appears to be between continuing to lead a life according to their old ways and suffering Hell, torments, burning fires in the next world, and adopting alien customs in exchange for the promise of everlasting bliss. But at the same time they are offered an escape: belief in the mysterious God's Son and repentance of their sins, even on their death-beds, will apparently get them the bliss anyway.

At last they understand the ruthlessness, lying, cheating, stealing, violence, bullying, adultery, drunkenness of so many of those who belong to this faith; and having accepted the Christian's beliefs, they accept his standards of behaviour. From then onwards, it is only their natural goodness, their lethargy, and the threat of the police which restrain them.

That the Indians are capable of accepting responsibility for their own actions at a simple level is shown by their beliefs; and that they are ready for more unified concepts is shown by their search. But that there should be such results from the introduction of Christianity shows the lack of intelligence of many who attempt to teach it—as well as the weakness of what they teach. . . . Missionaries are frequently educated men, dedicated to their work, altruistic in intent, backed by wealthy societies. If they could begin to view their work objectively and see the horrible un-Christianity of so many of its results and the loss to the world that it causes of so many things that can never return; if they could forget the lust to evangelize, their virulent and petty bigotries, despotisms, and intersectarian jealousies, and adopt an attitude of humility toward their flocks, they could more than any others make the transition to civilization smooth and beneficial wherever it is necessary.

But this, Mr. Guppy points out, would require that the missionaries "support the tribal society, and therefore—until the natives voluntarily desired conversion—the beliefs on which it is founded." Mr. Guppy does not believe

that many missionaries are capable of such patience and restraint!

Seldom has the case against missionary zeal been put with greater force. Mr. Guppy is not irreligious. He would like to see religion reflect the ardor of science for the discovery of truth and what he believes to be the scientist's acceptance of "personal responsibility in the highest degree." "These attitudes," he suggests, are "surely at the heart of Christ's teachings."

One thing is certain: From the social sciences has come the capacity to observe and evaluate the actual consequences in behavior of so-called "primitive" beliefs—consequences which, we now see, are far better in many cases than the behavior produced by Christian beliefs, whether at home or among the converted "heathen" of far-off lands. The problem of the missionaries is rapidly becoming one of basic honesty: how can they continue to ignore the havoc they create among people like the Wai-Wai Indians? Why should "saving religion" so utterly destroy?

As to the question raised at the outset—why primitive peoples, with their admirable sense of moral order in their own terms, should be so vulnerable to Western influence—we have only one answer, which is hardly adequate. It is that these simple people are not complicated enough to adopt and practice the hypocrisies customary among the more self-aware races of the West. This failure is probably related in some subtle way to their lack of self-consciousness, in comparison with Western peoples. Individualism and self-consciousness go together, and together make possible a higher level of moral offenses, the worst of which, perhaps, is the hypocrisy of religious self-righteousness. Much honest self-examination, and many more books like this one by Mr. Guppy, are needed to wear away the grip of this cultural delusion of the West.