

in Congressional apportionment. The perfidy of politicians is not evidence of anti-Negro sentiment in the North and West. Positive anti-Negro legislation might be so interpreted; inaction can not rightly be.

The authors speak of the revulsion of the white population at any mixing of the races. Certainly the whites never balked at that point—only at intermarriage. No one ever opposed interracial associations provided they were not on a basis of equality, nor was an eyebrow ever lifted when a white child was born to a Negro woman.

Another major theme of the book is “accommodation.” Slavery, the authors say, was easily maintained by institutional arrangement, when in fact it was maintained by force recognized and sustained by law. The slaves were freed by force, and they will escape from subordination by force applied either by the federal government or by themselves. The federal government, the book claims, was granted power by the Constitution to return fugitive slaves, while control of slaves was left to the states. There was no such provision in the Constitution.

The Missouri Compromise is dismissed as a momentary flare-up and the Tallmadge Amendment as a proposal to free the slaves in Missouri. The defense of slavery and of mob violence sent out to the world by the authors of the Gag Resolution is ignored. Perspective here is so narrow that it is said: “In all these years, [John Quincy] Adams’s was a voice virtually alone.” The authors fail to see that slavery was destroying democratic institutions and that its abolition was essential to the preservation of Constitutional Government.

A third theme, less clearly delineated, is the idea that education and skill will insure equal rights, a rash assumption so far as the Southern states are concerned. The best educated, the richest, and the most prominent man of color in this country asserts his human dignity in the South at his peril.

Any book which suggests that all white men were against all people of color in the history of this nation renders a great disservice to humanity. There is a solid, powerful body of Judaeo-Christian liberalism in the U.S. It has supported the natural rights of persons and the Constitutional rights of citizens, equality under the law and in the administration of justice, and the dignity and worth of individual man from Colonial days to the present. It has always been vilified, as people of color have been victimized, by the racist power structure inherent in our present governmental operations. Consciously or not, *The Troublesome Presence* fails to reach the heart of the problem.

## The Mystery in Our History

***O Strange New World: American Culture, the Formative Years*, by Howard Mumford Jones (Viking, 464 pp. \$8.50), juxtaposes that which is indigenous to U.S. life with those elements that derive from European tradition. August Heckscher, who served as Special White House Consultant on the Arts during the Kennedy Administration, is the author of “Public Happiness.”**

By AUGUST HECKSCHER

THE AMERICAN experience, the American image, lend themselves to analysis and rediscovery. For they appear plain on the surface; they seem to follow a straight line. Yet in fact America is as many-faceted, and its history as subtle and varied, as human nature itself. The stage on which the great drama was to be played out was full of contrast from the start, with its shadowed landscape, its mountains and wide spaces; and with its mysterious races of men. Here came people who were heirs of all that is rich and strange in Western civilization. No prophet could have foretold the result of this mingling and confrontation. But anyone could have suspected that the outcome would be something other than the pallid, one-dimensional tale which the schoolbooks long unfolded.

Howard Mumford Jones captures in his title the wonder men felt at the New World’s discovery. His subtitle, “American Culture, the Formative Years,” ac-

curately states his theme. He sets out to appraise the various currents that gave to American life its atmosphere and quality from the fifteenth into the nineteenth century. It is a serious and immensely learned book. Although it goes back to the great sources; it also takes into account the vast literature of contemporary American studies. Enough detail is given, with enough quotations from little-known records, to make the substance of Professor Jones’s argument dense. And the argument itself introduces at almost every turn surprises and fresh insights.

In two ways the author enlarges the familiar perspective. First, he gives to the long period between Columbus and the Declaration of Independence its proper weight. Nearly 300 years were to pass before the young Republic took form; even the brave but feeble beginnings at Jamestown were to be more than a century in the preparation. In all this time the character of America was being formed. It did not wait for the coming of Franklin, Adams, and Jefferson.

Secondly, Mr. Jones widens our gaze by giving importance to strains of European culture that the traditional views have subordinated almost completely to Puritanism and eighteenth-century rationalism. If the American was the child of the Reformation, he was also the child of the Renaissance, with its wilder, more turbulent note. He was the heir of the classical tradition, both Roman and Greek. He knew the gentle Richard Hooker and Montesquieu. Mr. Jones makes us see that he also knew—more intimate-

## An Old Embarrassment

By Helen Copeland

LAST year’s toad down in the steaming earth  
blinks alert as spring roots finger through  
the cavity that fits his pale thin skin.  
Shuddering he humps the leaf mould up  
and wobbles free  
to throb in a dapple eye of sun.

So tickled out of hiding  
the buried memory of an old chagrin  
in the quiet muster of an innocent day  
will shiver up, a smirk from jaw to jaw,  
and squat  
in the half-light of the mind.

ly than we had suspected—Machiavelli.

The cultural historian is inevitably tempted to see connections when only accident or fad may be at work. The pageantry of Renaissance life may have been directly imported to America by Columbus and Cortez; its style sounds unmistakably in passages from the early explorers. But are we really to assume (as Mr. Jones seems to suggest) that the American millionaire of the late nineteenth century, copying the French chateau or the Italian palace, was acting under the same impulses and within the same tradition? We can speak of "merchant princes" in contemporary America, but the analogy can hardly be taken seriously. Nor is there more than a superficial resemblance between the Renaissance man and the typical American who turned his hand to all kinds of trades and pursuits.

The classical element in American culture—visible in the architecture of so many of its public buildings, in the rhetorical style of its statesmen, in the concept of duty and citizenship in the generation that founded the Republic—seems more directly related to the main influences of American life. This was not a passing fashion, but a way of looking at the world derived from an awakening to classicism still fresh and potent. Europe may be said to have discovered at the same time the New World and the world of antiquity. The consequences of this intermingling make a fascinating chapter of cultural history.

A culture like our own may be viewed as the inheritor of diverse strains from the older civilization of Europe; or it may be viewed as a new amalgam which at various moments of its history, for obscure reasons, selects and copies elements out of the past. Mr. Jones takes a middle ground. "The Old World," he says, "projected into the New a rich, complex, and contradictory set of habits, faces, practices, values and presuppositions; and the New World accepted, modified or rejected them or fused them with new inventions of its own."

To follow this method is to see America in close relationship to the European civilization from which it sprang; it is to be reminded that the Atlantic had from the beginning two shores, the currents from each acting and interacting upon the other. It is to see, also, that America had a clear life and destiny of its own. The world of the sixteenth-century explorers was indeed new. In the end its own characteristics—like the sense of space which Mr. Jones develops sensitively in his chapter on the American landscape—were to transform all it had received. But the residues, the persistent strains and the memories that would not be put down, added richness and color to the fabric, as they make this volume lively and constantly revealing.

## No Place Like Home in the City

***The Urban Complex: Human Values in Urban Life*, by Robert C. Weaver (Doubleday, 297 pp. \$4.95), explores what government is doing to try to meet the phenomenon of urbanization. Robert A. Low is chairman of the Buildings Committee of the New York City Council.**

By ROBERT A. LOW

SOME 70 per cent of the people of the United States live in 1 per cent of the land area, and the concentration of our population in metropolitan areas is continuing at a striking pace.

The dramatic urbanization of American life has prompted many planners and social scientists to analyze the phenomenon. Perhaps the most noteworthy of these efforts is that of the French geographer Dr. Jean Gottmann, who described the urbanization of our northeastern seaboard from Maine to Virginia in *Megalopolis*.

But government response to the challenge of urbanization has been slow, whether at the federal level, where Congress still hesitates to act on the creation of a department concerned with urban

affairs, or at the local level, where a multiplicity of political jurisdictions continues to hamper efforts to deal with problems that are metropolitan or even regional in scope.

Only a handful of government officials have spoken with perception about the problem. One of these, Robert C. Weaver, who is administrator of the Housing and Home Finance Agency, has compiled and brought up to date in *The Urban Complex: Human Values in Urban Life* material from articles and lectures published over the last decade setting forth the challenges of urbanization and what the government is trying to do to meet them. His emphasis is on housing and urban renewal, fields in which Dr. Weaver's credentials are excellent. Today he is the highest federal official concerned with urban problems; he has also served in government positions at the state level—as New York State Rent Administrator—and at the local level—as chairman of New York City's Housing and Redevelopment Board. Robert Weaver has frequently been mentioned as a possibility for the Cabinet post should Congress create the long-awaited Department of Urban and Community Development.

In this volume his essays explore slum

**The Printed Image:** In the heyday of engraving writers complained of the competition from a medium that served as journalism and even as story-telling. In Jean Adhémar's *Graphic Art of the Eighteenth Century* (McGraw-Hill, \$6.95) we see also the savage satire of Gillray and Goya, the realism of Hogarth, the pastoral prettiness of Watteau and Moreau le Jeune.



"Beer Street," by William Hogarth.



"The Gardens of Marly,"  
by Moreau le Jeune.