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benefits of material culture. This means that justice cannot be considered a purely human concept, and that it cannot be administered by purely human means. Left to themselves, the mortals cannot establish and maintain a just and stable society. With the help of the gods, old and new, justice becomes known and can be practiced.

As you will leave the theatre tomorrow you will be convinced that justice has been done, and that it can be done again. You will feel that you have been present during one of the great moments of human history, when God taught men how to judge rightly and when men with divine guidance began to administer justice. May this moment not be forgotten, and may mankind continue to enjoy this precious gift of God: Justice among Men.

Notes on Welcome House

By PEARL S. BUCK, 1914

WELCOME HOUSE really began half a century ago in Asia. There I saw the children whom white men had left behind them in China, India, Indonesia, and wherever they had gone as traders and colonial rulers. Even lonely missionary men had left a few, secretly and unknown, usually, to their families and boards. In the colonial countries the numbers of half-white children were very large and the older the colony the more there were of them. Some of my childhood playmates had been the mixed children, and I used to suffer with them even then, because they were unhappy and solitary, since neither white nor Asian accepted them and they had no place. Yet they were almost invariably children of superior beauty and intelligence. The geneticist, Dr. George Snell, has written a monograph on the subject of mixed peoples, and he says that a hybrid people has always a higher average intelligence and a beauty greater than is possessed by the so-called "pure" races. The highest civilizations, he says, have come from the mixed peoples. The people of the United States, he points out, are certainly a mixed people, which may account for their energy and achievements. The difference between American and Asian is not greater than the difference between Swede and Italian.

Later in my teens I went to school in Shanghai and there had as my friends the family of a distinguished white American educator who had married an equally fine Chinese lady. Their children were far above average and yet as their close friend I knew how unhappy they were at heart, not because of their parentage but because of the injustice which their kind must suffer.

I did not expect to find the white-Asian children here in the United States, and after I came here to live I did not see them anywhere. But six years ago, I learned something I did not know. There *are* American-Asian children here in our country; while they do not exist in anything like the numbers that they did in the colonial countries, they are here. Although these children are Americans by birth, yet they have a hard time and especially if they are abandoned by their natural parents. Why? Because the average child-welfare and adoption agency feels that it is impossible to place them for adoption. Most agencies will not even accept them. "We consider them our number one problem," a well-known

agency said to me a few years ago. "They are a greater problem for adoption than the Negro children," another agency said. "We do not even accept them for adoption," another well-known agency in the Middle West said, "for we cannot place them."

One reason, of course, that they could not place American-Asian children was because of the theory, now happily breaking down, that a child must be placed in a home exactly of his own religious and racial background. Many an American child has remained an orphan because of this theory. Yet surely parents are born with child-loving hearts, whatever their race or religion, and the child should be placed according to more profound theories of love and understanding than color and creed.

None of this was in my mind, however, six years ago. It was forced on me in the least expected way—by a baby. A letter came to me one Christmas time from a faraway agency, saying that they had a baby whom they could not get adopted. His natural mother was a young American white girl and his father an East Indian. Neither family wanted the baby, although he was of high intelligence. Indeed, the agency considered him the finest child they had ever had and they were reluctant to do what now seemed necessary—place him in a Negro orphanage because he was brown. They had no prejudice against Negroes, they hastened to say, but they did not feel it right to put a child into a situation of prejudice which he might escape, for, actually, he was Caucasian on both sides. Why had they come to me? They had tried in every State in the Union to find people to adopt him, seeking the co-operation of as many agencies, and all had said they could do nothing. They had even approached the Indian Embassy, who said they had many thousands of such children in India and felt that this child, having been born in the United States, was not their problem. An Indian lecturer had passed through the town and the agency had gone to him to ask for advice. He said, "Write to Pearl Buck."

What did I do? I got on the telephone to every Indian I knew and to everyone interested in India to ask if anybody wanted a fine little half-Indian baby boy. Nobody did. I consulted my family and they were unanimous in agreeing with me—we would take him ourselves, since January the first, only two weeks away, was the deadline for the agency and after that he would be put into the Negro orphanage. Once we had him, we could solve his problem with care. We were too old, my husband and I, to adopt a baby. This baby needed younger parents who would see him through. Besides, one baby would not be hard to place happily, we felt sure.

Within a few days the one baby was two. A half-Chinese baby suddenly had nowhere to go. He was at a hospital, deserted by both parents. Well, one might as well be two. No agency wanted him, either. We went to the hospital and brought him home.

Now I had really to face the situation. So there were these children in my own country, too, and my country was just like all the others—it did not want them! One difference I find between myself and my fellow Americans: I love my country with a fierce and jealous love which they cannot understand because they have always lived here and take much that means America to me as a matter of course. But nothing that is American is a matter of course to me. I put the Constitution and the Bill of Rights into my spiritual life. I believe in them, not just to know but to practice. The inscription on the Statue of Liberty is sacred to me. I suffer when Americans are mean-spirited and prejudiced and deny their country by

un-American traits. To me a man or woman who practices prejudice and injustice toward his fellow man is a traitor just as much as if he were a Communist and wanted to overthrow our Government. For by being un-American in mind and practice he is trying to overthrow our Government even as the Communist is. Our American ideals are the highest that I know, and for me must be put into practice in order that they may live and light the world.

Therefore I could not bear to see these wonderful American-Asian children without a chance for home and happiness. Like the hybrid rose and hybrid corn, they have rare qualities, so rare that the waste was intolerable. I made a research of my own into their status here and to my horror found that it was no better than in colonial Asia. They were not wanted and certainly not appreciated. Their mixed origin was considered an insuperable handicap.

My love for my country could not accept this attitude and my faith in my fellow Americans denied it. Maybe not all Americans could appreciate these babies, but surely some could. I must find the ones who could.

Where better than in my own community? I live in a rural region where the farmers and small-town folk are the population. Of late years others have come to belong to our community, too, people of achievement and distinction from various fields. Our region is convenient to two great cities, and so we have these various elements. Yet I went first to the people who have always lived here, the Pennsylvania Dutch, the Mennonites, new and old, and the English-blooded Quakers. They are our farmers and our business men. I told them about the babies and said,

"I should like to find these children wherever they are in our country and help them to be adopted. I don't want to set up an institution or an orphanage, for children belong in families. Maybe I can persuade families around here to take one or two. But I don't want to do this unless you want these children in our community."

Our good general storekeeper, a stout Pennsylvania Dutchman and a respected leader in our community, said,

"We not only want them—we would be proud to have them."

With such endorsement, a fine Pennsylvania Dutch couple, twenty years younger than we were and much loved in the community, the father a teacher in the high school, took our two babies. We helped them to move into a big farmhouse, and one by one they took nine American-Asian children varying in age from four months to fifteen years.

It did not go so fast as that, of course. We could never have managed Welcome House, as we call it, so easily had not two other neighbors helped us. They were Kermit Fischer and his wife, Margaret. Kermit is a rising young industrialist with a world-wide mind and experience. He runs his precision works factory successfully on a profit-sharing basis. That is the sort of man he is. Kermit came forward to help buy the house and help with the children's support. A high school teacher does not have enough money for nine children and a couple of his own by birth. We helped to set up the enlarged household in the big house. Kermit's employees were wonderful. They gave money, they helped to get the house in shape, they mended roofs and painted walls and put in the fire escape, while Kermit arranged the mortgage and gave substantial sums himself toward upkeep.

It now began to be evident to us that we had to face the problem whole. There

were many more than these nine children. We were beginning to get letters asking if we could take more, most of them newborn babies, or babies soon to be born. We sat down, Kermit, Margaret, my husband and I, and we decided that we must do a good job. We would set up a real adoption agency for these babies. By that time another of the babies was already in my house. I had been to Chicago on a business trip and while there had been importuned by an agency to take a tiny half-Japanese boy. Why not? By this time I was reckless. I met him at the station where the agency brought him to me and I was enchanted by his instant smile when he saw me. Evidently we had met before, so far as he was concerned. I took him in my arms, and he was my own grandson, so far as I was concerned. I kept him for five months, before I found his adoptive parents.

This baby was our first adopted baby. I wondered how to get adoption started in our community. One night I had to make a speech and as I looked over the well-dressed, well-fed audience, I thought to myself, "Surely some young and loving couple want our baby." So before I began my speech I put the question to the audience. I told them about our baby, waiting for parents. Next day I had a letter from the wife of a young Presbyterian minister. They had one child, a son of five. The father had been wounded in the war; there could be no more birth children. Could they have the baby? Of course we had to get acquainted, but in due course they took the baby with love and joy. Before I let him go I said to the young father,

"Have you realized that it is possible sometime, in some community, that you may not be accepted by a church because of this baby?"

He said gravely, "I have thought of that, but we want the baby."

A happy ending to the story is that three years later when he applied for a certain church the answer came, "We have had two young ministers apply, both equally acceptable to us. But because you have taken a half-Japanese boy as your own son, you are the one we want."

Somehow, after that, it was not hard to find parents for the babies. Now we have a lengthening waiting list. My faith in Americans is renewed with every adoption.

But I am getting ahead of my story again.

If we were going to be an adoptive agency for the placing of American-Asian children, we must do it right. Kermit and I went to Harrisburg to talk to the Department of Child Welfare and tell them what we wanted to do. They were sympathetic, a fine group of people, but doubtful. Were there really these children? They wanted to look into the reality of the need. They would write to all the State agencies in the United States and find out.

For we were asking for a big job. We wanted a charter which would give us the right to receive children, American-Asian children, from all over the United States and to place them equally widely. Agencies are usually very local, or at best regional. And that is another fault in our child adoption laws. Many babies do not get adopted because agencies place only in a county or a State and they do not co-operate, so that if one agency cannot place a child he stays in a foster home or an orphanage, for the rest of his childhood days and is put out into the world, half-educated and ill-prepared, at sixteen or eighteen, often to become a lost person, a juvenile delinquent. I should like to see research done on the relation between

juvenile delinquency and the child put out at sixteen or eighteen by orphanages and agencies.

The reply from the agencies everywhere was overwhelming. They could do little or nothing for the American-Asian child, and certainly the need was great in terms of such children. They do not exist in extremely large numbers but they are our most needy American children, when abandoned by their natural parents. We got our charter.

The next job was to set up a board of good citizens, able and willing to work. We have had such a board from the first. Not all of them stayed by us. We do not have a perfect community, wonderful as this community is. Most of our people are generous and co-operative. But we have the other kind, too, as all communities do. Two or three Board Members could take the criticisms which the ungenerous and small-minded always make. One woman, when confronted with a die-hard old man was shaken when he said, "If any of those damned half-breed children marries one of my grandchildren, I will see you goddamned to hell." Since he was a man of some power, she feared him and persuaded her husband to be prudent with her.

Another young woman, not yet secure enough in her own position in the community belied her generous heart by allowing herself to be troubled by a few of her own Junior League sisters when they asked, "What will you do if one of your children wants to marry one of the Welcome House children?" She tried bravely enough. She said, "Because I give money to help and because the children come and play with mine doesn't mean they have to marry them." Yet the seed of fear was planted and she withdrew, taking her husband with her.

These are the only ones. The rest are a loyal, stout-hearted group. Our president is Oscar Hammerstein, and his loyal mate is his wife Dorothy. Both are dearly beloved in our community and highly respected. The wife of one of our county judges is on the Board, and so are our surgeon and his wife, and my neighbor, a famous minister and his wife. Our treasurer is a businessman whose like I have never seen, a magician with raising funds, and his wife is at his side. Our Board is made up of couples—husbands and wives. If, for some reason, one or the other cannot belong, as for example, the county judge, who feels he must not belong to any organization in his position of being neutral and impartial, yet we count on his advice and wisdom. Our judges, both in the county and in other places where we have placed children, are wonderful men. My estimation of American local and State courts has risen sky high as a result of working with them. They have been unfailingly just and sympathetic with our children.

But our community is wonderful at heart. Our pediatrician takes care of the children as her contribution—not only of our families but also of our incoming and outgoing babies. Three dentists care for the children's teeth as a contribution, one of them an orthodontist. Some of the stores take ten percent off for our purchases. Other stores have given us furniture needed for the houses. The schools are wonderful, too. The superintendents and teachers give their time and their encouragement and their personal interest to children who come to us neglected and far behind in their school work. I give my unalloyed appreciation and gratitude to our public schools.

We have fourteen children in our two families. These are for the most part our older children, who came to us too late for adoption, or too early, before our

agency was begun. Our second family lives in a small near-by town, not on a farm, and has five children. All other children have been adopted, even some of the older ones. Now of course we take it for granted that any child can be adopted if we look hard enough for the right family. We have a tiny boy who came to us as a spastic, a mild case, thank God, and the cerebral palsy center is generously helping him, free and for love. We hope to get him adopted when he is on his way, for we are told that there are parents waiting to take children with cerebral palsy. Our baby, half Chinese, is adorable, mentally healthy, lovable and loving. How sad to be abandoned at birth, left without home and family, and be a spastic too! What comfort for us that we found him!

How do we support Welcome House? We just ask people for money, by mail and face-to-face. Most of them don't give it to us, but enough do; so we manage. Our treasurer thinks up ways to earn money in the community. The community chest helps one of our families. Dorothy Hammerstein puts on a fashion show. The wonderful women in our community run an excellent thrift shop and turn in a monthly sum which is precious beyond its weight in money, because it represents hours that busy mothers and professional women somehow spare to help in what has become a community adventure. Others help in the office with the mailing and records.

Our children, with their American blood, have also in their ancestry Japanese, Siamese, Guamanian, Chinese, Korean, Indian, and Filipino blood. They are lovely to look at and nearly always above average in intelligence, and the blood of Asia has put into their natures a gentleness which is very lovable indeed.

How are they received in the communities into which they go? Kindly and with love and as other children are received! Three times only have we had any report of prejudice, even on a small scale, and we like to have parents tell us, for it is our duty to help them meet any such problems. I usually go myself and talk with the teachers and the ministers and help to enlist their aid, and I talk with the family where the prejudice exists. Sometimes someone else can do it better, and then he or she goes.

But what about adolescence? Are these children accepted with teen-age groups? We have had no difficulties. Our older boy, now nineteen, and a volunteer in the armed services, had more girls interested in him than the average boy has. He is a handsome fellow and a good athlete. Our oldest girl, now seventeen, is very pretty and sweet and she has plenty of dates. We introduce them, too, to other American-Asians.

Part of our job is to have our children meet fine people from Asia, in order that they may be proud of their ancestry from that part of the globe. A delightful young Chinese couple regularly spend their summer vacation with us and give much time to the children. In one of two permanent families a young Chinese scientist boards, and his influence on the children is excellent and they are devoted to him.

One of the valuable by-products of Welcome House is something that I never thought of when we began the work. It is the effect that it is having in Asia. Somehow or other, news about Welcome House has gone all over Asia. We have visitors from various countries who want to see the children because they have heard about it. Communist propaganda tells them that Americans hate Asians, and they want to see if we do treat the children with Asian blood as our own. They

go away heartened and encouraged. Not long ago, for example, a young Vietnamese came to visit and see for himself. He broadcasts to his country for our State Department and he wanted to tell his countrymen about Welcome House and what an American community is doing.

A lady in our community came by one day and said that she had heard of Welcome House but now felt she must know all about it because, when she had come down from New York a few days before, a gentleman from Pakistan sat near her and they fell into a conversation. She asked him what he wanted to see in the United States. He said, "First I want to see Welcome House. Do you know about it?" She said she could not tell him, that she lived near by but didn't know much about it. Hence her immediate visit!

Our hope, of course, is that Welcome House will not need to exist forever. We hope that all adoption agencies will believe that American-Asian children can be adopted because there are people who want them. They must, of course, be willing to place children with people who want them, whether or not those people "match" in race and religion. When the "matching" theory is abandoned, then social workers will not rule children's lives by it. Certainly all care must be taken in placing any child, and our agency has social workers who exercise every skill. But their criteria are from the human sources of experience and common sense to which textbook knowledge is helpful but secondary. Older social workers of sense and heart will know what I mean. Already we see the change. One well-known agency, for example, never accepted an American-Asian child. They heard of Welcome House and asked if we would take such a child whose mother had applied to them. We said we would. We placed that child with a fine young couple. We took two more from that agency, in time, and when the fourth child came we suggested that they search the lists of their waiting parents, always long, and see if some young couple did not want an American-Asian baby, whatever their own blood was. We said we would take the baby if they could not find such a couple. Thus encouraged, they did find such a couple. I doubt whether that agency will feel it needs to send us any more children.

I look forward to the day when there will be no more need for a special agency to place American-Asian children for adoption, or perhaps we shall just exist to be a reference agency, having lists of approved couples who specially want American-Asian children. It is our unusual qualification that our Board members, most of them, do have a knowledge of Asian life and people, and appreciate the value of such knowledge—or they are just warmhearted, big-minded people.

It will be wonderful to see the job finished, and to be no longer needed. That time may be a long way off; yet Americans are surprising folk. Once we see the light we can move with amazing speed.

Meanwhile Welcome House carries on.