

# A Word With You

WHEN we say "times have changed," it is difficult to say how much the *times* have changed, and how much *we* have changed. And when it's the times that have changed, we are not always objective when we say "the old way was better."

I recognize this, but still make the assertion that life on the streets of New York is not as good and interesting as it used to be.

True, some things have not changed. When I was a youngster and went downtown, it amazed me to see so many people moving around so fast, and I wondered what was happening. Now it seems like an ordinary pace to me, and I wonder why I thought they were rushing. In this respect *I* have changed.

But I can also see where the times have changed. People used to live on the streets more than they do nowadays. There was more lingering, more chatting, more children playing, more things to see and do. Yes, it's partly that I have changed, as I don't frequent the streets as much as formerly — but as I look around, I mostly see just other hurried worried people going from one place to another.

Gone are the pushcart peddlers with their varied and unguaranteed wares, and we are told it's better this way — but they made the streets a more interesting place to visit. No longer does the man with a dozen hats on his head come around and say "I cash

clothes." Newsboys no longer go through the streets shouting "Extra!" Even the scissors-grinder is gone. But the one I miss most of all is the hurdy-gurdy man grinding out tunes from the operas — a sure sign that spring was here.

The remnant of this gay crowd is rather forlorn — a Good Humor cart in the summer, a roast chestnut man in the winter.

Well, maybe we've progressed beyond all that. It is true that the towns and cities of less "advanced" countries have more life on the streets. But its extinction seems to me an unpleasant price to pay, and I can't quite accept that it *is* progress. The decrease of social life on the streets due to increased crime certainly does not bespeak progress.

Around Columbia University the convivial street life of students has declined due to the ominous threat of crime lurking around the corners. Meanwhile, the Economics Department is busy keeping up to date on the latest fad, mathematical economics. They may not be able to solve the crime on their doorstep, but they will be able to make good graphs and charts on it!

One prominent economics professor has resigned from Columbia because of the over-emphasis on mathematics. But, says the administration, we're just keeping up with the times. Progress! Me, I'll settle for *Trovatore* on the hurdy-gurdy. —Robert Clancy

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The community, by its presence and activity, gives rental value to land, therefore the rent of land belongs to the community and not to the landowners. Labor and capital, by their combined efforts, produce the goods of the community — known as wealth. This wealth belongs to the producers. Justice requires that the government, representing the community, collect the rent of land for community purposes and abolish the taxation of wealth.

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