

Freedom

ANARCHIST FORTNIGHTLY

"Self-government is better than good government."

Sir Henry CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN.

"Good men must not obey the laws too well."

Ralph Waldo EMERSON.

Vol. 9 No. 12

June, 12th, 1948

Threepence

FAILURE OF POLITICS

A FEATURE of political life which has come into prominence once again in the countries of Western Europe and also in America and the colonies is the tendency of public opinion to turn once again towards the Right.

Immediately after the war, the political barometer seemed set for the Left. Labour, Socialist, or Socialist-Communist majorities were shown in many countries where such things had been unknown for many years or had never been known before.

But the weather has changed, and the hand was turned once more towards the Right. In Italy a right-wing majority was returned in the recent elections, in France, de Gaulle's six million votes at the Municipal Elections are a sign of a forthcoming Parliamentary swing away from the Left, in America the Republicans and the more reactionary section of the Democratic Party are steadily gaining ground, while in South Africa and Ireland Right-wing groups have won heavily in recent elections. Even the traditional Labour stronghold of Australia is affected, and in England the bye-election results, as well as the investigations of recent opinion polls have shown a steadily growing turning away from Labour towards the Conservatives. For various reasons, opinion polls cannot be taken as giving a wholly accurate view of what might actually happen if an election took place, but it cannot be ignored that, while in recent polls the percentages expressing support for the Conservatives have varied between 42½%

and 49%, those giving support for Labour have varied between 33% and 42%.

Reasons for the Swing

The reasons for this swing are not far to seek. The workers and the lower middle classes imagined that Left-wing governments would solve their economic problems, would save them from the varying degrees of serfdom which war-time conditions imposed upon them, and preserve them from the dangers of another war. After some years of left-wing power, they find that their economic problems have grown steadily worse, that the promised alleviations of living conditions have not materialised, that bureaucracy and regulations still restrict their lives almost as much as ever, and that the danger of another war in which they will be conscripted victims has increased. And beyond this, they see that in those parts of Europe which pretend to be most extremely Socialist, Russia and her satellite states, there exists a totalitarianism as rigorous as anything that Fascism or Nazism produced before the war.

The Right have made full use of these sources of public discontent, and promise that they will supply the deficiencies of the Left, will produce economic security, will abolish regimentation, will prevent war and save

Europe from totalitarianism. And the indications are that a very great many of the ordinary people in all countries are falling for this propaganda.

But before they accept that the Right will necessarily rectify the failures of the Left political parties, the workers should reflect why some years ago they turned towards the Left. Precisely because the Right had regimented them, had failed to give them economic security, or to prevent war, and had subjected them to the danger or the actuality of totalitarian government—the very faults which they now—quite rightly—find in the Left as well.

Failure of Politics

The fact is that it is foolish to blame either wing of the political movement for these failures. They are faults inherent in the political system itself. Capitalism, whether it be of the state or private variety, will always suffer from economic contradictions which prevent even elementary security to the masses. Nationalism will always breed war, which is moreover a necessity of an economic system that has failed to solve its consumption problem by common ownership. War, the interests of the governing classes, and the very nature of political administration, will always necessitate regimentation and conscription, the substance if not the outward form of totalitarianism, so long as they are allowed to exist.

At present, since they are mentally trapped in political conceptions, the peoples of the world feverishly obey the swing of the pendulum that carries them from Right to Left and back again, swinging between two apparently contradictory movements whose basic ideas are fundamentally similar and which have the same results in practice.

Their only salvation is to escape from the political cycle, and turn towards a rational system of administration, in

The New Health Service Examined

ON July 5th the new National Health Service will come into force, and on the same day the National Insurance Scheme. It is possible to make some estimate of how it will work, and since it is a positive manifestation of reforming activity it serves to illustrate both the merits and defects of reformism. In this article I am mainly concerned with the National Health Service but it is important to realise that the new Service is intimately bound up with, is in fact dependant on, the Insurance Scheme which comes into operation on the same day.

The Idea of Insurance

The aim of an insurance scheme is a good and sound one; it is to try and spread the burden of individual dis-

asters over the community as a whole and so mitigate their effect for the individual. Illness is such a disaster, old age and the concomitant inability to work (i.e., earn a living) another. If every member of a community makes a contribution a common fund can be created from which those incapacitated by illness or old age can draw in time of need. The conception is basically one of mutual aid, and many of the old sick clubs had no other aim. This aim has been fairly thoroughly adulterated by the modern insurance companies which operate in the capitalist way with interest, and have become immense financial powers. Every insured worker knows furthermore how quickly a few non-

(Continued on page 8)

HAMBURG POLICE RAID ANARCHISTS

From a Correspondent.

THE *Kulturfoederation Freixer Sozialisten und Antimilitaristen*, one of the liveliest libertarian organisations in Germany to-day, has its own premises in Hamburg, and is the meeting place for the Federation and its strong and active Youth group. The federation publishes its own bulletin and is in contact with other groups and a wide circle of comrades in all zones of Germany.

On the night of May 27th, the German police raided the rooms of the Federation and home of Carl Langer, its founder and secretary.

Carl Langer is a known Anarchist with an outstanding record in the movement which dates back to 1906. He has always been an active fighter, even during the Hitler regime when he worked in the underground movement inside Germany, and it is significant that the *Kulturfoederation* of Hamburg was one of the first German libertarian organisations to appear after the collapse of the Third Reich.

In a letter of protest to the Police following the raid, Carl Langer wrote: "I regard the search on the 27/28th May as a high-handed act. In the Nazi Reich a citizen was easy game for the Gestapo. These kind of methods should cease; they are a mockery of so-called democracy..."

No one knowing the true composition of the German police force, harbouring as it does notorious Nazis and neo-Nazis, will be surprised at this police action, which met with little success since they found no "incriminating evidence". But it is interesting that it should have taken place a few days after the publication of the Manifesto of the Anarchist conference in Paris, at which the German and Austrian organisations and groups were represented by I.O. delegates.

Was the raid carried out with the connivance of the British authorities? And what did M.I.5 and the Special Branch know about it?

The Problem of the Soil

World Population Increase of 150 Million Since 1938

Sir John Boyd Orr, the retiring Director General of the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization, recently drew attention to the dangers inherent in the exhaustion of soil. This is probably the first time a great public figure has made public reference to a process which many agricultural scientists believe to be more pressing, as far as human survival is concerned, than political questions, not even excluding war.

In 1936 Sir John Orr's report on "Food, Health and Income" did more to establish in the minds of administrators the direct connection between income levels and degree of health (or ill-health) than any other work. If he can bring the problem of soil erosion squarely before the thinking public in the same way he will have achieved something of immense importance.

Briefly, Sir John Orr's argument was as follows. Despite the war, the population of the world has increased by 150 millions since 1938. There are 12 millions more in Europe alone. World population is increasing by 20 to 25 millions every year. Hence there is an urgent necessity to increase food production throughout the world. And this involves the successful tackling of the related problems of soil depletion.

So far the Food and Agricultural Organization has been content to try and raise food production by ironing out difficulties which exist in capitalist methods of distribution. It has not sought to promote production under any other stimulus than that of profit. Sir John Orr is about to retire from his post as Director General

of F.A.O., and it is possible that his work there has forced him to recognise that the problem of increased food production, and of stemming soil depletion, demands a more rational stimulus to production than that provided by the profit motive. His studies on nutritional levels and income levels in 1936 laid bare the inequalities in class society; studies in world food production can scarcely have failed to expose the fetters which capitalism imposes. Sir John Orr is a scientist of distinction; he is not by any means a revolutionist, but he is clearly a man of considerable social vision; once again it looks as if a close study of a fundamental problem will force an anarchist solution on him. In 1936 he put forward the view that the only possible nutritional aim was not as heretofore a diet such that men could keep alive on, but one which would give full health. Since his studies showed that only the upper income groups involving about 20 per cent of the population reached this level the extent of the social change required was obvious. Let us, in conclusion, see where the problem of food production and soil depletion leads us.

Markets and Needs

With the population 150 millions greater than ten years ago and increasing at the rate of twenty millions odd each year the need for increased food production is manifest even if one leaves out of account the fact (officially recognised by Bevin) that half the world's population do not get enough to eat. But in our world food is a commodity to be bought and sold like anything else, and it therefore can only be produced if there is the prospect of selling it—if there is a market for it. Unfortunately those who need it most have no money and so they do not constitute a market. It is cash not needs which stimulates production to-day.

Furthermore, that problem cannot be solved by simple charity, by giving food to the starving. Even when there is an "excess", a "glut" (the irony of these terms usually passes unnoticed) of food—wheat, fish, coffee—it cannot be given away, but must be destroyed or used as fuel. Such an excess is a danger to the existing price levels. If the food were given away general food prices would fall, and so charity is out of the question. And the problem is more serious than that of mere profits and greed. If the price of agricultural products fall, not only do farmers lose their profits, but they lose their incentive to grow more food. Lower prices in practice means the ruin of agriculture with less being grown instead of more.

Scarcity therefore is inextricably tied to the profit mode of production. Profits need high prices and high prices need scarcity. Increased production on any adequate scale requires the destruction of this vicious circle. The needs of the world's population must take the place of a "market" as the stimulus to food production.

Soil Erosion

The problem of soil depletion derives from the same capitalist basis. Factors like rent, lack of farming capital, and the eternal need of peasant farmers to con-

sider the immediate questions without reference to the future, all make for a process of getting as much out of the land as possible. Such a process leads to exhaustion of soil which is not only wasteful in that it precludes the reaping of future crops from the exhausted fields, but the total loss of productive soil itself. For when soil is exhausted and no vegetation will grow on it, there is nothing to bind it together and it is blown away by the wind, exposing the underlying rock. This is soil erosion and it is the cause of the dust bowls in the U.S.A. and elsewhere.

The causes of soil erosion are several, but they are all derived from the profit motive, the market economy of capitalism, and they could all be eliminated in an economy based on production for need. Deforestation, the cutting down of trees without a parallel replanting, exposes the soil to winds and alters such factors as rainfall and surface drainage. The exhaustion of the same ground by repeated cropping has already been mentioned. Finally, there is the ploughing up of pasture lands, which often have only a very thin layer of soil overlying the rock, for arable cultivation. All these processes are going on all over the world. As long ago as 1937, in two articles published in the *Times*, Elspeth Huxley drew attention to the danger of soil erosion not only in Africa, and America, but also in Asia (where the disastrous floods are in part attributable to soil loss) and in the Soviet Union. Erosion is favoured by the large scale mechanised farming fostered by the five-year plans.

These extensive methods of cultivation aim to draw crops with a minimum of expense in labour costs, rent, etc. A more intensive cultivation, involving more labour perhaps but rewarded by immensely increased yields per acre, has the reverse effect, that of creating soil. (See Kropotkin, *Fields, Factories and Workshops*.) It does not suit the agricultural economics of capitalism, but it is suited to rational culture which takes into account men's needs, both immediate and in the future. The future lies therefore with food production for needs; but the road to such a future is blocked by the irrational mass of capitalism and its money market economy.

J.H.

THE HOUSING PROBLEM IN ITALY

ITALY'S housing problem is most grave and pressing. It has been discussed at great length in the last few years, after the destruction caused by the war had considerably worsened it, but the discussion has been led away by the purely political slogan of "Reconstruction" and has remained devoid of any concrete content.

Yet the housing problem is at the root of the crisis of contemporary society, it is the visible materialisation of this crisis. It is enough to go around Italy, visiting towns and villages, looking around the countryside, seeing the places where men are born, multiply and die, and the houses they live in, to realise that our whole social body is in a state of decomposition, and that only the most radical and energetic remedies can cure it.

To-day, we in Italy need twelve million more rooms in order to reach the density of two inhabitants per room that, in our country, is considered tolerable. (In the United States and in Belgium, more than one person per room is thought to be overcrowded.) Since we have a population of 46 millions, which implies 23 million rooms at the rate of two people per room, we have at present only half the number needed.

When we take into account that these figures and the deductions made from them, are statistical, that is to say, they express the overall situation in a calculation of averages, we can get an idea of the actual gravity of the situation, since the position of the working-class houses is, as always, far worse than that of the dwellings of the wealthy.

Vital Statistics

Detailed figures will give you a more precise picture. In a town of between 20,000 and 50,000 inhabitants, 42% of the population live in grossly overcrowded conditions and in a large city 33%.

The situation in Sicily is particularly demonstrative. Of the total of existing houses at Agrigento 55% are overcrowded, at Caltanissetta 50.8%, at Catania 40.7%, at Enna 44.2%, at Ragusa 45.5%, at Siracuse 43.1%, at Messina 34.8%, at Palermo 38.8%, and at Trapani 26.9 per cent.

At Canosa di Puglia the average density is of four people per room, but of the

8,000 rooms existing, 25% are unfit for habitation from the point of view of the stability of the buildings, and 70% uninhabitable according to the existing hygiene byelaws.

The effects of this situation are disastrous. Overcrowding prevents the dwelling from fulfilling its principal function, it ceases to be an environment where fruitful human relationships can unfold, and becomes a dangerous instrument of physical and moral degradation, a vehicle of sickness and death.

The average infantile mortality in Italy in 1946 was 169 per 1,000, while in France where the housing situation is slightly better, it was 110 per thousand.

At Rome deaths amongst children from 0 to 12 years of age represent 25% of the total mortality. At Canosa di Puglia in 1947 deaths of children up to 12 years old were 49.6% of the total mortality.

At Messina the death rate amongst children up to 14 years old was even higher in 1943-4 and equalled 19.5% of the total mortality, rising to an average of 28% from 1945 to 1947, when the extra overcrowding resulting from war destruction began to show its effects.

At Naples, in an enquiry made between 1935 and 1941, of 8,431 children visited 16.8% were found to be suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis, and 11% from non-pulmonary afflictions. In 69% of the cases, the home consisted of a single earth-floored room, in 70% of the cases, the invalid slept in the same room as the family, frequently in the same bed.

At Milan, of 100 families with a T.B. sufferer, 76 live in one or two rooms.

These figures will be enough, since there is no space for more, to show that the house of to-day is a peril to human life. But there is one more important fact to be underlined—the fact that in Italy 33 in every 100 working-class dwellings are overcrowded compared with 8 in every 100 middle and upper class houses.

An Age-Old Phenomenon

This is nothing new. The homes of the poor to-day are little different from those of the slaves of the third century B.C. or from those of the plebians in Imperial Rome. It is a phenomenon which coincides with moments of crisis in the will of man, and with the weakening of his resistance to the State.

The weakening of the sense of independence strengthens the authority of the State. The impulse for direct action declines, regimentation and the bureaucratic spirit triumph, education becomes purely quantitative, culture and art are separated from life, life itself is departmentalised and is thinned out into the channels of abstraction. At the same time the town loses its natural function of physical and spiritual regeneration and becomes a malignant organism, persecuting man in his decadence.

The situation to-day is no new phenomenon but it is worse than ever before, because its effects are more extensive, more dreadful, and, in view of the advances in technique which could be available for us, more absurd. Yet the social organs of to-day, capitalism and the State, are able to do nothing to resolve this desperate crisis. New materials, new constructional processes are of no avail as long as the principles of privilege and authority prevail.

"Free" Enterprise

Capitalism is not building, and cannot build, houses for the underprivileged classes because that sort of investment doesn't guarantee a good return. The proportion of his wages that a worker could afford to pay in rent in 1935 was about 18%. To-day it is only 8 to 10% and is thus totally inadequate, as the larger percentage was in 1935, to be of any use in the competitive building market. The consequence of this fact is that private capital is invested only in upper-class housing and in those types of building that guarantee a good income (blocks of offices, luxury shops, cinemas, etc.), and the poor are forced to find shelter in old and unhygienic buildings, causing still more overcrowding with all its consequences. This causes situations like that in Milan where, despite of the urgent need for 300,000 rooms and its implications—people living in the basements of schools and hospitals, in tuberculous cellars, underneath bombed buildings—capitalist initiative is rebuilding only the city centre when high land

This is the first of two articles written by a young Italian architect who is engaged on the re-planning of the town of Reggio Emilia.

The present article deals with the ghastly housing conditions in Italy to-day and their effect on the health of the people. In the second article the writer will deal with the possibilities and limitations of direct action in the housing field and the problem of urban planning.

values and the character of the buildings guarantee a good investment. Or else situations like that of Messina, at the opposite end of Italy, where, despite the need for 30,000 rooms—which in concrete terms implies people living in caves, in dug-outs, in the open air—capitalist enterprise rebuilds only luxury shops and the sumptuous villas of the war profiteers.

And the State

The State does nothing, and can do nothing, to alter this situation. For the



THE VICTIM. This little ragged Neapolitan boy stands barefoot on the railway ballast waiting for the coins or cigarettes which will supplement the family budget. What future is in store for him? ["Freedom" Photo]

State is the principle of authority—an abstraction masquerading as some thing real, and can have no contact with the one concrete reality—man himself, whom it treats and manipulates as though he were just an ab-

traction. The home is an organism in direct relationship to man. It is his external environment, his affirmation in space. Thus the home cannot have any relationship to the State which recognises man not as an individual but as a number, a fraction of some greater number.

Every time that the State has taken upon itself these relationships, the results have been disastrous. We could look back into history in order to demonstrate the truth of this, we could describe the city under the ferocious autocratic States of ancient Egypt, of Imperial Rome, of the French monarchy, but it suffices to think of any Italian town to-day. Bari, for example, where the State has intervened only to create a sterile centre of monumental edifices for the provincial bureaucracy, a marble façade that hems in and conceals the miserable life of the hovels of the old town. Or Matera, where a top layer of public buildings and churches hides the squalid misery swarming underneath, or Carbonia, Littoria—to cite a case where action was not tied to a pre-existing situation—there the houses built for the workers are mean, inadequate and unhealthy, despite their being formally laid out. These and many similar cases are the result of direct State intervention in the housing problem, but there is another form of intervention, the results of which are certainly no more effective—indirect intervention through the Institute for Public Housing and the municipal administration. The State guarantees these enterprises a subsidy of 50% of the capital and an annual contribution of 3% on the rate of interest. This looks



THE REALITY. One of the hundreds of alleys in Naples in which the poor live in primitive conditions, overcrowded and without sanitation. ["Freedom" Photo]

very helpful but, in the light of fact, it is shown to be futile and for obvious reasons. The number of apartments to be built with the promised assistance is insufficient and will always be, because the State will allow so little for so unimportant an activity as house-building. And whenever the contribution is granted the organisation has to resort for the remaining 50% to private capital which, if it does not demand too high a rate of interest, refuses to invest at all in so unprofitable an activity.

Can Do Nothing

In every case, even when the rusty financial mechanism does work, the administrative bureaucracy is so expensive in its functional slackness, its technical incapacity, its mental laziness, its corruption—that it absorbs any advantages resulting from the State subsidy. The result is that public housing is so limited and costs so much that it cannot be occupied by the people for whom it was intended. It is, moreover, ugly and badly built, for it is not constructed for human beings as they really are, but for the abstract men conceived by the State.

Municipal housing means to-day, those squalid barracks which line monotonously the perimeter of our towns, where people are so miserably engaged. They do not solve the housing problem in either quantity or quality, but they are the greatest contribution that the State can make.

GIANCARLO DE CARLO.

(Trans. by C.W.)

[To be concluded]



THE FACADE. The Central Post Office in Naples, bombastic creation of Fascism, built at the expense of the homeless and the underfed of the back streets. ["Freedom" Photo]

FLASHBACK—6

If we proceed in this way, and analyse the movement which we see growing round us, and try to divine its probable outcome, we must say—with great regret that if the Socialist movement continues on the same lines as it goes on now; if no new ideas as to its real aims and possible sphere of action are brought forward, and spread among the toilers of the soil and workshops—its results will be disappointing to those who expect from it a thorough modification of the present conditions of labour. . . . We have insisted upon the necessity of LOCAL ACTION for solving the great economical problems which have grown ripe during the present century; and we have pointed out that, if in a given country the workmen place their hopes on an elected body of representatives—however honest and earnest the elected—and wait from this body the great economical revolution which has become a necessity; instead of proceeding themselves, in each separate locality, to the immediate transformation of the present economical conditions; if they expect some national reform and forget that each locality must proceed by its own example first, to induce the more backward parts of the nation to follow suit; then the movement will be a failure. It will not realise one-hundredth of the hopes now set upon it. It will soon discourage the masses, and open the way to the bloody reaction of the White Terror.

—FREEDOM, June, 1887.

Dehumanising & Mechanising Men

This is the third article of the series. In the first (*Freedom*, 17/4/48*) we attempted to show that prison reform is doomed to failure because the reformists refuse to face up to certain fundamental facts concerning the relation between the class society and crime. In the second (*Freedom*, 15/5/48*) we dealt with the purpose of prisons. In the present article we are discussing the moral and physical effects of imprisonment and in the final article we shall deal with the question often asked of anarchists: "How would the criminal be dealt with in an anarchist society?"

THE black-maria stops for a few seconds before the massive wooden doors of the prison; they slowly open and the van advances a few yards up to the equally massive iron gates. The wooden doors are closed, the gates then opened and the van with its load of men deprived of rights, and soon to lose their individuality and likes and dislikes, proceeds to the building where it will disgorge its contents to the tender mercies of the reception officer. The first step in the process of what a writer (with prison experience) describes as "dehumanising and mechanising men" is to order the prisoner

* Both issues are still available price 4d. (post free) from Freedom Press.

† Mark Benney in *Gaol Delivery* (Longmans, 1948).

to remove all his clothes and to don the prison grey pocketless flannel suits, the shapeless pants, the ill-fitting, unironed rough shirts, the short grey ties. His finger-prints are taken and his reception bath is over. He waits to be escorted to the cell which is to be his new home. And that moment as the prisoner stands in the central hall of the prison, from which the wings radiate, is vividly described by Mark Benney in his book:

"In such a place the new prisoner, as he stands there . . . wondering which of the several hundred doors now visible to him will later slam behind him, feels a new terror grip him. Pain he was prepared for, discomfort, separation and loneliness; but not this immense apparatus for dehumanising and mechanising men."

This is the essential fact to stress about prisons. One cannot say that the inmates of British prisons are tortured or brutally treated in the purely physical sense. They are simply dehumanised.

In a short article one can hardly do more than enumerate the methods used in this process of dehumanising and mechanising men.

1. *Employment of Prisoners.* No attempt is made in prisons to teach a man a trade. The exception to the rule always exists, and we may be told that in one or two "show prisons" this is done. But the fact remains that according to the latest official statistics (for the year ending March, 1946) of the daily average of 13,507 prisoners available for work, 5,000 were engaged on making mailbags or repairing them, 400 spent their time as pickers and sorters, 2,313 were engaged in domestic service as "cleaners, jobbers, labourers and washers" and all that could be said for the remainder was that their work was less degrading, but certainly

there was no question of learning a trade. It should be noted also that the day's labour is of five hours duration.

2. *Hours of Idleness.* Five hours are spent in the workshop, one hour on exercise. Total six hours. The remaining 18 are spent locked up in a 13 ft. by 7 ft. cell. Where meals are taken in association these hours in the cell are further reduced by perhaps three. "No one at all familiar with prison life," writes Mr. Benney, "can fail to notice that nearly all the mental energies of prisoners go into the re-living of old excitements. In the terrible monotony of the gaol only memories of the past and fantasies of the future are available to whet the enormous hunger of the human soul."

3. *Monotony of the Diet.* We will not list the week's menu in prisons. All we need say is that a prisoner serving a seven-year sentence will have a similar plate of porridge and loaf of bread for breakfast on 1,704 consecutive days and the supper, served at 4.30 p.m. will consist of a pint of cocoa, 8 ozs. of bread, a pat of margarine and twice a week a small piece of cheese. 1,704 pints of cocoa, winter and summer, night after night! Some M.P.'s are afraid that prisoners are being too well treated. Certainly, they are not starved; the calories may be there but so is the monotony. And in the prison budget for 1945 in the section for Maintenance is included Vidualling. The sum spent for the year was £179,000 and the daily average number of prisoners was 14,708. The money spent therefore on feeding a prisoner averages 4/8 per week per head.

4. *The Earnings System.* Obviously it would assist in a man's rehabilitation if he not only learnt a trade but was also paid for the product of his work. But in

(Continued on page 5)

ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM AND DIRECT ACTION

THE principle of anarcho-syndicalism in industry is that of *direct action*. We do not elevate direct action into a creed of itself, as some enthusiasts did in the early days of syndicalism, but consider it as one of the effective means of waging the class struggle. Direct action implies that our propaganda should be carried "to the point of production"—that is to say, precisely where the workers are working and where the means of implementing the proposals of social change are at hand. And that our action should be done by the workers themselves—through strike action and so on—rather than by reliance on delegates and leaders carrying on reform proposals through negotiations with the capitalists, or participation in the local or national governmental machinery.

The anarcho-syndicalist proposals for workers' direct action have been misinterpreted as dual unionism and tending to the creation of "paper unions". This is not the case. Anarcho-syndicalism does not imply the creation of small breakaway bodies without power, for the simple reason that its idea of industrial unionism is one based on the idea of workers' actual participation in decisions affecting them (rather than by representation) in mass meetings on the job; that is to say, by workers' councils, and an anarcho-syndicalist union built on the firm basis of workers' councils can only be a majority industrial organisation or merely a propaganda movement. To draw up a union on paper that does not exist in fact, only confuses the workers by raising the legitimate question: Why doesn't your organisation act? A few workers here and a few there has greater weakness, obviously, than a reformist trade union; the idea of a revolutionary union ought not to be compromised by such a shadow movement. (Here certainly, is a disagreement we have with the I.W.O. of America, an industrial union formed on militant lines in 1905 and which has been a foremost fighter for revolutionary unionism. The I.W.O. has lost its influence but persists in claiming to be still an industrial union. Thus it has entered into contracts and so on to maintain its existence, which it would never have done when it had its solid backing for industrial unionism. Better to admit when there does not exist a basis for an industrial union. The fault is not the organisation's after all, but the workers', in following after political illusions and deserting the harder revolutionary tasks).

The Unofficial Strike Committees

How is it possible to create a revolutionary movement now? It seems clear that we ought on the one hand to announce our break from the paths of reformist trade unionism; to offer a clear-cut alternative. But at the same time this should not appear to be in itself a union, because that it is not and cannot be until it has actual influence on the job. The formation, then, of committees for workers' action and workers' control. In different trades and industries; and with local federations in various districts of all these committees. Sooner or later with the spread of our ideas the committees may have some influence. They may themselves be specifically anarcho-syndicalist; but their aim will be to build an industrial movement not composed of anarchists, but composed of workers generally. The anarchists' task is to keep the politicians out; to object to any would-be leaders (even if they called them-

selves anarchists!) but to urge the workers to rely on their own strength. And so far as the present situation is concerned, it seems as if their task is a simple one—not to create but to co-ordinate. Not to build a new movement—but to appeal to the workers to keep in being those unofficial committees and that unofficial machinery that is already created whenever a strike takes place.

Certainly our people in many cases have to join a trade union, and may do good propaganda work inside the union, although undoubtedly the man who stands outside often makes a far bigger propaganda impression. One can argue for and against on this point (as with the question of permeation in the Army or conscientious objection). But the main point is that whether in the reformist union or not, they should not be with it and accept positions in the trade union hierarchy which are the first step to betrayal and the means by which good militants become bourgeois leaders. The trade union machinery cannot be reformed. It is unwieldy, centralist, a big dues-paying machine, confined in most cases to the narrow craft lines. It is the happy hunting-ground of politicians; it has always been reformist but now it is bound up inextricably with the State machine. And in nationalised industries the bureaucrats are recruited in some part from its ranks. The revolutionary struggle that is already—without aims and ideas—taking place is, amongst other things, against the trade union machinery. Our task is to co-ordinate the unofficial councils into federations fighting for worker's control, an alternative to State ownership and private ownership, an enterprise of the workers and not of bureaucrats or capitalists. Already in many industries some picture of this exists. The workers have a glimmering of the idea of syndicalism. This can easily be perverted by politicians who will claim some sympathy with the idea in order to damn the practice altogether (this has already been seen with the production committees, which are supposedly "controlling" on behalf of the workers together with the capitalists).

The Social Side of an Economic Movement

The organisation we should now set to work to create is a federation of committees in each industry, standing for (and not claiming to actually be) industrial unionism based on workers' councils. This anarcho-syndicalist propaganda movement can take an active part in social affairs. Anarchism is attainable through two means, namely, industrial and municipalist. With the abolition of central government and the State machinery, clearly the local administration of things plays a much larger part. The aim of anarchists should be to support the decentralisation of all social activities and stimulate local endeavour. Actually, municipal ownership was a fundamental of social democracy, but is taking second-place to nationalisation—owing to the tendencies of the age which turn both capitalism and social democracy into totalitarian creeds. Anarcho-syndicalism does not support quite the same sort of municipal ownership, since in place of an elected town council it puts the *commune*, containing all the inhabitants. But it suggests that the communes should be responsible for all social activity, such as the building of houses, schools, &c., the construction of which would be delegated to the syndicates concerned.

Many small communities or communal endeavours can be created within the shell of the capitalist society, and give support to the revolutionary struggle. A small agricultural community in a mining area in time of strike, for instance, might do exceedingly valuable work. Other endeavours than agriculture lend themselves to the community principle—the health services for instance (as shown in the Peckham experiment), education, catering, printing, and possibly others on the co-operative principle. (The co-operative movement itself is certainly an advance on the idea of nationalisation; it is only recently that many of its advocates are beginning to find the distinction).

Moreover the municipal side of our industrial movement has other uses, such as the building of a sense of local solidarity which can better all regulations of price and rent control (some undoubtedly necessary to-day without which the exploiter could run wild, but direct action by resistance or boycott would be a far more effective check on exploitation since there could be no question of legal loopholes). Something of this was seen in the pre-war rent strikes or the post-war squatters. Such spontaneous movements, equally with those on the industrial field, can be

OUR ANCIENT RAILWAYS

SEVERAL conferences have been held during the last few weeks by railmen of different grades. And in every case the arguments of the men have been noticeably directed against the antiquated nature of the equipment, stock and premises with which they have to work, and which are in part responsible for the re-

luctance of workers to enter the industry.

Signalmen, for instance, at a private conference for delegates representing 19,000 members of the Signalmen's section of the National Union of Railwaymen, blamed out-of-date signalling systems on the railways as one of the main causes of accidents.

Coupled with that, however, was the fact that 20,000 signalmen are having to do the work of 25,000, the number needed to adequately man the signal boxes, and this leads to overwork and overstrain which is again a contributory cause of accidents. Instead of working the agreed 44-hours week, most signalmen are now working 12 hours a day for 20 out of every 21 days, hours which in a job requiring constant vigilance and responsibility must be nerve-wracking.

The equipment in the cabins is such that many are lit by oil lamps and scientific devices for ensuring safety and eliminating error as far as possible are sadly lacking.

The annual conference of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen also passed a resolution denouncing as antiquated the safety and sanitary arrangements in locomotive depots and instructing its Executive to press for early reforms.

The President of the Railway Clerks' Association (Percy Morris, M.P.), set the tone for a much more uncritical conference. He denied that railmen are disillusioned with nationalisation and went on to praise the "spirit and manner in which representatives of the Railway Executive have met us."

Unrest at Euston

Whether railmen as a whole are disillusioned is, of course, impossible to say, but a complete stoppage at Euston Station was only averted a fortnight ago by some high-pressure talking by the local union secretary.

linked to a struggle for direct action against the State and capitalists, and for social reconstruction.

No Politics in the Union!

Success on these lines would undoubtedly mean a swoop by all the politicians in an endeavour to cash in. That is the job for Anarchists—to plug the idea for self-reliance, the fact that if the workers can carry through their own emancipation without leaders they can live without government afterwards. Many times such movements have been born and betrayed, sometimes on the very point of complete social transformation. The big stumbling block is not the classic reformist excuse "the workers are not ready" but that the would-be controllers are too ready. If such a movement as we have described here were able to keep clear of any political leadership, but went through a programme of direct action to the point where it took control of the places of work and ran them by the workers in each industry—on behalf of the community—this would be in itself the social revolution. With the cutting off of the State and capitalism from the root, the Anarchist society would be born.

A.M.

(The fourth in the series will be on the lessons learned in past struggles in England.)

Land Notes

FARMING UNDER SOCIALISM

IN two recent, consecutive issues of that august, yet frivolous, journal, *The New Statesman and Nation*, there appeared an article entitled "Wanted—An Agricultural Policy". Out of a sense of duty, strengthened by a vague curiosity, I read it all through. It was an experience.

"Three or four years ago," begins Mr. Bateson, "agricultural policies were to be had for the asking. I have a pile of them in front of me as I write—a wierd and wonderful collection... The prodigies of asininity that an agricultural policy-maker can achieve have to be read to be believed."

On that point, if not on many others, I am in full agreement with Mr. Bateson, and those readers who would like to peruse an example of "the prodigies of asininity that an agricultural policy-maker can achieve," are strongly recommended to read Mr. Bateson's own contribution. It will be a valuable addition to my own "wierd and wonderful collection".

Lamenting the fact that "throughout its history the Labour Party has only taken an occasional and spasmodic interest in farmers and farming," and has therefore no real policy of its own, Mr. Bateson makes an heroic, all-out, attempt to supply one—a commendable effort and very illuminating.

The Achievement To Date

Lacking a policy, the Labour Government took over the existing policy, such as it was, of the previous Government and, with certain comparatively minor modifications and additions, stabilized it in the Agriculture Act of 1947. There was, so to speak, a change of tenants, but the in-coming tenant took over almost everything at valuation, made a half-hearted and ineffectual attempt to tidy up the place a bit, and settled in. The achievement to date I attempted to summarise in *Freedom* a month ago. Were the Government a private farmer, it would probably have had to consider issuing an order for its own eviction by now on the grounds of gross inefficiency.

Mr. Bateson makes clear, as I have tried to do though for different reasons,

that the present uneasy compromise between authoritarian socialism and Beaverbrook capitalism "is giving us the worst of both worlds. It is apparent now that neither incentives nor deterrents are tending to maximise production. With a comfortable living to be had almost for the asking on the more fertile soils, many farmers, quite naturally, are tending to take things rather easily." Incidentally, the fact that farmers are at the moment able to make a moderate profit, without living a life of penal servitude, seems to be a constant source of irritation to the urban community.

"What then is the ultimate Socialist objective for British agriculture?" asks Mr. Bateson. He begins by making the assumption common to all socialist and capitalist theory alike, that the population of this country has "outgrown its food-producing capacity." This myth is by now so well-established, and indeed so necessary if an economic policy based on exports is to find any justification at all, that one is not surprised to find it perpetuated once more in this context. What is surprising—or perhaps, after the initial shock has passed off, it is not really surprising at all—is the "Socialist objective for British Agriculture" as herein envisaged.

The Socialist Objective

"Is it not clear," asks Mr. Bateson in another rhetorical question, "that for our modern farming system to acquire its complete formulation, as the capitalist system did in the landlord-and-tenant four-course farming of the mid-nineteenth century, the State must not only place the orders and make the purchases, as at present, but also do the actual farming?"

Nothing if not logical—one must at least grant him that—the writer draws a brief picture of farming England as he would like to see it.

"Instead of farmers and farm-workers we must surely expect a network of of salaried scientists, with qualifying examinations, a ladder of promotion, retiring ages, a scale of pensions and all the paraphernalia of bureaucracy."

No, that is not a surrealist nightmare but English farming under Socialism. Neither is the writer being funny. He is in deadly earnest as only a scientific socialist can be.

"Nor is there anything in such a prospect that should shock a member of the Labour Party, who is in touch with rural realities (!)"—exclamation mark supplied by myself.

Fortunately for Mr. Bateson few members of the Labour Party are, in fact, "in touch with rural realities" at all. He himself is just sufficiently in touch with

The dispute arose among the dining car staff, of whom there are 4,000 in Britain, all feeling the pinch since the Railway Executive ended the 10 per cent. service charge (in restaurant cars) which used to be shared by the staff. The charge is still on the bill, of course, but the staff get it now in the form of wages, and travellers, imagining it to be still shared as an extra, cut tipping accordingly.

Because of this, dining car attendants' wages have dropped by about 32/- on an average.

Eight hundred station staff at Euston were prepared to come out in sympathy with dining car men if they struck, but the whole action was called off on the promise of negotiations for an increase starting immediately.

The railways were in a dilapidated condition when taken over by the State. They still are. But we cannot help remembering how the Spanish workers took over the railways in 1936. Under workers' control the railways in Catalonia and Barcelona were run more efficiently than before (under British capital and control) and also more cheaply, while at the same time the workers' wages were levelled up. And the railway workers' syndicate in the C.N.T. was said to have only one paid official! All the preparatory work of forming, organising and educating the workers for workers' control had been done at the point of production by railway workers in no way privileged or separated from their fellows.

Under State ownership in Britain today, the worker is feeling the weight of officialdom bearing him down, as witness this letter from the *Daily Mirror*, of March 9, written by "Railwayman, Middlesborough":

"The harder we work, the sooner another official is appointed to stand and watch us do it.

"If you want to make a move in any direction, you have to do endless form-filing. Satisfaction—usually nil.

"If the time spent on this modern hobby was devoted to production, the increase in output would be colossal."

The Means and The End

"Nationalization by frontal attack, as on Romney Marsh, can only lead to losses of time and temper. The correct technique in the initial stages is a piecemeal, unobtrusive nationalization, with the emphasis always on projects that will be obviously beneficial to the farmers directly concerned..."

For the time being there is to be "no direct intervention on farms, except at the farmer's own request, and a decent pretence can be maintained that the State is simply supplementing private enterprise."

The final aim "is the complete exclusion of the private owner from effective control of agricultural land in return for a fixed annual payment guaranteed by the State."

The writer elaborates his policy of nationalization by infiltration and shows, to his own satisfaction at least, how it can be achieved democratically. This, in actual fact, would seem ultimately to justify almost all and any means short of the public whipping of those who do not consent to be nationalized.

Summing up, Mr. Bateson says: "The long-term Socialist objective, then, can be summarized, I suggest, as nationalized farming organized democratically—an economic necessity married to a political ideal."

Such a marriage, I am afraid, will soon crack up and can hardly ever hope to be consummated. Indeed, divorce proceedings will probably have been begun before the honeymoon is over.

Manpower Dept.

An extract from *The Farmer's Weekly* (7/5/48) which should warm the heart of Mr. Bateson:

"In 1938 the staff of the Ministry of Agriculture numbered 2,450. This year (including county committees) the figure is 17,457 or getting on for one official to every ten farmers, and they are all, says Mr. Williams, necessary to the production drive."

Nice work if you can get it.

The Endeavours of Capitalism In Decay

IT is not without interest to follow the endeavours, as multiple as they are scattered, of several groups of employers who are searching for solutions to the crisis in capitalism which has become evident.

That interest grows when it is ascertained that the attempts conducted by working-class parties and organisations are less audacious than those initiated by elements which come from the ruling class.

Finally, a little passion cannot fail to be mingled with that interest when it is realised that certain points of view expressed by the capitalist camp approximate appreciably with those expounded by the watchwords of the official socialism of our age, and that a school is being born whose masters and propagandists are recruited impartially from the two parties, so long as individually they constitute the same type of man.

To investigate the origins of the tendencies current to-day among the circles of "activist" employers, it would need patient study and a rich documentation, from which to make a packed thesis. Our aim is more restricted. It consists of a more modest task of revealing the essential ideas in the programmes which have been put into circulation.

The Reparations Racket in Germany

IN the matter of reparations, the German sometimes sees little to choose between the practice of the Eastern and Western Occupying Powers. For example, a certain blast furnace earmarked for Russia, cost originally 120,000,000 marks but was reckoned, as reparations at half that. The Russians, inspecting it, wrote it down to 45,000,000. In the dismantling, hundreds of workmen were busy for many months and tons of wood were used to make shipping cases. All this, as well as transportation costs, was cut from the price, which finally stood at 11,000,000. Yet engineers doubt that the furnace can be reassembled in Russia. Left in place, it could have produced about 10,500,000 marks worth of steel a year. Now, hardly more than that has been credited to the German reparations account.

A factory in the Rhineland had some 45 turning lathes built by a firm in Czechoslovakia, and bought from the firm's agent in Berlin. The German buyer not only paid money but delivered to Czechoslovakia nearly the same value again in goods. Nonetheless, the 45 lathes were declared "stolen goods", dismantled, and sent back to Czechoslovakia without compensation. Production in the Rhineland plant stopped.

As for Bizonia, when the price of meat at Chicago was \$350 a ton, Germans had to pay \$1.00 for it; when wheat was at about \$84, Germans were charged \$120. When a Dutch firm wanted to have a large number of rolling mill products from the Rhineland, no Ruhr coal was available so 100,000 tons of U.S. coal had to be imported. Germany had to pay \$22 a ton, while she was credited for the same amount of Ruhr coal at 15.75 marks or, at the present exchange rate, about \$1.50 a ton.

Pounds v. Marks

Mr. Bevin has declared that the British have received, as reparations, German ships worth some 88,000,000 marks. In the June 19th, 1947 report of the International Board for Reparations, in Brussels, those ships are valued at £12,200,000 or, at the rate of 40 marks to the pound, 488,000,000 marks, just 400,000,000 marks more than Bevin's estimate.

That exchange rate of 40 marks to the pound is what British soldiers and other personnel get when serving in Germany. German P.o.W.'s who earn their wages in England, however, are only given 15 marks for the pound when they return to Germany with their earnings. On the strength of favourable working conditions, a god many of them volunteered to stay a year longer in England, especially those whose homes were in the East and who did not know where to go. But they were not told that more than half the wages they would earn in the extra year would be taken from them by a special exchange rate. Several Members of Parliament have protested, and Mr. McNeil, for the government has promised that the matter will be recognised. But, he added, it would be "dishonest to hold out great hope".

(Worldover Press.)

The reading of the reviews *Young Employers, Federation*, and the pamphlets and projects put into circulation, and the examination of certain methods put into application or of certain reformed enterprises, allow some strange contradictions to appear.

The average mentality is made up of two great anxieties: on the one hand that of not playing entirely the "social part" which the function of the employer implies according to the bourgeois catholic morality; on the other hand, that of overcoming the economic decadence which eats away the system of private property. Hence is born an incessant duality: between the will to go to the people, to understand them and make them participate in enterprises, and the need to take into account cost and competition. An apparent synthesis emerges from that intimate opposition, a synthesis which carries the names of patronal authority and of respect for the hierarchy.

The sole radical initiative, suppressing the employer, has been taken by Barbu, whose community was for months the object of reports and discussions. Barbu, having been elected to the Chamber, at present is engaged in creating a network of similar communities. But the first enterprise, created in Valance, and based on the manufacture of watch cases, is to-day in the hands of the Communists.

The experiment was based on the co-operation of all the members, remunerated according to their productivity and the effort contributed by each of them to the social life of the community. Thus the wage system was not abolished, nor was inequality of wages, but the general assembly was supreme with the framework of the statutes. Economically, the factory was sound, thanks to the semi-monopoly which it held in its speciality.

But when the great tendencies represented within it played the regular democratic game, the communists worked as a group and succeeded in gaining control.

In the Parisian region, the experiments bear almost exclusively on the method of fixing wages, with a common aim: to in-

terest the workers in the factory's production and to invite him to participate willingly. It is thus that the relatively important workshops function with a superior efficiency to the average, thanks to complicated systems of bonuses on to complicated systems of bonuses on production, of participation in profits and workers' shareholding.

Hyacinthe Dubreuil, former militant syndicalist, and expert on the American systems, foresees the creation of autonomous units in a single enterprise, that is to say, that the group of workers employed in one determined phase of manufacture receive orders from the management and fulfil them, without the latter intervening in any way in internal organisation and or the method of sharing receipts.

A third tendency is shown in the utilisation of Factory Committees, elected by the personnel, in order to interest them in the life of the factory, and, by this means, to make the greatest number of workers participate to their utmost in production, to make them carry out economies, to incite them to better production, the extra profits gained being distributed or serving to better the general condition of the workers, by making sports grounds, canteens, co-operatives and recreation rooms.

The problems of daily life are also examined from this angle by the same class of employers, and this applies particularly to dwellings and food.

In many places, and particularly since the Liberation, co-operative purchasing groups have been constituted with capital advanced by the managements to allow the workers of the same factory to buy wholesale and share out goods at a lower price than in the retail market.

In the North, principally in the region of Roubaix-Tourcoing, the great textile centre, Inter-trade Committees of Housing have been founded, to hasten the construction of cheap dwellings.

There again the most various methods have been tried; some based on housing allocations deposited by groups of employers in proportion to their number of employees; others supported by loans guaranteed by employers and which the tenants pay off gradually, their presence at the factory serving as a premium and each supplementary year committing the employer to free them more rapidly from their debt by substantial remissions. Finally, there exist projects based on contracts into which enter only the hours of work, with the object of easing the difficulties created by too great fluctuations of the value of money.

It would doubtless be easy to explain this case of the capitalists to transform

themselves into simple managers of their enterprises by a barely disguised hypocrisy. And it is certain that even among the "Young Employers" that hypocrisy exists.

Do not let us forget that the funds invested in the co-operative buying groups, in workers' dwellings and in factory committees, at the same time escapes taxation. Nor should we forget that a direct benefit returns to the firm, by a greater productivity on the part of the workers and by their attachment to their factory.

It is not, however, to be denied that capitalist anxiety exists, that the great fear of a brutal transformation which would deprive the employers of all their privileges is a reality and that finally, the heads of businesses understand that the rapid and smothering growth of State bureaucracy threatens them in what they regard as most sacred: the spirit of initiative and enterprise.

Finally, let us remember that the circles of employers who give subsidies to research committees for the reform of business are far from being in the majority, and represent what might be called the advance guard of the conscious bourgeoisie.

More curious, undoubtedly, is the other fact, that the advisers and theoreticians of the new methods are not employers, but old trade union executives

or non-capitalist intellectuals, not to mention the important group of psycho-technicians and "production engineers".

And it goes without saying that between the advisers of the "Young Employers" and the advisers of the trade union movement, there exists no ditch. With the one, as with the other, there is to be found the same desire to reject the incoherencies of the old liberal capitalism based solely on immediate profit, without far-seeing perspective, but also the same distrust towards the organising capacities of the workers and the value of their initiative.

Both are impressed by technique and are intent on convincing the technicians and managers of the enormous part they have to play in the organisation of production.

The crossroads of present experiences allows the gathering together without any difficulty of active employers, participating closely in the life of their business, which in France has become exceptional of trade union leaders and of specialists of the social movement who have fundamentally abandoned the socialist doctrine while taking care not to lose the orbit of its phraseology, of the technicians themselves, conscious of the end of a regime and the magnificent future which opens before them, and, finally, of certain State functionaries, who realise the ossification of bureaucracy and already think of securing a theoretically neutral power in order to make use of it with the support of the rising classes or of the intelligent remains of those in decay.

S. PARANE.

REPORT FROM CHINA

THE first and the second Chinese National Conventions were of a very similar composition—most of the delegates nominated by the Kuomintang, the rest almost all ambitious professional politicians, millionaires, local tyrants, and members of the subordinate parties of the Kuomintang. The constitution framed by the convention is for the most part, the same as the "Constitution of the 5th of May" created by the Kuomintang, with a few slight modifications to give it the "Western" aspect of a parliamentary democratic system. But there has been no modification of its spirit. The election of the Presidents and the legislature has been nothing but a farce, although that of the vice-president has revealed grave internal dissensions in the Kuomintang. The

Social-democratic Party and the nationalist Tchen-nien-tang are both at present very dissatisfied with the rôles in which the Kuomintang has cast them but can do nothing about it except grumble and beg for a few seats in the Chamber and a few secondary posts in the government.

No change has taken place—still the same people in office, still the same dominant bureaucracy. To maintain its supremacy, with the aid of United States' imperialism, the Kuomintang will continue to wage civil war, the rule of the secret police will go on, inflation will get worse. The suffering and the misery of the people will not merely remain, they will increase as time goes by.

Spontaneous movements of popular insurrection are not strong enough at present to resist the government oppression (though the government is unable to destroy them). This weakness opens the way for an increase in the strength and the military power of the Communist party. Compared with the Kuomintang, the Communist party is thought preferable, for it is not so corrupt, not so rapacious, and not so impotent. The expropriation and redistribution of the land, and similar reforms are highly desired by the poor farm workers who are the principle source of the Communist army. But the dogmatism of the C.P., its ambitions for dictatorship, its suppression of liberal views, are looked upon as repugnant. Already the Communists have taken control of the "Democratic Front" and consider themselves its leaders.

The Chinese people have no real revolutionary organisation. Those which existed before, and during the war with Japan have all been wiped out, or "re-organised" by the Kuomintang or the Communists. Government violence, Communist influence, imperialism, the continued existence of feudalism, all these have stifled the revolutionary movement.

The Anarchist movement itself has been fought by all these forces. During the civil war, organisation was almost impossible. Our comrades, apart from a few renegades, are weakened by famine, sickness, unemployment, and this is the principle cause of the weakness of the movement which has influenced only in small local organisation, in isolated personal struggles and in the sphere of education and culture. Perhaps

(Continued on page 8)

FUNERAL OF VANSITTARTISM

ALTHOUGH it comes a little late in the day, the Germans are officially recognised to be Huns no longer! General Robertson, the British Military Governor of Germany, announced that the members of the Control Commission would get new instructions on how to deal with the German people. The object of them being that Germans should be treated as "a civilised and Christian people". We no longer owed them any ill-will and their interests "were in many ways identical with our own".

The idiocies of war fortunately do not remain for long; the fantastic theories dug up about other nations when we happen to be at war with them are soon forgotten. But we cannot rejoice at this change of heart, because it is clear that the interests "identical with our own" are the interests in World War III when the German people, a decent, civilised Christian Ally and dirty Huns no longer, will be expected to join us in the killing of the Russians.

Perhaps one of the gentry who entertained us with racial nonsense during the war will dig up a Black Record of the Russians, and show us how since the days of the Tartars they have always been warmongers—or the benefit

of the Left—the Right will be entertained with anti-Communism, just as in the last war the Right was entertained with anti-Nazism. The real objects of the war—the clash of rival imperialisms, in which ideologists and races do not enter, will thus be forgotten.

How ironic to think that people are fooled by this propaganda! While reading the naive declarations of General Robertson, another couple of items in the Press caught our eye. The Jews in Cyprus concentration camps threaten trouble if they are not soon released. And in another paper the usual vaguely anti-Semitic stories of "anti-British demonstrations in New York by Jews".

How unlikely it would have seemed eight years ago to the people talking about Britain's "democratic revolution" and struggle against Nazism, that the day was not far off when the Nazis who of course comprised all the German people, would in due course be recognised as a Christian and civilised people and the Jewish inmates of Nazi concentration camps, who were then in the news, would have been in British internment camps instead. And yet this unlikelihood would have been only the result of their

own hallucinations; because they must have known perfectly well then that Britain was Imperialist and her policy dictated by imperialist motives. It was not less so then—in fact in the interim years it has lost quite a bit, rather involuntarily. The newspapers—nor the persons concerned—do not remind us that the "anti-British demonstrators" in New York to-day are the same old gang who in 1940—Ben Hecht and all—were busy eulogising the British way of life and talking of its national love of democracy as opposed to the Germans who were all of course born militarists. Any talk of "rival imperialisms" was—to them—"fascist"! We would not mind if these politicians—along with the British Left Wing—admitted to having been liars and hypocrites—but they have the impudence to complain of being "betrayed"—by this or that individual such as Bevin, who comes in as a convenient bulky scapegoat. The real betrayers were all those who gained support for an imperialist war by disguising its real motives, which they themselves had not the courage to oppose, but wished to show in a more favourable light so as not to expose themselves as mere agents of imperialism.

THE MEANING OF MALAN

THE defeat of General Smuts in the South African elections has at least the merit of smashing yet another old-established idol—which is rather necessary in these times when everybody believes the “great man” myth—how “one man” was responsible for this, that and the other. The limelighted figures of the thirties have now all passed into oblivion—Roosevelt replaced by Truman, Churchill replaced by Attlee, De Valera replaced by Costello, Smuts by Malan, Hitler and Mussolini dead and practically forgotten. Only Stalin remains; he too is mortal, and so is his dictatorship. Just as the once seemingly impregnable empires of the Sultan, Kaiser and Tsar are now crushed; also the fascist empires that were to have lasted “a thousand years”; so the great dollar and knout empires of to-day will eventually disappear, however solid they seem at present. Who would have thought only a few years ago to have seen the great British Empire on which the sun never sets, bankrupt and in the process of dissolution? The passing of any public figure is welcome if it brings these reminders. And Malan’s victory is welcome if it brings these reminders. And Malan’s victory too shows how hollow was the myth—gradually becoming enshrined in school history books, of how after the Boer War we reconciled our former enemies so that they became our greatest friends. During Malan’s campaigns all the old bitterness and hatred was shown to be still alive.

The British Press supported Smuts for his pro-imperialism and feared Malan’s republicanism. But as soon as he was seen to be the victor—although one or two tactless voices cried out against the war-time supporter of Hitler’s Germany—they consoled themselves with reflection that Malan in power was not so likely to be as extreme as Malan out of power. Power has a sobering effect, and one need not look outside London for illustrations of the change it has on one-time extremists.

End of Immigration?

The greatest fear expressed by the Press has been that Malan would exclude English people from immigration to South Africa. But Malan is not primarily a republican or even an Afrikaner Nationalist. This is subordinate to the fact that he upholds what is called “white supremacy”—he calls it “Apartheid”—and the segregation of the native African.

In the end his long-term aims can only be fulfilled by European immigration, thus keeping down the African even in the course of time to a minority, or at any rate a less considerable majority. While Malan’s supporters, the Afrikaans-speaking Nationalists, bear many old grudges against England, the fact remains that they must depend on English immigration to some extent. They are mostly imbued with the Stuemer race theories and would probably want “nordic” immigration; it is odd that it never strikes fascists as peculiar that the Scandinavians themselves show less inclination for these fantastic theories, and there will never be more than a trickle of immigration forthcoming from the Scandinavian countries to be a Herrenvolk in South Africa. Doubtless in present circumstances immigration will be available from Germany; but the other countries likely to send immigrants are “suspect” races such as Poles and Italians and it may well be true that Malan will

prefer English immigration. So the schemes for getting our population to Africa are not likely to cease; and alongside the scheme for Tanganyika, the “ground nuts” plan and so on, entry into the Union is not likely to be affected. But what Malan will certainly do is to use immigration as a means of stabilising an attack on the life of the African.

Comparison with Palestine

Now when a working-class is settled into a country one cannot condemn them on historical grounds; eventually the workers elsewhere must accept them. While we should have opposed the colonisation of America, which entailed the ruthless destruction of the peaceful inhabitants, clearly to-day America is there and one has to accept that fact. Similarly, the analogy of our present times—the anti-imperialist must perforce have been anti-Zionist. But to-day the Jewish working-class in Palestine is a concrete fact and it is there and we can no longer simply say that it is no use creating a new nationalism. (The Arabs themselves grant this: Rahman Azzam Pasha’s proposals are to accept the Jews now in Palestine as an accepted fact but to say that they should not be a State and immigration should cease.) But so far as Africa is concerned we need not come to the point where it is necessary

to reconsider the claims of the original inhabitants. Over the most part they are a majority, or are performing all the useful work, and nowhere are they not a substantial minority at least.

As Anarchists we are against all nationalist frontiers—let each man settle where he wishes and to hell with anyone who claims that this piece of the earth is such-and-such a country and that piece of earth is another. But this cannot by any casuistry be twisted into support for colonisation projects. Malan wants immigration and he will not oppose, he may even further, the present plans before us every day for immigration to Africa. The reason they want to get us there is to strengthen the white block by our presence.

Once that white block is established, the Indian community will be frozen out or driven out. It is a possibility that there may be some racial sideshow for the benefit of the mob, such as anti-Semitic laws, in order to raise a storm over an issue other than the main one, and then—if he loses—give in on that point only. But the real aim and policy of Malan is simple: whatever methods he uses for dividing the European communities, his policy is the COLOUR BAR.

Colour Bar in the Colonies

Do not make the mistake of blaming the white man for the colour bar. In reality, it is the coloured people who were responsible. The white man did not go to them as a conqueror; he went as a whining carpet-bagger. The popular conception of Empire as having been instituted by conquest is not quite accurate. The imperialists went out first as commercial travellers, seeking favours of the chiefs, kings and emperors before whom they abased themselves. They presented themselves at the courts of India, China and Japan currying favour and selling goods. The favours were granted by the Quisling rulers who let them in by the back door. The Sudan was conquered by an English officer in the employment of the Egyptian Government, leading a joint army. India was first taken in by the East India Company. The first business men who went to Africa went to buy slaves. When the native rulers had allowed European infiltration and penetration, both economically and commercially, they began to side with the Europeans against their “own” people. As in India, the maharajahs and nabobs began to go in for Western education and forget that they had a civilisation centuries older than the Europeans. When the Europeans had economic mastery, they began their political conquest, which led to destruction of the Quislings who had helped them, and the wars of conquest against recalcitrant tribesmen. The colour bar was imposed to keep them down and to make sure that they could not compete on equal terms with the white settlers, because they feared the natives. Furthermore, the fact that the sycophants (who increased with the growth of missionary endeavour, which taught men to despise their past because

it did not conform with the dictates of an outworn creed which few in the countries sending it out believed in) despised their people, led to the Europeans adopting the same attitude. And you can see to-day in S. Africa that the (largely bourgeois Indian community rightly struggles for equality—of itself with the European communities. But not for equality to include the native African. But the African will write his reply in due course. It must be regretted that this will be done by painful means, but he will do it; for if the Japanese War taught nothing else, it did teach all Asia and Africa that the idea of white man supremacy was just another myth.

Don't Go to Africa!

Do not add to the problem. Schemes for settlement in Africa are often tempting, particularly for those who feel no sentimental attachment to any one part of the world, which fools parcel off into faterlands. But this is not a free world. And therefore this is not the time to go to Africa. If you are in Africa you cannot avoid being by your presence part of the European block that Dr. Malan is building. You cannot expect the African to accept you as a friend; you will never get the opportunity to treat him as such. Instead, let us stand by the struggle of the African to attain his independence; a struggle that will grow in intensity as Dr. Malan’s followers tighten their grip on the Colour Bar question, as they force the African down and down to be merely a cheap chattel-slave. Stand by the African in the struggle for his emancipation that will surely come. But emancipation can only come from within and cannot be imposed from outside. The only aid we can give him is to see that military aid is not sent to the governments which are the object of his attack. We must look to it that the British Army is not once again sent to pull the chestnuts out of the fire, and save the Afrikaans-speakers from the disaster they are going to bring on themselves.

INTERNATIONALIST.

CASTLES IN THE AIR

Ex-King Michael, recently seated on one of Europe’s richest thrones, has now lost 29 castles, 114 palaces and 16 hunting castles and lodges once the property of his family. A Rumanian State decree has also confiscated the banking and industrial shares held by Michael with no mention of compensation.

News Chronicle, 26/5/48.

The Abuse of Power

LAST summer the Freedom Defence Committee submitted a memorandum to the Home Secretary on the “treatment of aliens landing and embarking at ports in the United Kingdom”. It dealt with the cases of a Frenchman, Dr. K., and a naturalised Frenchman, Mons. D., resident in France for many years. A subsequent memorandum described the case of Mons. X.

Dr. K. and Mons. D. arrived at Newhaven from Paris on Saturday, June 28th, 1947.

“Before entering the Customs shed, their passports were examined by plain-clothes officers. Dr. K.’s passport was the first to be examined and she was allowed to pass. Mons. D., however, was detained and, upon observing this, Dr. K. decided to wait for him at the entrance to the room where foreign passports were being examined. Some short time later a plain-clothes officer approached Dr. K. and asked her for whom she was waiting. Upon hearing that it was for Mons. D., the officer consulted a colleague and then asked her to follow him. She was taken to a small room, in which was a woman, and the officer then left. The woman asked Dr. K. to remove her clothes, and when she had removed them all (including stockings and suspender-belt) with the exception of her brassiere and knickers, the woman after endeavouring to ascertain whether anything was concealed beneath these remaining garments, ordered Dr. K. to remove these also. Dr. K. protested energetically, pointing out that she was a doctor and that she herself had to do this to her patients, but objected to it strongly under these circumstances. The fact that the person whom she was examining was a doctor seemed to impress and embarrass the woman officer, and she did not insist further, but allowed Dr. K. to dress.

Dr. K. was then questioned on the purpose of her visit, her relationship with Mons. D. (how she met him, how many times she had met him, what kind of work he did, etc.) and finally, after having told the officer that she was a doctor in a nationalised factory near Paris and that he could telephone the director of the factory if he wished, she was allowed to proceed to the Customs shed, where her suit cases were not even examined. She caught her train with a few minutes to spare, the incident described above having occupied the best part of an hour.”

Mons. D. was detained on the steamer until the following Monday when he was returned to Dieppe.

No reasons were given to him for his being refused entry into this country, but, judging from the remarks made by the officers, he believes that the following contributed to the decision in his case:—

(a) Not having suitable reasons for coming to England. Apparently he was informed that to visit friends is not sufficient to justify entry into the United

Kingdom.

(b) Being the bearer of an address book containing “far too many addresses”—which seemed to infer that this suggested that he was a suspicious character.

(c) Above all of being a Jew, of knowing Jews, and the fact that the name of the person with whom he intended to stay in this country (given on the landing card) was also Jewish.

Mons. D. was questioned by five or six plain-clothes officers, and each one tried to extract from him some special reason for his coming to England. One asked him if he were not a “Trotskyist”, when he explained that the reason for the large number of addresses was to obtain advance subscriptions for a book dealing with the history of the Russian Revolution. Finally he was informed that England was not barred to him, but his entry would have to be “under different conditions and for him more valid reasons.”

The F.D.C. made the following observations on each of these cases: That since Dr. K. was searched before reaching the Customs shed, the search was not made by Customs officers suspecting smuggling, but by the Special Branch, yet no search warrant was produced. That the woman police officer had no right to require Dr. K. to undress completely, and that the change in her attitude when she learnt that Dr. K. was a professional indicated an objectionable discrimination. That if there was any suspicion that they had any connection with Jewish terrorists, it is hardly likely that Dr. K. would have waited for Mons. D. “under the very noses of Scotland Yard’s Special Branch”, and that the officers had no right to question Dr. K. about Mons. D. In the case of Mons. D., the committee questioned the right of Special Branch officers to decide what constitutes a “valid reason” for entry, since visas have been abolished between France and Britain. His address book was retained until the following day, no reasons were given for his being sent back and no compensation made for his financial loss or for the considerable inconvenience caused him. Both cases indicate a disturbing discrimination against Jews.

The experience of Mons. X. was similar to that of Mons. D. He was compelled to strip completely and although he had a valid passport and re-entry visa issued by the British authorities (since he had been working in this country and was returning from a visit to his parents in Belgium), was refused admission, was not allowed to telegraph his parents and had to pay the full fare back to Belgium, and for his night’s lodging in Dover.

The F.D.C. has had a long and fruitless correspondence with the authorities on cases, in which all the complaints raised have remained completely unanswered, and has at length released all the letters and the facts to the press.

It appears that Home Office officials can abuse and exceed their powers with impunity, and that passports and visas can be ignored by the very authorities that issue them. So much for Mr. Bevin’s pious support for “the principle of unrestricted travel for everyone throughout the world”.

Footnote.

It was reported in the *Daily Express* on the 10th March, 1948, that 23 people, including two British subjects, were compelled to remove every article of clothing when searched by customs officers on the Swedish ship *Suecia*, in Tilbury Dock. This procedure seems somewhat at variance with the Home Office statement that “the method of search, which is applicable to all travellers, is to request the removal of the outer garments only”.

Dehumanising and Mechanising Men

(Continued from page 2)

prison whilst maintaining the evils of the capitalist system: piece work and inequalities of pay, the maximum a man can earn is 1/- a week, from which 1d. is deducted as a contribution to the purchase of daily papers and other “amenities”. As an example, those prisoners working in the tailors shop had to make up 56 pairs of trousers a week to earn 1/-, and then on Friday had to suffer the humiliation of lining up for this pittance to be paid out to them in coppers by an arrogant Principal Officer. Is it surprising that one often heard such remarks as “I’ll make up for it when I get out of here.”

5. *Restrictions on Human Contacts.* Every possible restriction is placed on the prisoner maintaining contacts with friends and family. Letters to and from the prison are strictly rationed as are visits which take place under inhuman conditions. Reading matter too is limited.

6. *The Counting of Heads.* Prisoners cannot move about the prison unless they are accompanied by a warder or a “trusty”. This means in effect that the prisoner moves about the prison only when required to by the authorities and not when he wants to. Further, he is continually being counted. As he leaves the wing to go on exercise, two warders are posted to count heads. As groups of prisoners are marched off to labour the warder in charge calls out the number of men in his batch to the Principal Officer who, slate in hands, records the number of heads. At the end of work as they march off to their cells more counting . . . and so on all day. Not even sheep are subjected to such intensive checks! The prisoner loses his identity,



he is a number, a head, a statistic. Everything but a human being.

7. *Punishments in Prison.* There are many kinds of punishment in prison, each one more sadistic than the other. Except for flogging, rarely used to-day, the punishments consist in losses of “privileges” and restrictions on diet. The offences against prison discipline are fantastic, but if one recognises that the aim of imprisonment is to “dehumanise and mechanise”, one is not so surprised. The list includes such offences as disobeying an order, idleness, carelessness, swearing and cursing, assaulting, escaping, communicating with other prisoners and mutiny, which can be classified as being fairly straightforward charges. But when a man can also be charged with “treating

with disrespect any officer of the prison” or “commits any nuisance” or “in any way offends against good order and discipline” or “attempts to do any of the foregoing things”, then it is not so straightforward. The last-mentioned phrase is sinister to say the least. And since many individuals refuse to be dehumanised the punishments inflicted are many. The *Report of the Commissioners*, Appendix 5 (Table B) shows that in the year 1945 the offences in men’s prisons numbered 11,167 and the number of prisoners punished 6,526. There were 6,919 awards of dietary punishment, 7,087 of loss of remission, 4,859 of close confinement and 10 men were flogged.

And let it be remembered that every prisoner punished bears an additional grudge against prison and society as a result, not so much of the punishment but by the ease with which the warders can “frame” a prisoner and have their word accepted every time by the Governor.

Far from reforming, prison life has the opposite effect. As Mr. Benney rightly says, prison obliges “even the most honest conscientious people” . . . to develop habits that will stand them in good stead in the most vicious circles. It would be impossible to contrive a more efficient school of law-breaking than to construct a secluded society, governed by absurd and arbitrary rules which prohibit any elementary social exchange, and to impose harsh punishment on anyone who is caught breaking the rules.”

V.R.

* He was referring to conscientious objectors who went to prison during the war.

Godwin's Political Justice

Book Reviews

ENQUIRY CONCERNING POLITICAL JUSTICE by William Godwin, edited by F. E. L. Priestley. 3 volumes. (Oxford University Press, £3/13/6.)

GODWIN'S *Political Justice* has not been reprinted in its entirety for more than a century. In 1926 an abbreviated edition appeared in New York, and an isolated chapter, that on *Property*, with an introduction by H. S. Salt, was published in London in 1890 and reprinted as recently as 1929. But readers seeking a complete edition were forced to refer to the few libraries which possessed it, and therefore this new edition, published by the University of Toronto in 1946 and now issued in England by the Oxford University Press, is welcome in that it once more makes available a book which is a classic both of anarchist theory and also of general political criticism. It is unfortunate that the price should be so high; with the recent revival of interest in Godwin in this country, there was surely room for a much cheaper edition, and the field is yet free for an enterprising publisher to bring out a one-volume edition at a reasonable price. But for the present those who are interested in Godwin and cannot afford this costly new edition—the great majority, I imagine—should at least press their local libraries to acquire it.

Political Justice first appeared in 1793. At a time when most of the radicals were busy discussing what form of government was best, Godwin put the fundamental question whether any government was good, and, after an exhaustive analysis of the effect of coercion in all its fields, came to the conclusion that social justice could only be attained by the elimination of government and what he called "positive" institutions altogether from social life. In other words, although it was left for Proudhon to use the word "anarchism" in its present sense, Godwin was the first to give a systematic foundation of reasoned argument to the doctrine, and, to this day, *Political Justice* remains one of the best and most thorough criticisms of government and the coercive system. Some of Godwin's chapters, such as his attack on the idea of punishment, have not been bettered.

Later, in 1796 and 1798 respectively, Godwin published second and third editions of *Political Justice*, and it is the third edition that Mr. Priestley has used, with accurate and full appendices containing all the points in which this version differs from its predecessors. Since the first edition was in many ways more vigorous than its successors, it might at first seem that this should have been used, but Mr. Priestley puts a good case for his method, since the import of the alterations has been greatly exaggerated by De Quincey and other critics, and, while Godwin did not change the fundamental bases of his arguments, he certainly smoothed out some of the less thorough passages and removed certain apparent absurdities of logic. Personally, I still think

the first edition is the best, but the difference is certainly less important than many people suppose, and Mr. Priestley has rather disarmed criticism by printing in full all the chapters from the first edition which were subsequently eliminated.

The third volume, apart from the various critical notes and textual appendices, included a lengthy essay on Godwin's ideas, his formative influences, and his own place in the development of social thought. On the whole, this is an intelligent contribution to the scanty literature on Godwin, and shows a sympathy towards Godwin's general ideas which makes it all the more valuable, since the author has not that motive for misrepresentation which has spoilt so many writers on Godwin, particularly the Shelley enthusiasts.

There are chapters on Godwin's political philosophy, showing his abrupt divergence from the Statist ideas of the French revolutionary philosophers, on his moral philosophy, showing the extreme importance he gave to the question of individual as opposed to collective development, and on his economic thought, showing how far his influence, transmitted through Thompson, Owen and Place, played its part in developing the economic theories of both Proudhon and Marx. Another chapter examines the influence of the tradition of Eng-

lish religious dissent on Godwin's concept of individual freedom, but fails to trace the possible lines of development from the Levellers, the Diggers and other seventeenth century radicals who had expressed the ideas of dissent in terms of social philosophy. Finally, the chapter on Godwin's own influence, while it does justice to his place in the literary tradition of the time, his influence over Wordsworth, Hazlitt, Shelley, etc., certainly does not discuss thoroughly his clearly profound part in inspiring Owen, many of whose theories are merely Godwinism turned to a practical end, nor, while he points to Wilde's *Soul of Man* as a complete revival of Godwinist ideas, does Mr. Priestley trace the close identity of Godwin's ideas, not only with those of later anarchists like Proudhon and Kropotkin, but also with the anti-authoritarian views of such sociologists as Mumford. In such cases there may be no evidence of direct influence, but the position of Godwin in international social thought at the beginning of the nineteenth century (a German edition of *Political Justice* appeared in 1803, Benjamin Constant translated it into French and an American edition in 1796 had great influence among the early political theorists of the United States) was such that his contribution to the libertarian tradition must be recognised even where it is not immediately obvious.

Nevertheless, this essay constitutes a study of Godwin's thoughts which cannot be ignored, and it is to be hoped that some day soon a less expensive edition of the whole reprint will be published. I always have a lingering hope that the editors of the Everyman Library, who many years ago published Malthus's inadequate

Freedom Bookshop

Carlo Levi's
CHRIST STOPPED AT EBOLI 9/6

Kravchenko's
I CHOSE FREEDOM (reprint) 15/-

Godwin's
POLITICAL JUSTICE (3 vols.) 62/6

★
Letters from an Outpost
Alex Comfort 7/6
The Mass-Psychology of Fascism
Wilhelm Reich 22/6
Soul of Man under Socialism
Oscar Wilde 2/6
Slavery of our Times
Tolstoy 2/6
Defence of Poetry
Shelley 2/6
Coming Up for Air
George Orwell 9/6
Hearts not Heads in the School
A. S. Neill 7/6
The Anatomy of the Village
Thos. Sharp 2/6
The Lawless Roads
Graham Green 1/6
Hiroshima
John Hersey 1/6

Postage is not included in above prices, and should be added.

Please send all orders to
FREEDOM BOOKSHOP
27, RED LION STREET
LONDON - W.C.1.

attack on Godwin but have never brought out the original work that aroused it, will one day realise this strange gap in their list and at last publish *Political Justice* at a price which everyone can afford.

GEORGE WOODCOCK.

Revolution of Desire

"It is not necessary to paint a man with a gun. A bowl of apples can be just as revolutionary."—PICASSO.

A REVOLUTION must be made at a time of prosperity when the State is at its most gracious, the police and army least obtrusive, and oppression dozing; at any other time a revolution may be expected to fail. I do not mean fail materially. The *coup d'état* may prove successful, hunger and despair are the best of allies at a time of crisis, but it will fail eventually because the spirit of the men involved remains unchanged. Then the dead body of the revolution will breed the maggots of a new tyranny.

The face of the world, its institutions and code of morals, are the concretion of its spirit. Fed at the disgusting paps of the state, most men grow up mental deformatives, and even those who have the courage to fight the system are involved. If due to the collapse of the economic machine necessity drives men to revolutionary action, they are willing to follow anyone who promises to restore prosperity and right their grievances, but misery does not alter the character of these men. The leaders of the revolution may be completely genuine in their beliefs, but they are soon replaced by others who to 'save' the revolution murder its ideals, and they are allowed to do this by the masses who thereby acknowledge their belief that power, fear and position are essential to a practical society.

To alter the structure of our world it is necessary to reassert the nature of man. I find many anarchists think that the replacement of parliament by workers' syndicates will solve everything, but men form the syndicates, and to-day most men are entirely devoted to their own interests, and have no wish to remove the blinkers of prejudice and superstition imposed

by the state. The ugly display of letters to the newspapers provoked by the repeal of hanging demonstrates the mental poverty of most people. So well has the state conditioned its dupes, that when it decides to undo its own abuses its victims cry out in anger. Is the destruction of ballot boxes expected to confer the ability to think?

Let us first try to become human. A man at the zoo in contrast to the dignity of a lion or antelope appears a ludicrous object. We must admit to and respect our animal origin, and over-throw the absurd and crippling moral code. The sad masturbators in the cinemas must come out into the sun. The men who scribble on lavatory walls must shout their desires in the street. There must be no more talk of the rights or wrongs of such topics as homosexuality. Let us explore every human desire without caution. Then, our minds free from the cancer of repression, we can build a sane world with the aid of Kropotkin or Charlie Chaplin.

There are anarchists who consider the space this paper gives to art or poetry wasted, but the poet or artist can be a revolutionary of the greatest importance. They attack reality as it is, and rebuild the ruins with their instincts. They net the dangerous fish of desire and kiss them on their salt mouths. They, no less than the theorists, are the true prophets of the revolution.

The anarchist who knows Bakunin by heart, and has never examined the inside of a flower or the sex of a woman, the anarchist who despises a rotten society and follows its anti-human code, is divorced from the spirit which could ensure our eventual triumph. Our intention is to found a world on our secret desires, and make life so wonderful that we destroy the necessity for poems.

GEORGE MELLY.

Freedom Press

- Charles Duff:
A HANDBOOK ON HANGING 2/-
Rudolf Rocker:
NATIONALISM & CULTURE 21/-
George Woodcock:
ANARCHY OR CHAOS 2/6, Cloth 4/6
NEW LIFE TO THE LAND 6d.
RAILWAYS AND SOCIETY 3d.
HOMES OR HOVELS? 6d.
ANARCHISM AND MORALITY 2d.
WHAT IS ANARCHISM? 1d.
THE BASIS OF COMMUNAL LIVING 1/-
Peter Kropotkin:
THE STATE: ITS HISTORIC ROLE 1/-
THE WAGE SYSTEM 3d.
REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT 3d.
Errico Malatesta:
ANARCHY 3d.
VOTE WHAT FOR? 1d.
SELECTIONS FROM HIS WRITINGS (Chosen by Herbert Read) Cloth 8/6
Herbert Read:
THE PHILOSOPHY OF ANARCHISM 1/-
Stiff Cover 2/6
THE EDUCATION OF FREE MEN 1/-
POETRY AND ANARCHISM Cloth 5/-
William Godwin:
SELECTIONS FROM POLITICAL JUSTICE 3d.
ON LAW 1d.
A. Ciliga:
THE KRONSTADT REVOLT 2d.
M. L. Berneri:
WORKERS IN STALIN'S RUSSIA 1/-
C. Berneri:
KROPOTKIN—HIS FEDERALIST IDEAS 2d.
Alexander Berkman:
A.B.C. OF ANARCHISM 1/-
John Hewetson:
ITALY AFTER MUSSOLINI 6d.
ILL-HEALTH, POVERTY AND THE STATE Cloth 2/6, Paper 1/-
MUTUAL AID & SOCIAL EVOLUTION 1/-
Gaston Leval:
COLLECTIVES IN SPAIN 1d.
John Olday:
THE MARCH TO DEATH 1/6
THE LIFE WE LIVE, THE DEATH WE DIE 2/6
P. J. Proudhon:
GENERAL IDEA OF THE REVOLUTION IN THE 19th CENTURY Cloth 5/-
F. A. Ridley:
THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE MODERN AGE 2d.
"Equity":
THE STRUGGLE IN THE FACTORY 3d.
Icarus:
THE WILHELMSHAVEN REVOLT 6d.
McCartney:
THE FRENCH COOKS SYNDICATE 3d.

27 Red Lion Street
Holborn, W.C.1

The Outlook for Mankind

"If the friends of peace are to be politically effective, they must be unwilling to listen to arguments tending to show that this war is unlike all other wars, that all the guilt is on the other side, or that the millennium will come if our side is victorious. These things have always been said at the outbreak of a war, and have always been false. They will be said next time, and will still be false; but censorship and propaganda will make it difficult to prove their falsehood at the moment. The only wise course, therefore is to be prepared in advance by an absolute renunciation of war."

The above is taken from P. 127 of Bertrand Russell's book *Which Way to Peace*, published by Michael Joseph in 1936.

The arguments in favour of disarmament are so clearly put in this book, that it is up to Bertrand Russell to explain how it is that he has changed his view: not merely to assert (as he does in *The Outlook for Mankind*, *Horizon* April 1948) that the only way to combat Communism, and to create the condition of permanent peace and democracy, it to wage another war with the object of establishing an *American military* government over the whole world.

Reference to his book shows the futility of wars of principle: that (1) another world war will not bring and (2) a world military government will not maintain, the condition either of permanent peace or democracy, and (3) a "show of strength" on the part of the Western Powers will not secure peace now.

(1)
P. 120. "If a war of principles is to be worth fighting, the cause must be secured by victory. If you go to war to end war, and you win, war must be ended; if you go to war against militarism, your victory must produce a world in which there is less militarism than there was before the war; if you fight to make the world safe for democracy, the defeat of the enemy must not lead to the establishment of military autocracies."
P. 222. "The best passions to which,

in the past, those who waged defensive war were able to appeal, can no longer be invoked to sanctify even the most righteous conflict; . . . Of the things that make life tolerable to a lover of peace, none are likely to survive on either side in a great war between technically efficient States."

P. 121-2. "If a war against Germany becomes necessary for imperialistic reasons, it will of course be represented as a war against Fascism. But, even if all goes well, it may be taken as certain that the men in power in England when the war ends will have no dislike of Fascism, and it is highly probable that they will think a military dictatorship necessary for the preservation of order."

What is the difference between a "military dictatorship" and a "single military government over the whole world" that Russell now advocates? Has he not fallen for the very thing he warned against?

(2)
P. 170. "If the doctrine that the aim of politics should be to give power to heroes were one to be met by rational argument, it would be easily refuted. Through war and military dictatorship it must lead to the extermination of courageous men, and to the establishment of that very régime of cunning scheming slaves which it most abhors. The hero, having made himself master of the State, must set to work to secure his power. This is no longer to be achieved on the battlefield, since his open enemies are vanquished. The men he has to fear are his colleagues, and his dependence must be on spies and secret police. He may, like the Emperor Augustus, fall a prey to the ignoble dream of perpetual peace, but it will be a peace based on terror, not on consent."

(3)
P. 139. "Having no longer large armed forces, we should threaten no one, and no one would have any motive to make war on us. All the nightmare horrors that we have been considering . . . would still threaten the nations that continued to play the game of power, but we should be liberated, and our energies could be devoted to purposes worthy of sane men."

P. 140. "If you, at great expense, prepare the means of killing large numbers of other people, they will certainly, un-

(Continued on page 7)

A.S. NEILL ON LITTLE BELSEN SCHOOLS

I'M afraid I'll have to argue with John L. Kinloch after all.* He calls my system of education Anarchy, as opposed to his conception of Socialism.

I don't think in political terms; indeed I consider that the abolition of all politics and politicians would be the beginning of progress.

Kinloch wants a planned Socialistic society. O.K. Who is to plan it?

There are many who can make plans—say—for schools; they can design marvellous buildings with elaborate labs. and good teachers, but they cannot plan for children's souls because their own souls have already been warped. I included Kinloch and

Neill in this category. Listen to the obscene laughter in any cinema when childbirth or love or chamber pots are mentioned. Think of the misery given to youth by ignorant condemnation of a natural phenomenon like masturbation. Think of the damage done to youth by religion with its postulation of original sin.

My school has no political aim. Its aim is to produce children who will be emotionally free, so that in adulthood they may plan schools and society that will consider fundamentals in human relationships.

I grant that in one generation it cannot be done, but a few generations of emotional freedom would cure the sickness of humanity, the hate of wars, but also in our barbarous criminal code, our sadistic tawing of children (making our schools like little Belsens differing only in degree from the big one), our cruel attitude to bastardy.

I ask what is the use of a planned Socialist society if the members are to continue to be sick and hateful? The economic solution is not enough; radios and washing machines and six-hour working days exist in a million neurotic homes.

Just a final word about Kinloch's Anarchy. I wonder how he would define a Summerhill weekly general meeting in which all laws are made by voting.

I am not sure if he realises that freedom simply means doing what you like so long as you don't interfere with the freedom of others. I suspect him of having an idea of what children should be.

My own work is scientific in this respect, that I don't claim to know what children should be or do; I merely observe what childhood desires, and when I find it preferring jazz to classical music, I say: "Good."

The unscientific way would be to say: "But they aren't capable of forming a true judgment. I'll make them listen to an hour of Bach each morning" . . . as they did in a German progressive school.

The Outlook for Mankind

(Continued from page 6)

less they have been convinced by our argument, make equal preparations to kill you. They will, feeling themselves innocent, consider you wicked on account of your preparations; you, convinced that you intended only self-defence, will think them wicked. Each side will become persuaded that the other side is capable of a treacherous attack, and will therefore become itself capable of the very thing that it suspects."

In *Horizon*, Russell advocates that American war production should be kept fully occupied in order to avoid depression, and that Britain should "concert with the Dominions a large scale scheme of emigration, especially of women and children", and reduce its population to twenty millions, mostly adult males, in order that "our defensive strength may be greatly increased".

Can the words "permanent peace" or "democracy" possibly be applied either to this state of affairs, or to the hypothetical outcome of another war: "a single military government over the whole world"?

ANTHONY WEAVER.

ANTI-RELIGIOUS PROPAGANDA

SIR,

As an orthodox Christian and an Anglican my limitations may seem to you to be such as to invalidate most of what I may have to say about anti-religious propaganda. Nevertheless, I regret that your comments on the film *No Orchids for Miss Blandish* should have been made the occasion for an attack on Dr. Wand, Bishop of London, who merely pronounced it unsuitable for showing in his Diocese which, of course, he had every right to do. His restraint in confining his disapproval to a letter to the L.C.C. is somehow unfavourably contrasted with the behaviour of "indignant Anglicans" at a (to them) "disgusting exhibition" of the Bishop's "crowning" (sic) in his Cathedral some time ago. This exploitation of an unseemly incident for the purposes of propaganda does you little credit, and without doubt had the opposite effect to that intended, for as your policy can hardly be to persuade the ignorant, whom I fancy do not read your paper, you merely succeed in antagonising the thoughtful who do. Incidentally, there is considerable evidence that the Bishop's opponents were mostly sectarians whose connection with the Anglican Church may be said to be confined to those for whom a purely legalistic interpretation of Church membership seems to be all that is required.

On another occasion a contributor when commenting on the tragedy in Jerusalem referred to the worship of images by Christians other than Protestants, a suggestion so foolish that it is hardly worth refuting.

On the credit side I hasten to mention the treatment of religion by "Anarchist" in the "Question and Answer" series wherein he discussed the modern religion of humanitarianism, and the relevance of Stirner as an aid to a deeper apprehension of the pseudo-religious background of the seemingly emancipated. Also, a stimulating contribution by Eric Thacker acknowledges the religious truth in Anarchism as perceived by Berdyaev and Herbert Read. It is true that Thacker specifically rules out "Objectified systems which pass for religion in society" as incompatible with what he, together with Berdyaev and Read, mean by religion, but it should not be overlooked that Berdyaev was a practising Christian of the Orthodox Church whose Christian personalism fundamentally differed from the Anarchist philosophy in spite of certain interesting resemblances. I write subject to correction as my knowledge of this profound question doesn't permit me to express other than tentative opinions.

If it be contended, vide Eric Thacker, that what Anarchists understand by religion is an act of faith regarding man's true nature which all should make who wish to liberate themselves and their brothers, surely such profound self-affirmation, however inadequate from the Christian point of view, can have little to do with that sterile negation of religious truth born of the shallow self-confidence of nineteenth-century Agnosticism which

Letters to the Editors

finds such frequent expression in your columns.

P. M. M. HUGGON.
[The point here surely is that the behaviour of churchmen is not of such high quality as would justify them in laying down the standards for correct behaviour in the laity. There is moreover an obvious want of proportion in the attitude which denounces an indifferent film while blessing the weapons of war; which takes a keen interest in a people's "spiritual fare" while remaining supine in the face of material poverty. One would feel happier about the Bishop's decried *No Orchids for Miss Blandish* if one were not aware that such disapproval springs from the same anti-sexual attitude which raises opposition to every attempt at a rational and humane solution of the many sexual problems of our time.—EDS.]

THE CURSE OF NATIONALISATION

DEAR COMRADES,
Nationalisation of the coal industry has been put into practice long enough for all its defects to be manifest. Propaganda, showing it as a sort of universal panacea, had been spread by the Trade Union movement for many years. The miners were ready to accept this new measure and judge it on its merits, although bitter memories of the 1921 and 1926 strikes filled them with distrust of authority. In the early months of 1947 production increased, but there were no sweeping changes. Instead, the National Coal Board personnel were recruited from the most reactionary elements among the management and T.U. officials. Their large salaries and the lavish sums spent on buying up large country houses to accommodate office staff combined to place the N.C.B. in debt. This did not matter to them as the people of Britain were footing the bill.

What little trust the coal-workers had in their leaders was soon betrayed. They were accustomed to a personal relationship with the "boss", who they could approach directly on matters of pay. Under the new system, rates of pay were standardised. This centralisation was resented by the men. Bureaucrats with no knowledge of local conditions attempted to step up production by forcing the colliers to accept more yardage on the coal-face. The immediate result of this policy was the Grimethorpe strike. The older men felt that though they were able to fill off the increase stunt then, in a few years they would find it impossible. Besides, they had not struggled in the past in order to submit to the dictates of professional windbags. At Waleswood recently, the pit went on strike because the

miners believed they could produce coal more efficiently in their own mine, in their own way. They were only defeated because other pits in the area did not co-operate.

Coal-mining is such an unhealthy and unpleasant occupation that society must replace coal by some cleaner source of heat and light. Mines are self-contained and should be treated as such. No two coal mines are the same in conditions or in any other way. The only real solution to the problem of coal now is the control of the mines by the actual miners working in them. A miner's safety depends on the skill of his comrades and on that broad basis of mutual trust the future must be built.

St. Annes, Lancs. F.T.
[The writer of this letter was for three years a Bevin Boy in S. Yorkshire.—Eds.]

JU-JU IN BATTERSEA PARK.

ARE anarchists to be numbered amongst the ju-ju men? It would appear so from Philip Sansom's article on the sculpture exhibition in Battersea Park. Who, in his right mind, wants to walk among these lumps of stone and "get to know them"? The Roman Catholic Church is more progressive: its statues are only supposed to act as reminders of the holy man. Mr. Sansom appears to believe in idol-worship.

Sure, man does not live by bread alone! He also needs other articles of diet, decent housing, some form of religious belief and in most cases suitable companionship. Granted these you can keep all the spiritual perversions which masquerade as "art".
Byfield, Rugby. T. A. YANDELL.

Philip Sansom answers:

MY enthusiasm for the Battersea show was precisely because the sculpture was being taken out of museums and galleries where it was being idolised and put into an everyday environment where it could take its natural place beside the cabbages and the kiddies playing, and not be thought of as rarefied in any way.

By this reader's reasoning, Shakespeare's plays or Vanzetti's letters are lumps of paper, Beethoven's (or Louis Armstrong's) music lumps of noise, a chair is simply something to sit on, a meal simply something to eat and neither artistry nor craftsmanship are worth knowing about.

But his last paragraph gives him away. His list of needs could be suited in some form of total State. His need for a religious belief shows that it is he who is looking for something outside of himself to worship and not I.

DEAR SIR . . .

One of those problems of etiquette which floor the most delicate mind has been troubling the Parliamentary Labour Party, I understand. The problem is, how should members be addressed by circular letter?

"Dear Sir or Madam" is considered too formal. "Dear Comrade" was O.K. until the Communists pinched it, and now it is too Red. "Dear Friend" had its advocates, then someone thought it would cause confusion to the Quakers. "Dear Brother" might have been all right if the trade unions hadn't long ago appropriated it.

The only thing left, the patient secretariat decided, was "Dear Colleague". This has been used. But Mr. Morrison is on the warpath. It's "too schoolmasterish" he considers as well as being inexact. Better go back, he thinks, to "Dear Sir or Madam".

He has me with him in a blitz against a favourite Labour Party word "organisational" ("Why not just organising?" he asks, "or organisation?") and—a new horror that is creeping in—"agitational".
News Chronicle, 1/6/48.

PRISONERS OF EVE

Out in the Middle East desert Rommel's Afrika Corps is still embarrassing the British, the Commons was told yesterday.

But there is a difference. The Germans are prisoners—employed as batmen to A.T.S. girls. Mr. J. Rankin (Lab., Tradeston) wanted to know what was being done about it.

Mr. Michael Stewart, Under-Secretary, War Office, said 21 Germans had been employed in the Fayid (Suez Canal) area during the past year. Women could not be employed in the desert, but local labour would be used as the prisoners were withdrawn.

Mr. Rankin understood that among the intimate duties which these prisoners had to perform (Laughter) was the duty of serving morning cups of tea to these young women while they were still in bed. (Renewed laughter.) If the men looked too happy in the process they were reported.

Mr. Stewart was not impressed.
News Chronicle, 2/6/48.

Through the Press

FULL EMPLOYMENT?

1. For the first time in many years a man with a factory in the East End has put up No Vacancies notices to stem the stream of applications for jobs.
2. A man who advertised recently for a chauffeur received 178 applications in 24 hours.
Evening Standard, 29/5/48.

3,500 REDUNDANT ON TRADING ESTATE

Since March, in spite of new factories coming into production, nearly 3,500 workers on the South Wales trading estate have been discharged as redundant. This is a fifth of the total number employed on the estate at the end of last year.

These figures were issued by the Welsh Board for Industry yesterday after a deputation from the Industrial Association of Wales and Monmouthshire had pressed the claims of trading estate factories, many of which, it was claimed, faced the prospect of having to close because of the slump in the sale of consumer goods and the large stocks of unsold goods now blocking the factories . . .

Firms manufacturing "luxury" goods found themselves with vast stocks on their hands. Hirwaun, chiefly dependent on radio production, was very badly hit, and one firm had a stock of 200,000 electric irons.
Manchester Guardian, 2/6/48.

VAGRANCY CENTRE

Because of the big increase in the number of vagrants, particularly young men, the Social Welfare Committee of the Essex County Council have been searching the county for suitable premises in which to set up a vagrancy rehabilitation centre.
Evening Standard, 27/5/48.

GOING TO THE DEPTHLESS POOL?

Two Tyneside branches of the British Legion did not take part as usual in the annual civic service at St. Cuthbert's Church, Hebburn, where the vicar (the Rev. T. A. Drewette) had refused to allow the Legion standard to be placed in the sanctuary of the church during the service because the Legion conference had decided to promote a football pool.

Referring to the matter in his service, the vicar said: "If I did one thing I insulted a public body. If I did the other I mocked Christ." The issue was not for him alone but for everyone in every sphere of life.
Manchester Guardian, 24/5/48.

BUSINESS IS BUSINESS

1. Ex-A.R.P. Steel Helmets. Suitable for any dust-up in any part of the world . . .! Approximately 5/10,000 available. Ex-London area. Prompt delivery. Price 1/6 each. Terms: Nett cash with order. Ref. 515/AXF/R.
From a Trade Circular of Messrs. E. & B.B. Ltd., 60, Highfield Rd., N.21.

SALE OF H.M.S. AJAX

Lord Hall (First Lord of the Admiralty) said in the House of Lords yesterday that the Chilean Government had asked early this year what price the British Government was prepared to accept for the sale of the cruiser *Ajax*. A price was quoted but there had been no firm offer to purchase and no further action has been taken.

Lord Teynham: Will you bear in mind that it might be better policy to restrict the sale of our cruisers to countries of the Commonwealth rather than dispose of them to those countries who have done certain things recently in the Antarctic?
Lord Hall: No offer from any Com-

monwealth country for a cruiser or other warship has been refused. We shall take every matter into consideration, either with Chile or any other country.

Lord Simon: If a price has been named by the Government and the offer has been accepted, will that make it a bargain?
Manchester Guardian, 2/6/48.

TIP FOR "FREEDOM" READERS!

A woman I know put her son down for Eton soon after he was born, 12 years ago.

His name went on the general waiting list. This was a mistake. His mother should have made sure it was on a housemaster's list.

So unless there is a failure among the examinees in September, he stands no chance of going to Eton in the autumn. Hundreds more boys are waiting for such chance vacancies.

Fees at Eton are now £278 a year. Nevertheless, lists are full until 1960.
Evening Standard, 26/5/48.

SEX PROBLEMS

Dr. David R. Mace, general secretary of Britain's Marriage Guidance Council, said here to-day that a three-year examination of 1,000 British families disclosed 546 couples had basic sex problems. Twenty-five per cent. of the 1,000 showed "gross ignorance" of sex matters.

Only 25 couples, he added, had read books on sex education.

Council research and advice saved approximately one-fourth of the 1,000 marriages from "going on the rocks".

Pre-marital sex relations showed a "definite correlation" with later marital trouble.

Dr. Mace attended the National Conference on Family Life in Washington this week.
A.P., 7/5/48.

What do *Freedom's* "too many sex articles" critics think now?

TUT! TUT! DARE WE?

Sir,—This week is Chelsea Week. Now that the dust is settled, is it not possible to honour one famous resident of this borough with a commemorative plaque? Oscar Wilde has contributed a great deal of enjoyment to people of all classes, and quite recently there have been revivals of his plays. Overseas visitors would be moved and interested to see a blue plaque outside No. 16 (now No. 48), Tite Street. Surely this can be arranged.
Yours, &c.,
IRENE PENGILLY.

19, Beaufort Mansions, Chelsea, S.W.3.
Letter to *The Times*, 24/5/48.

LOGICAL

Sir,—The subtle arguments of your correspondents are interesting. But surely there is just one vitally relevant consideration. If we are careful to keep open the door for the co-operation of Russia in the reintegration of a civilized world, it must follow that we do not shrink from co-operating in that great aim with a totalitarian police State. In that case there can be no justification for the boycott of Spain on the ground that it is a totalitarian police State. Of course if we decide definitely to boycott Stalin it may be reasonable to boycott Franco; but if not, not.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
GUY P. DAWNEY.
Letter to *The Times*, 24/5/48.

"I'M A BLUNT MAN I AM"

Mr. Eric Neve, K.C., defending, said that McCann had a bad record and Forrest had been discharged from the Army as a psychopathic delinquent.

"That is modern jargon," said Mr. Justice Hilberry. "It sounds grand and much better than being a convicted felon, or, in plain language, a thief and rogue."

Passing sentence the Judge said: "You are a good example of the type of criminal who is not willing to reform, who is bad and wants to continue bad, and on whom a lot of money has been wasted in vain endeavours to reform you."
The Star, 15/4/48.

THE NEW HEALTH SERVICE

(Continued from page 1)
 payments of stamps is followed by "falling out of benefit", but, by contrast, how unwillingly some times the insurance society is to cough up the money in time of absence from work through sickness. These delays are no doubt due to the business of checking up on the validity of claims; but they effectually efface the mutual aid aspect and substitute cold actuarial calculation, with all its indifference to the sharp prick of need. It does not seem likely that the centralization of insurance under the government will humanize the process in any way. No doubt it will merely introduce the inefficiency of red tape.

The Scheme Itself

The pamphlet issued by the Ministry of National Insurance explains the scheme thus: "In return for regular weekly contributions, it will provide cash benefits during sickness, injury, unemployment and widowhood, payments at childbirth and at death, and pensions for industrial disablement and on retirement from regular work. It is compulsory, and takes the place of the present Unemployment Insurance, National Health and Contributory Pensions Schemes, and the Workmen's Compensation Acts. The money to pay for these benefits comes partly from weekly contributions by insured people and employers and partly from payments out of taxes."

The amounts paid are considerable, being 9/1d. a week for an adult working man, of which he pays 4/11d. and his employer 4/2d. "Self-employed" adult males pay 6/2d. and "Non-employed" 4/8d. A man's contributions may be increased to cover his wife if she is not working in outside employment, and so not paying contributions on her own account.

No doubt the partial financing of the scheme out of taxation is intended to lower the burden of payment for low incomes, and in effect increase it for high incomes. But that does not mean that the aim of the scheme is to operate the idea of "to each according to his needs—irrespective of capacity to contribute. The Ministry's pamphlet makes that clear: "If you are self-employed or non-employed and your total income is less than £104 a year, you may be able to claim "exemption" from the Scheme. If "exemption" is granted you will not pay contributions, but you may lose benefits". (My italics.)

Gains Under The Health Scheme

The chief advantages come from what is in essence the extension of Lloyd George's National Health Insurance to

cover not merely employed persons, but also their families. Medical treatment is therefore free to all in the sense that individual acts of medical service do not have to be paid for in the shape of fees. This means that as much medical service as the occasion demands can (in theory) be supplied without worries about doctor's bills. How satisfactory that service will be will depend on the individual doctor and the conditions under which such insurance practice is carried out.

There is no doubt that this provides considerable benefit, especially in regard to the treatment of children, many of whose minor ailments are to-day neglected because of the burden of fees. Such neglect may lead to serious disability later on; "running ears", for example, if untreated may lead to partial or total deafness with all its curtailment of earning power, not to speak of its crippling of individual development.

The fact that the rich are also provided with free treatment is a somewhat academic advantage of the scheme. Poverty compels poor patients to put up with the inevitable hours in surgery waiting rooms; but the better off will prefer to avoid long waits and the company of the "lower orders" by paying fees to doctors practising outside the scheme. The envious type of socialist would doubtless like to see this loophole stopped for the well-to-do; to do so would not improve the lot of the insured patient, however, and the aim should be to raise the standard of comfort in treatment for them rather than to engage in more levelling.

Some Snags

An obvious snag is the high contributions. This increase when added to the income tax, trade union contributions, and any other incidental deduction from the wage packet, will lighten it considerably on Friday nights. The struggle put up by the doctors against the Act has also been motivated in part (some will say a very small part, but they will be mostly reformist socialist types) by a realization that the conditions under which medical services will be given will be very far from ideal. If looked at in detail, however, the scheme will probably seem to have more advantages than snags.

It is quite otherwise if one looks at it in broad outline, and also in its political implications. A German woman, long resident in this country, remarked to me, "So they are copying Hitler already!" and the remark is not wholly fantastic.

The idea of mutual aid inherent in insurance scheme aims at insuring against natural catastrophes—or should do. It is obviously idiotic to incur against the effects of, say, bad drains, for the rational thing to do is to improve them. The Labour Party's Scheme derives from the Beveridge Plan, and its whole conception

CEMENT FOR EXPORT

MAYBE we are wrong. Perhaps there is no housing shortage; perhaps 22,000 building workers are not really out of work. But we have the word of Mr. Charles Key, Minister of Works, that Britain can now export cement—a basic building material if ever there was one.

Mr. Key does not say whether the cement is going to ruined Europe, or for what purpose. What he does say, according to the *Daily Mirror* (25/5/48) is:

"The point I was trying to make is that we are now able to have a properly organised home building scheme and at the same time have limited exports of some materials."

It's a pity the home building scheme doesn't build homes, but we can't have everything, can we?

THEIR LOSS, OUR GAIN

Charlie Chaplin, said to have cancelled his projected trip to England because he was not sure of receiving a re-entry permit for the States, will base his next picture on Paul Vincent Carroll's *Shadow and Substance*, a piece of Irish mysticism wrapped around the legend of St. Brigid.

"Monsieur Verdoux", panned by most of the U.S. critics for political reasons, has netted £75,000 in U.S.; cost £500,000.

News Chronicle, 26/5/48.

NO SHORTAGE OF THESE

Medals awarded by Britain for the First World War totalled 15,327,763.

The Leader, 29/5/48.



SUDDEN AFFECTION

is a liberal one. When the Beveridge Scheme first was published we denounced it in *War Commentary*, *Freedom's* predecessor. We pointed out that it made no attempt to eliminate poverty, only to insure against its worst effects. As such its effect was actually to stabilize poverty; by seeking to make it just tolerable. The same criticism must be brought against the scheme of July 5th.

There are in addition other hidden trends of a pernicious character. The operation of the scheme provides a complete register of every man, woman and child in the country and a means of checking up on them. This is illustrated by the new medical cards. Instead of the complicated system of Approved Society's name or symbol, and the individual's number with the Society, the new card has quite a simple system of letters and a short number. They use, in fact the National Registration numbers. This means that the struggle to abolish identity cards has been partially hamstrung by their virtual incorporation into a social service.

And yet another step has been taken along the road that ties the population to the State by making it dependant on a State operated scheme for an essential social service. Such measures were a substantial factor in securing the stability of the Fascist regimes, and of the new one-party democracies and their prototype the Soviet Union. Such schemes owe their pernicious effects to the fact that they encourage the irresponsible dependance of individuals on the State. The fact that the alternative, under capitalism, is destitution and the sharper anomalies of poverty, does not make the Liberal-Socialistic alternative a sound proposition.

Towards the Slave State

The only rational insurance against the evils of poverty and industrialism and old age under the wages system is the abolition of poverty and the wages system, and the transformation of industrialism to serve human ends instead of grinding up human beings. Once again the evils of the old system and the evils of the reformist adjustments of it is seen to lie in an anarchist solution.

J.H.

PRESS FUND

Johannesburg: J.S. 7/6; London: G.G. 2/6; London: K.B. 1/6; Aberdeen: W.M.R. 4/3; York: H.A.A. 10/-; Bristol: P.W. 2/-; London: P.O. 1/6; Leeds: P.M.H. 11/6; Cambridge: Anon 5/-; Stirling: R.A.B. 10/-; Brighton: G.S. 2/6; Parkstone: L.H. 1/-; Bideford: N.S. -/6d.; Sidmouth: J.S. 1/6; Withensea: J.M.D. 7/6; Berkeley: J.W. 14/-.

Previously acknowledged ...	£4 2 9
1948 TOTAL TO DATE ...	£195 12 11
	£199 15 8

Have you received a Renewal Reminder?
 Be sure of receiving **FREE-DOM** regularly by sending your renewal without delay! When Renewing your Subscription why not order 2 copies and pass one on to a friend?

'Two Years for Swearing' Case

In a recent issue we drew attention to the case of Albert Aston, of Dudley, whose sentence of two years was doubled by the Recorder after he used an "offensive remark" about him.

He appealed to the Court of Criminal Appeal and the sentence was halved. The Recorder stated that he increased the sentence after further consideration of Aston's record of deliberate house-breaking. Lord Chief Justice Goddard said that if the Recorder had told him that, things would have been different; but what he said would lead one to feel that he was increasing the sentence because

of the offensive remark. It was improper to do that.

"The price of liberty is eternal vigilance." We shall always give prominence to such cases.

THE WISHFUL JUDGE

AT times the people who administer the law appear to be so divorced from reality as to seem like the inhabitants of another planet. And no doubt between the lives of Mr. Justice Croom-Johnson and Mr. Capps, a Norfolk net-worker, there really is an immense gulf. But that doesn't worry the learned judge.

Mr. Capps was unfortunate enough to step off the pavement into a motor-cycle, the pillion rider of which was thrown off and fatally injured. Damages were awarded again Mr. Capps for negligence. The amount awarded by Mr. Justice Croom-Johnson was—£2,500.

This may not seem much to a widow and three children for the loss of a husband and father, but Mr. Capps, who is nearly 60 and is not covered by insurance, earns £4 10s. per week. At which rate weekly it would take eleven years to pay the damages—leaving nothing to live on.

People should not be careless, of course, and we have full sympathy with the bereaved family. But how can the net worker pay a sum like that? We don't pretend to know. Ask the learned judge.

RENT SPECULATORS

During the first three months of 1948 a total of 3,892 new cases were referred to the 77 rent tribunals in England and Wales, making a grand total of 22,773 cases since the setting up of the first tribunal under the Furnished Houses (Rent Control) Act in June, 1946.

London tribunals remain among the busiest in the country. At the end of March, Paddington had very nearly reached 3,000 references and Stepney and Hammersmith were both over 1,000. Birmingham (two tribunals) had over 800 cases; Leeds, Manchester, and Brighton, each over 500; and Coventry and Portsmouth over 400 references each.

Manchester Guardian, 20/5/48.

REPORT FROM CHINA

(Continued from page 4)
 the present critical situation will bring a rapid and sudden development and growth.

As for publications, there were before the Great War many periodicals, and translations of Bakunin, Kropotkin, Malatesta, Jean Grave, S. Fauré, Goldman, Berkman, Rocker, etc. Despite all the present difficulties, our comrade Li-Pei-kan is continuing with the publication of the complete works of Kropotkin. Translations of *Evolution and Revolution*, by Elisee Reclus, and of Bakunin's *God and the State*, have been published at Shanghai. At Chuen-tcheon, Fou-kien, there is a monthly review with a leaning towards anarchism, and at Chengtu we are struggling to continue the publication of pamphlets and of the periodical *Thought* which appears every ten days. A duplicated paper *Knowledge and Emancipation* and an internal bulletin will soon begin. Our comrades at Nanking hold frequent meetings and are preparing a comprehensive review.

So far we have not been able to make contact with the Japanese anarchists or to learn what is happening to our friends in Korea, occupied

by the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., but we do get news from our Indian comrades.

Before the war we printed pamphlets and illustrations on the Spanish revolution, and this work is still going on. We send our greetings to the European anarchists and we regret that in our present weakness, the rigid regulations of the government prevent us from making any more concrete and effective manifestation of solidarity with our foreign comrades.

LU-CHIEN BO.

FREEDOM
 Anarchist Fortnightly
 Price 3d.

Postal Subscription Rates
 6 months 4/6 (U.S.A. \$1)
 12 months 8/6 (U.S.A. \$2)

Special Subscription Rates for 2 copies,
 6 months 7/6 (\$1.50)
 12 months 15/- (\$3)

All Cheques, P.O.'s and Money Orders should be made out to **FREEDOM PRESS**, crossed a/c Payee, and addressed to the publishers

FREEDOM PRESS
 27 Red Lion Street
 London, W.C.1 England
 Tel: Chancery 8364