

In this Issue :

- Land Notes - - p. 3
- Adventure Playground - p. 3
- The Story of a Love
Affair - p. 4

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"Freedom is the one purport,
wisely aimed at, or unwisely,
of all man's strugglings, toilings,
and sufferings on this earth."
—THOMAS CARLYLE.

Vol. 19, No. 36

September 6th, 1958

Threepence

Our Hitler Youth

THE FAILURES OF OUR SOCIETY

IT IS SAID that people get the government they deserve. If it is true then it is equally true of all social phenomena, and millions of well-meaning Londoners may be asking themselves to-day what they have done to deserve the ugliness that hit their city this week.

The answer is: *nothing*. They have done nothing to make their city a place to live in rather than to exist in, nothing to build society instead of a concentration of population, nothing to build an environment of love and security instead of hatred, competition, frustrations and latent violence.

Last week the violence ceased to remain latent. It burst out and filled the streets with howling Teddy boys thirsting for blood. And it doesn't really matter whose blood. Coloured people are a convenient target with all the qualities of a scapegoat, but when they are lacking the Teddies will fight among themselves.

Now that riots are occurring in London, following the 'race riot' last week in Nottingham, now that the emptiness in the drab lives of underprivileged youth has been filled with violence on the streets—now the Press discovers that there are such things as sexual jealousy and housing problems, but what it will not discover, because it doesn't care to look, are the deep-rooted causes for hate which only find their excuse in racialism but are in fact built on the very foundations of our society.

The Pattern for Servility

Authoritarian society has two cornerstones: violence and hate. From the violence of authority—king, despot, church, dictator, party,

No Guidance on the Bomb

ONE might suppose that after the statement made by the Lambeth Conference committee that: "War as a means of settling international disputes is incompatible with the teaching and example of our Lord Jesus Christ", the logical step would be an outright condemnation of war with a directive to the flock to refuse to take part in it. Christians who feel that they need guidance in this matter will be disappointed, because although the committee urges that the use of nuclear weapons should be banned by international agreement, it is divided over the immediate steps to be taken. It is argued by some that it is necessary to retain these weapons believing that if they were abandoned it would increase the possibility of an "unscrupulous" attack. Others argue that the use of nuclear weapons is unjustifiable under any circumstances.

It is stated that the fact that the committee is divided does not "absolve any from making a personal decision".

We suspect the motives of the Church for the reason that on most other matters of Christian dogma not involving the state or the "national security", the Church is not prepared to advocate the use of individual conscience only.

To do so would be to deny the supreme "truth" and authority of the Church, and would encourage the heresy that individuals on all matters affecting their lives are the best judge of what is good for them.

democratic government—the pattern for servility is set. And because servility is hard to bear, objects of hate have to be provided so that frustrated aggression may assume the appearance of strength.

When we discussed last week the fact that there had to be a crisis, it was only a variation of the theme of the scapegoat—the enemy. Every authority needs an enemy in order to keep its supporters in a state of fear and therefore reliance on that authority. In order to make you believe in, need and love God, you have to be made to believe in, fear and hate the Devil. In the most primitive societies where witch doctors hold sway they do so through the superstitious fears of ignorant people. When Billy Graham brings his message of the love of gentle Jesus, he never forgets to breathe hell-fire and thus play upon both the fears and the need for love of the ignorant people who fill his arena.

And the modern religious institution—the State—follows the same pattern. For Hitler to be God to the Germans, the Jews had to be the Devil. For Stalin to govern the Russian people their frustrations had to be canalised into hatred for Trotsky, and Joe's particular genius lay in always providing as Satan those who might otherwise challenge him for the position of God.

Plenty of Hate

The strength and long-lasting stability of the British establishment owes a lot to the fact that, due to its imperial position, there has never been a shortage of outside enemies to provide the hate-objects. From Napoleon to Khrushchev, from Indians, Irish and Africans to Germans, Japanese and Russians the needs of Empire have coincided with the needs to distract the people at home, and to corrupt the Labour movement.

It is not generally recognised how much more hate is catered for than love in our Society. It is true that Christianity, the supposed source of morality in the West, speaks in terms of brotherly love. But nobody really falls for that stuff from that direction any more. Christians have supported too many hate-campaigns, from

the Crusades to the Inquisition to the world wars of this century to be able to claim any respect for love—neighbour or turn-the-other-cheek.

Christian love in fact is a very limited affair. You must love God and you must love one wife or one husband until death do you part. You must limit your love to your own family circle, which is sacrosanct, and bring your children up with the same narrow conceptions. Love between members of the same sex is a sin and to extend your love to foreigners is seditious, and the Church must keep in with the State. To have any sexual partner—with or without love—outside of marriage is taboo, and once you are married—with or without love, with or without hate—that's the way you've got to stay.

Victims of the British Bomb?

A Naval officer who served at Christmas Island last year during the H-bomb tests has been killed by a blood disease which medical experts say can be caused by atomic radiation.

He is 29-year-old Lieutenant David Cyril Franklin, who died in the Royal Naval Hospital, near Gosport, from aplastic anaemia, similar to leukaemia.

A hospital spokesman said last night: "There is a question of security in this matter."

But later the Admiralty issued a statement: "From all information available there are no grounds for considering that the fact that Lieutenant Franklin was serving in the Christmas Island area has any bearing whatever on the illness."

Lieutenant Franklin, from Tickhill (Yorks), was married with two sons. He served in the aircraft carrier Warrior, which was the headquarters ship for the British atomic tests.

News Chronicle, 30/8/58.

★

The claim for a pension for the parents of Sapper William Brian Morris, of Conway Road, Penlan,

The Christians hate the flesh, which is the source of all love, and the channel for all enrichment of the senses as well as the field for frustration. Christianity demands hate, coupled with the humility and servility which are also essential to this life-denying creed, mental and emotional conflict becomes inevitable.

Popular Horror

On the secular side of our society hate and violence pay handsome dividends. The cinema, which has been so shaken by the competition of television, is answering back with a formula which seems to be dragging the customers in: Horror. The popularity of the present wave of horror films demands closer analysis than we have room for here, but that they are satisfying

some need on the part of the public is obvious.

How much identification is there with Dracula as he sinks his vampire fangs into that lovely neck? How much escape from the humdrum existence of every-day life and the fear of the real horrors of H-bomb reality is there to be got from revelling in the fantasies of Frankenstein? How much satisfaction of early unfulfilled desires to get revenge for adult domination is to be had from seeing a father turned into a fly? How much frustrated destructive urge released as the colossal monster smashes the skyscrapers of the city?

These films clearly satisfy the perverted needs of sick people. But only for a time. The satisfaction is after all only temporary and vicarious. But what it does is to open wider horizons of human—or rather inhuman—behaviour. Nothing you can do on the streets with a bicycle chain is worse than Frankenstein's bubbling baths of human parts. The concept of what is horrible is pushed so far that simple physical violence is no longer horrible.

The horror film may be providing for the State a signal service in performing this function. It is harder to be shocked by the children of Hiroshima when one is used to the bride of Frankenstein and easier to push the reality of, say, Belsen, into the back of the mind if the front is conditioned with were-wolves.

Continued on p. 3

RIGHT & PROPER

The gravediggers who yesterday had nearly completed the grave of Mr. Strydom in the old cemetery were to-day displaced by white students of Pretoria University, who included Mr. Daan Verwoerd, son of the Minister of Native Affairs.

The students' representative council to-day asked the Pretoria city council to be allowed to dig the grave rather than the Africans, who yesterday were working under white supervision.

—The Times, 28/8/58.

SOUTH AFRICA ON TO DICTATORSHIP

J. G. STRYDOM, late Prime Minister of South Africa, whose funeral took place in Pretoria last week, attended by a hundred thousand mourners and a flag bearing the strange device, "God is Present", was a sufficiently unpleasant racist that even the other professional politicians balked at making the usual platitudinous orations which normally follow the death of a Prime Minister. It was left to a representative of the Dutch Reformed Church, the Reverend A. M. Meiring, to deliver the final absurdity upon the death of Strydom as: "the passing of a father in the highest sense of the word."

As we write it is not yet decided who is to be the next Prime Minister, but of the three most likely to succeed, (Verwoerd, Donges and Swart), it seems almost certain that Dr. Hendrik Verwoerd from the Transvaal will come out on top.

Verwoerd is more of an extremist than was Strydom, and it is expected that he will impose a stricter régime of apartheid than ever before. But it will be more than that, for he is also a fanatic of the cause of Afrikaner domination, a cause which has already achieved the greater part of its aims. As one South African M.P. has put it:

"As a result of the historical evolution of party politics in South Africa the following posi-

tion exists in the country: first the Afrikaner folk is identified with the Nationalist party and the Nationalist party with Afrikanerdom. Second, the entire Government of the country is in the hands exclusively of Afrikaans-speaking Afrikanerdom."

This is tantamount to saying that far from being a democratic State, South Africa as at present constituted in terms of its elected representatives, has a one-party system—a dictatorship. Whether or not this is already the case, it is certainly the end to which Verwoerd and his adherents are wholeheartedly committed; and it becomes equally obvious that the extreme Nationalists want South Africa to become a republic as soon as possible.

This presents some possibility of a split in the Nationalist Party—between the northern extremists on the one hand and the Cape "moderates" on the other—with the English-speaking South Africans casting anxious eyes towards heaven and the helpless United Party.

But it is too late for compromise and gradualism and a moderate attitude. Afrikaner Nationalism is in full flood, and like German National Socialism will express itself in racial hatred and an ever-increasing urge to dominate over all. Verwoerd will become the high priest of hate, the arrogant dictator.

The T.U.C. Relaxes at Bournemouth

THE T.U.C. is holding its conference at Bournemouth this week, the first visit since 1926. In the words of Tom Yates, "we are going to show the town how much we have changed since then". One of the few truthful statements, we suggest, likely to be uttered throughout the performance.

Whatever revolutionary aims the trade unions had in the far off days of the general strike have been lost. To-day, the many knighted (and ever hopeful) ex-workers who make trade union policy are more concerned with not embarrassing the government—whether Labour or Conservative—than in the kind of militant action which would give their members a bigger slice of the cake.

Trade Union members will not get much encouragement from Tom Yates, this year's president, who also told newspaper reporters that they chose Bournemouth because the air is very relaxing. Not that we really

expect the T.U.C. to come up with an original answer to the problems of unemployment and wages.

According to a News Chronicle Gallup Poll, the main worry of people to-day "is unemployment and a possible recession whatever their party and whether or not they are members of a trade union".

One person in every three, according to this poll; "Lacks confidence that his job is safe, and every one in ten expects to be unemployed during the next twelve months."

Even if the trade unions were militant organisations, and the leaders less ambitious for themselves, their is no permanent solution within the present economic system.

Nevertheless, the trade unions could, even within the limits of capitalism, be much more militant than they are. Alas, the government and worried employers need have no fears that any revolutionary ideas will be bred at Bournemouth—the air is too relaxing.

THE L.A.G. SUMMER SCHOOL LECTURES ON 'WAR & PEACE' MEN AND WEAPONS

(Continued from previous issue)

ANIMALS do not fight solely in combat for a sexual object, nor is combat the only means by which a male secures for himself the favours of a female. It is in sexually motivated fights however, that animals show most ferocity and persistence. About other matters, such as shelter and food, conflicts are fairly peacefully solved by a clearly defined social hierarchy or distribution of territory. Thus the sources of man's aggressiveness and daring are to be traced back to situations of sexual competition and frustration, but the ravages and achievements that make them conspicuous are due to their transposition to other fields of competition, to their disentanglement from any obvious sexual goal. History begins when woman ceases to be man's overriding concern, and males are more interested in one another, when cities are built, and pursuits emerge that are not strictly biological, when man finds in the purposes and practice of war the most peremptory affirmation of his maleness, and an effective compensation to his subordinate rôle in generation.

My object is to account for war, and I contend that it is rooted in human nature, and has tempted many a man and many a nation to seek in it the most thrilling experience, and the greatest opportunity for self-fulfilment. I do not deny the presence in man of other needs or potentialities, or that self-fulfilment may be sought and achieved in other activities besides fighting and killing. On the other hand, though competition, and the urge to come out top, to prove oneself better, more meaningful and important than others, are probably indelible characteristics of human maleness, they do not suffice to explain the spirit of system and organization that goes with most wars, especially of the modern variety. The urge to triumph over a rival is undoubtedly instinctive, but the power to do so, the power to defeat a rival or a combination of rivals is not in anybody's biological equipment. The power which any man has in himself to conquer, kill or subjugate his rivals is small, while the effects of war are great. The destructiveness of war, therefore must be assigned to something which is in its greater part external to the individual, and this something we now proceed to investigate.

The species to which we belong has

FREEDOM BOOKSHOP OPEN DAILY

(Open 10 a.m.—6.30 p.m., 5 p.m. Sats.)

New Books . . .

Never Come Morning
Nelson Algren 15/-
Amyntas André Gide 21/-
Life Plus Ninety Years
Nathan Leopold 21/-
Fads and Fables in Modern
Sociology and Related Society
P. A. Sorokin 50/-
How to be a Communist Vayko 12/6
His Excellency Emile Zola 18/-
The Dollar and the Vatican
Avro Manhattan 21/-

Cheap Editions . . .

The Great Man Al Morgan 2/-
The Dark Ages W. P. Ker 4/-
Human Types Raymond Firth 4/-
Language: a Modern Synthesis
Joshua Whatmough 4/-

Second-Hand . . .

My House in Málaga
Sir Peter Chalmers-Mitchell 7/6
The Meaning of Money
Hartley Withers 2/6
The Writer and Politics
George Woodcock 5/-
Democracy, Debts and
Disarmament Walton Newbold 3/-
Democracy in France
David Thomson 3/6
The Left was never Right
Quintin Hogg 2/-
How the Labourer Lives
B. Seeborn Rowntree 3/-
A Preface to Politics
Walter Lippmann 3/6
The War of Steel and Gold
H. N. Brailsford 3/6
Inquest on Peace Vigilantes 3/-
War: its Nature, Cause and Cure
Loves Dickinson 3/-
Commonsense and Morality
Ethel Mannin 3/6

We can supply ANY book required, including text-books. Please supply publisher's name if possible, but if not, we can find it. Scarce and out-of-print books searched for—and frequently found!

Postage free on all items

Obtainable from
**27, RED LION STREET,
LONDON, W.C.1**

been called *homo sapiens* because it is set apart from other species by its power to reason, learn and understand. An even more remarkable feature of distinction, however, seemed to Bergson to be man's ability to make tools, and he suggested accordingly that our species should be called *homo faber*. The two are not mutually exclusive or contradictory, but neither must they be confused. They correspond to two different lines of development of the brain, the one in function of the vocal organs, and primarily for purposes of communication, the other in function of the hands and primarily for purposes of action. It is possible to conceive *homo sapiens* as fitting indefinitely in the general scheme of nature because his peculiar preoccupations are with himself, with his kind and his gods. *Homo faber*, on the other hand, cannot be so conceived because the proper of his fabrilty is to alter his natural surroundings, and to elicit profound modifications by rebound in the order and satisfaction of his desires.

Bergson defined tools as an extension of bodily organs. One particular kind of tool, presumably the most ancient, is the weapon, by which a man extends the power to hit, to hurt and to kill inherent in his body, and particularly in his hands. With a weapon a man may kill at a distance, with limited and pleasurable exertion, with little or no danger to himself. A weapon may thus bring all the advantages of daring, with little of

its discomforts. Few animals can hold their own against an armed man. Most vulnerable to the weapons devised and wielded by man is man himself. Possession of weapons, and ability to use them, confidence in their power, and the knowledge, when correct, that the "enemy" has nothing to match them with, is the best single and simplest explanation of many acts of aggression. Once brought into existence, weapons make war all but inevitable, for the organ elicits the function. Weapons are not made to rust or obsolesce. Even if there are no special reasons and occasions to use them, they will be used in order to test what by an irony of language is called their "goodness", or because he who has got them is expected by others to use them at the first opportunity.

Since, by definition, tools and weapons are not an integral part of the human organism, all men remain fundamentally the same, and fundamentally share in a fairly equal measure of vulnerability and power. But because some of them can regularly avail themselves of tools and weapons, which are not at the disposal of others, differences are established in their style of life which make them nearly as strange to one another as are animals of different species. We think ourselves superior to other animals for no better reason than because we are able to destroy them, if such is our need or whim. Similarly with those human groups who think themselves superior to

others, their prime and final argument is their power to keep them down or at bay, and to destroy them if they wish. No freedom, no equality and no fraternity are possible as long as in any given society some men are armed and some are not.

In many societies of the past to be armed meant to be free, and a slave or a serf was he who had no weapons or, having them, would not dare, or would not know how, to use them effectively. In modern societies the situation is different, since the modern soldier is in a sense the most thoroughly controlled and cajoled slave that ever was. Yet, as H. L. Mencken observed, "the strictest military discipline imaginable is still lower than that prevailing in the average assembly-line. The soldier, at worst, is still able to exercise the highest conceivable functions of freedom—that is, he is permitted to steal and to kill. No discipline prevailing in peace gives him anything even remotely resembling this." The freedom given the soldier against the enemy is a terrible freedom, and the rigours of military discipline are not meant as much to ensure prompt execution of orders in battle as to immunize the soldier against the temptation of using against his officers the terrible freedom given him by his weapons.

Military discipline further embodies the techniques of arousing and frustrating anger, and of producing stimuli for aggression whilst blocking its very outlet. It is consequently a relief for the soldier when he is finally brought face to face with an "enemy" on which he can vent all the hatred with which his life has been purposefully poisoned. This, and other equally correct observations, do not explain, however, how the soldier who is ready in battle to kill and to be killed does not make use of this readiness to free himself from military slavery and to punish the people who in his experience are the immediate cause of his thwartings. I hope, with what remains of this article, to help solve this puzzle, and furnish at the same time a guide to the understanding of war, as it is waged in modern times, in its relation to human nature.

When a man makes use of a weapon or a tool, he affects his surroundings more efficiently and more extensively than he would if he had none; but he is affected by it in turn, sometimes very deeply. If weapons and tools are an extension of his organs, so can his organs, and the mind that rules them, be considered an extension of weapons and tools when they are all combined in one single operation. The specific purposes for which tools and weapons are intended impress their specification on the persons who use them. Proficiency and

enjoyment in the exercise of a function particular to a weapon or a tool are signs of a high degree of identification of man with that weapon or tool. A man tends to be happier or at least less unhappy, when using the tool in the handling of which he has become proficient, than he is in other situations where he has only his mind and his body to do anything with.

One definition of a machine is that it is a multiplication and co-ordination of tools. Tool-identified men acting together and combining their different activities for the attainment of one specific purpose can be said to be machine-line. Organization, as the word implies, is a combination of human activities modelled on the unity presiding to those of a living organism. An organization, however, resembles a machine more than it does an organism when its structure is so rationalized, and its operation is made so precise, as to eliminate the multiplicity of often conflicting trends by which an organism is animated. It resembles a machine rather than an organism particularly when the force that sets it in motion is not inherent in it, and when the decision of setting it in motion, and the choice of the material on which it will operate, lies outside the competence of its component parts. A state, a party and, above all, an army, are all machine-like organizations.

Daring is of two kinds. There is daring to carry out an action, to meet the obstacles lying in the path of its execution, and to face its immediate effects; and there is daring in conceiving and deciding upon its execution. Only the second kind is truly destiny-fulfilling. Ambitioned by every man, it is amply exercised only by a few because, as it entails the fullest commitment, it brings mortification of self with each unsuccessful essay. Machine-line organizations, and the fact that practically everyone is incorporated in one or another of them, leave little scope for its exercise. Yet it cannot be entirely abolished and suppressed, and that explains how out of place, how frustrated and in disharmony with his destiny each thoughtful man feels, who has not yet resigned himself to be no more than a tool.

So, to conclude, war is to-day the result of huge machine-like organizations built for the express purpose of murder and destruction, and of a few men who are in a position and dare to set them in motion. The anarchist position is therefore justified: (1) in asserting that, if war is to be abolished, the first thing to do is to break up all machine-like organizations, and to dare conceive of actions conducive to the attainment of ends of his choice.

GIOVANNI BALDELLI

BOOK REVIEW

The Face of War

**OTHER MEN'S GRAVES,
Diary of an S.S. man, by Peter
Neumann, Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 21s.**

THE publisher's blurb asks, "How do men get that way?" We read of the appalling crimes of the S.S. and tend to put it down to the innate sadism of the German character. But these crimes are committed by other peoples too, so that cannot be the answer. Neumann's autobiography shows us all the stages of his training, from the Hitler Youth to the S.S. So we are able to understand how it was possible to turn an ordinary young man into a fanatical warrior. Or at least that was what the training was supposed to do. Neumann, and his friends who went through the same training with him, never really lost their essential humanity. For it must be pointed out that the blurb is somewhat misleading. Neumann was in the Waffen S.S. He was a soldier rather than a policeman. The concentration camp guards were rather looked down upon by the other sections of the S.S.

The point is important, because there is nothing that he says or does that could not have been said and done by an ordinary British soldier, professional or conscript, in the course of his ordinary duty, had the circumstances been the same. It is easy for the comfortable British to condemn the kind of atrocities described in this book. Situated in relative safety, even in modern conditions of warfare (or at least prior to the A-bomb), on their tight little island, with the threat of foreign invasion kept at a distance by their sea-moat, it is difficult for them to realise what it is like to have frontiers to the East and West, and potential enemies on either side of you.

The reader will find in this book no concentration camp horrors. All the atrocities are the logical and natural consequences of the soldier's trade. Neumann remains to the end a kindly person. He has a Jewish girl-friend to whom he remains loyal throughout, if not "faithful" in the usual sense. (He is chosen to go as a human stud to a Nazi breeding station). But to him the Russians and Mongolians he fights are sub-human, just as the Negroes are to the British. At the end he draws no conclusions, and one is left wondering whether he came eventually to a rejection of war, and whether this rejection was the cause of writing this book, or whether he still believes in the cause for which he fought. I have a feeling, from the general style, that he no longer believes in Hitler, but that he is still a German patriot and anti-Russian.

There is nothing that he says that I have not heard said, in defence of atrocities and so forth, by conservative and patriotic British people. The Anglo-Saxons were not a specially humane

people, and in any case are Germans too, while the Celtic section of the populations have a long series of massacres to their credit. If the Russians occupied this country the same bestialities would occur on each side as occur in this book. But this sort of statement will seem almost needless to anarchists, who are accustomed to be sceptical of patriotic claims. Let them look nearer home then. I am convinced that an anarchist war, waged by anarchist militias, would end in exactly the same way. The necessities of a war for survival are absolute. Kill or be killed. The ideals for which the war was begun cease to have any meaning. Gouging, dagger fighting, executing prisoners (anarchists cannot make people prisoners without betraying the ideals for which they claim to fight anyway) and the use of weapons like phosphorus dropped from planes and flame-throwers, not to mention the H-bomb in all probability, would be the order of the day, if the revolutionary forces were not to suffer defeat.

Military necessity would demand the torture of prisoners, even women, since Amazon fighters are again becoming fashionable after three thousand years absence from the world's battlefields. Information must be got quickly. It is all described here. And, once their blood was thoroughly roused, anarchist militiamen would probably behave just as did the S.S. men (who in their Hitler Youth days had taken an oath to defend women and children). The author states quite frankly that he could hardly care less about the fate of the captured men or women. He points out that one soon gets used to killing, and one ceases to feel very strongly about it.

Soldiers begin by killing the enemy and end by killing each other. "The sword becomes all edge." (Gerald Heard). The book ends with a disastrous retreat from South Russia to Austria. Those who run away, even staff officers, are ruthlessly killed by their own people. The whole thing begins to degenerate into meaninglessness. Killing for the sake of killing. An almost mechanical habit.

In the end Neumann himself is captured by the Russians. Mainly because he found a gun amongst a heap of dead. His original intention was to put a wounded friend out of his misery, but the habit and desire for revenge was too strong, and he fired on a Russian patrol.

War is unthinkable for people who desire freedom. Fight for hate, for loot, for women, for excitement, for self-defence or for revenge, but never, never fight for freedom. If the anarchists ever become sufficiently strong to use violence in defence of a revolution, their own violence will rot the whole basis of their society.

ARTHUR W. ULOTH.

EXHIBITION

A Creative Thinker

Pictures by Oliver Caldecott at the Coffee House, Northumberland Avenue. August 24-October 4.

THE Coffee House, according to a blurb which appears in all its exhibition catalogues, was "founded by a group of people drawn from several professions . . . to provide a social meeting place in pleasant surroundings and informal atmosphere", and "In order to encourage young and coming Artists, it was decided to give the wall space of the Coffee House for monthly exhibitions of painting."

There is no doubt about the commercial success of the Coffee House enterprise, but socially and artistically it must be a great disappointment to its founders. Many of the regular customers are colourful bores and poseurs, nostalgic for a past that never was, awaiting a fame that cannot come; and fully half of the exhibitions which appear on the walls are appropriate to the general atmosphere of the place.

The current exhibition, a collection of 29 drawings by Oliver Caldecott, is better than most. It is, indeed, worth going to see, if only for the sake of the half-dozen best exhibits; but the quality of the work varies considerably. Caldecott has a variety of subjects and themes—abstract, cartoonish and social-realist—but he appears to start all his drawings with a brush or pen full of black ink, a blank sheet of paper, an idea, and nothing else; no roughs, no guide lines and no models. This manner of drawing, because it does not permit changes of mind, makes for freshness, simplicity and discipline in the successful drawings; but it causes also a high percentage of failures.

Now every work of art is something of a disappointment to the conscientious artist, and a young visual artist, especially one who works in so difficult a

medium, is not to be blamed if he cannot himself pick out the best of his work. But the fact remains that some few of the drawings here would have been rejected by any hanging committee, and tend to lower the whole tone of the show.

The most pleasing drawings are those done entirely with a stylo pen. Generally humorous in subject, and very economical in line, they seem to have been bashed in very quickly, but they have obviously needed a good deal of time for thought and practice. *On the bus* suggests the expressions and clothes of a bus conductor and passengers, and the furniture of a bus, in a very few lines indeed; and *A.R.A.*, while it is not quite so restrained in its line, succeeds in portraying some complex expressions with very simple means. A pompous, self-satisfied artist is depicted leaning on his painting of a very snooty woman, and lecturing three reporters who are dutifully writing down what he says, but really indifferent.

One drawing, *Chelsea Cat*, which shows a nude model and some artists, is drawn in the same sort of line with some areas painted in solid, and is equally successful. But freer brushwork tends to cause gloom and confusion, and the half dozen drawings coloured with pastel (after being drawn in ink) are a bit overworked and dull in colour. Perhaps the technique of thinking out an idea and then putting it down quickly has most chance of success with the most restrained medium.

The thick white plasterboard frames are a pleasant expression of ingenuity and visual sensibility, and the general feeling of Caldecott's work is one of careful thought and genuine creative power, quite out of keeping with an atmosphere which a writer in *Soho News* has called "Coughy House".

D.R.

OUR HITLER YOUTH

Continued from p. 1

The twenty-year-old of to-day was born in 1938. The first vital seven years of his life, therefore, was spent in war-time conditions. The drone of the bombing plane and the crunch of the bombs, the thunder of the guns—this was the background music to a life among adults pre-occupied with the restrictions of rationing, fumbling in the black-out, glorying in the violence of 'our side', anxious, afraid and bewildered, rallied only by an old man's call to sacrifice.

Since the war, the cold war. And above all the grim shadow of the mushroom cloud and its great question mark over the future. Education is limited to preparation for a function at a certain level. For the children of the working class, a low level. They are taught to read well enough to fit them for jobs as labourers and vanboys. They are not taught to think because the State, which can afford ballistic missiles, cannot afford enough teachers for that, and in any case doesn't want thinkers among the working class.

In this environment one would be surprised if a proportion of our youth were not sick at heart and undeveloped in the head. The wonder really is that such a large proportion develop into reasonably balanced adults. But they are not the problem. The problem is the minority of empty-headed and empty-hearted young people who are sitting targets for those who wish to use them by filling their heads with prejudice and their hearts with hate.

In Germany in the 1930's Hitler provided a frustrated youth with uniforms, a cause, and a place in Society. In Notting Hill in 1958 the youth provide their own uniforms; drain-pipe trousers, long jackets with velvet collars and slim-jim ties. The Teddy-boy regalia. Weak and unhappy, grown up but without responsibility, with no privacy for a sex-life which is forbidden them anyway, they seek strength first by forming gangs and then by extending themselves by weapons.

To Let off Steam

Bitter with frustration and an empty, pointless life, they sought some means of release in the violent jangle of rock 'n' roll, but it was frowned upon by all the good solid citizens. The more enterprising formed skiffle groups, but they soon faded out. Their homes aren't worth staying in, their parents are a bore, if they stay in a café or a pub they've got to keep spending money, the youth club is run by do-gooders who think good clean fun is the jolly old thing, so they make for the street corner. And there they look for a fight to let off steam.

Jealousy is a right and proper emotion (even God is a jealous God), violence is demonstrably the way to get things, thought and reason are beyond their development and round the corner someone is chanting 'Keep Britain White'.

The race riots of the past week are not something to be stamped out by the police and then forgotten. They are outbursts of angry violence by the failures of our society. Our failures. We have not created a decent society so we are not creating decent people. We are creating beings emotionally stunted and mentally underdeveloped, feeding them with insecurity and horror. The keynote of the world is hate and love is almost an embarrassing word.

We can do what we can to combat the present stupidity. But the root causes will remain while human beings remain the means to somebody else's needs.

PEOPLE AND IDEAS: ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND

The city parks, which are among the best monuments and legacies of our later nineteenth century municipalities have been far too much influenced by the standpoint natural to the prosperous city fathers who purchased them, and who took them over, like the mansion-house parks they often were, each with its ring-fence, jealously keeping it apart from the vulgar world... But the boys? They are at most granted a cricket-pitch, or lent a space between football goals, but otherwise are jealously watched, as potential savages, who on the least symptom of their natural activities of wig-wam-building, cave-digging, stream-damming, and so on—must instantly be chivvied away, and are lucky if not handed over to the police.

—PATRICK GEDDES (1914).

ALL the problems of social life present a choice between libertarian and authoritarian solutions, and the ultimate claim we may make for the libertarian approach is that it is more efficient—it fulfils its function better. A most interesting example of this is the adventure playground. The need to provide children's playgrounds as such is the result of high-density urban living and fast-moving traffic. The authoritarian solution is to provide an area of tarmac and some pieces of expensive equipment like swings, see-saws and roundabouts which call for no imaginative or constructive effort on the child's part, or else, where space is available, to provide for the standard range of ball games. Swings and roundabouts can only be used in one way, they cater for no fantasies, for no developing skills, for no emulation of adult activities, they call for no mental effort and very little physical effort, and they are giving way to simpler and freer apparatus like climbing frames, log piles, 'jungle gyms', commando nets, or to play sculptures—abstract shapes to clamber through and over, or large constructions in the form of boats, traction engines, lorries or trains. But even these provide for a limited age-group and a limited variety of activities, and it is not surprising that children find more fun and more continual interest in the street, the derelict building or the scrap-heap.

That there should be anything novel in simply providing facilities for the spontaneous, unorganised activities of childhood is an indication of how deeply rooted in our social life is the urge to control, direct and limit the flow of life.

But when they get the chance, in the country, or where there are large gardens, woods or bits of waste land what are children doing? Enclosing space, making caves, tents, dens, of old bricks, bits of wood and corrugated iron. Finding some corner which the adult world has passed over and making it their own. But how can children find this kind of play in towns, where, as Agnete Vestereg of the Copenhagen Junk Playground writes:

"Every bit of land is put to industrial or commercial use, where every patch of grass is protected or enclosed, where streams and hollows are filled in, cultivated and built on?"

"But more is done for children now than used to be done, it may be objected. Yes, but that is one of the chief faults—the things are done. Town children move about in a world full of the marvels of technical science. They may see and be impressed by things; but they long also to take possession of them, to have them in their hands, to make something themselves, to create and re-create."

The Emdrup playground was begun in 1943 by the Copenhagen Workers' Co-operative Housing Association after a landscape architect, Mr. C. T. Sorensen, who had laid out many orthodox playgrounds had observed that children seemed to get more pleasure when they stole into the building sites and played with the materials they found there. In spite of the fact that there is a daily average of 200 children at Emdrup and that 'difficult' children are especially catered for, it is found that "the noise, screams and fights found in dull playgrounds are absent, for the opportunities are so rich that the children do not need to fight".

★

THE success at Copenhagen led to a similar effort, 'Freetown' in Stockholm, and then to The Yard at Minneapolis, USA, with the same idea, "to give children their own spot of earth and plenty of tools and materials for digging, building and creating as they see fit". When the place was opened, writes John Lagemann,

"it was every child for himself. The initial stockpile of secondhand lumber disappeared like ice off a hot stove. Children helped themselves to all they could carry, sawed off long boards when short pieces would have done. Some hoarded tools and supplies in secret caches. Everybody wanted to build the

biggest shack in the shortest time. The workmanship was shoddy.

"Then came the bust. There wasn't a stick of lumber left. Hi-jacking raids were staged on half-finished shacks. Grumbling and bickering broke out. A few children packed up and left.

"But on the second day of the great depression most of the youngsters banded together spontaneously for a salvage drive. Tools and nails came out of hiding. For over a week the youngsters made do with what they had. Rugged individualists who had insisted on building alone invited others to join in—and bring their supplies along. New ideas popped up for joint projects. By the time a fresh supply of lumber arrived a community had been born."

As at Copenhagen, the prophesied catastrophes did not happen. "After a year of operation, injuries consisted of some bandaged thumbs and small cuts and bruises for the entire enrolment of over 200 children. No child has ever used a tool to hit another person". The pioneer of the idea in Britain was another landscape architect, Lady Allen of Hurtwood, who regards the adventure playground as the answer to the question: "What kind of play did we all most enjoy when we were young, and how can we best provide these opportunities in a crowded city?" She emphasises its difference from the conventional playground thus:

"There is no asphalt, no see-saws, swings or slides, except those created by the children themselves out of waste materials freely available on the site or by the terrain of the playground itself. The main difference is that the children are given facilities which are a spur to their creative abilities and their love of fun and adventure. The area in which they are invited to play will no longer be an insult to their intelligence or to their physical abilities".

To-day, after unaided and much-criticised efforts by isolated groups the idea is gaining ground in this country. Eleven adventure playgrounds are known to the National Playing Fields Association, six run by voluntary organisations, three by local authorities and two by a combined effort. In Lambeth, the Lollard Adventure Playground Association caters for about 300 regulars aged between two and twenty, and from the original activities of building huts and bonfires, other activities have arisen, from vegetable-growing to producing a

magazine, plays and opera. As at Emdrup, this playground has succeeded in keeping the interest of older children and thus enlarging the scope of possible projects. The older Lollard boys have built and equipped a workshop and now do repairs and redecoration for old people in Lambeth.

★

THE Grimsby Adventure Playground Association's Shanty Town, now in its fifth year, saws up its shacks at the end of each summer and delivers large quantities of firewood to old age pensioners. When the children begin building in the spring it's "just a hole in the ground—and they crawl into it". Gradually the holes give way to two storey huts. But, says Mr. Benjamin, the project leader,

"they never pick up where they left off at the end of the previous summer. It's the same with fires. They begin by lighting them just for fun. Then they cook potatoes, and by the end of the summer they're cooking eggs, bacon and beans."

Similarly with the notices above the dens. The first thing is to nail up a sign 'Keep Out' (just the same as The Yard in Minneapolis). "They are followed by more personal names like 'Bug-hole Cave' and 'Dead Man's Cave'. By the end of the summer they have a communal name such as 'Hospital' or 'Estate Agent'."

In the letter to the *Times Educational Supplement*, which had commented sceptically on adventure playgrounds, Mr. Benjamin writes:

"By what criteria are adventure playgrounds to be judged? "If it is by the disciplined activity of the uniformed organisations, then there is no doubt but we are a failure. If it is by the success of our football and table tennis teams, then there is no doubt we are a flop. If it is by the enterprise and endurance called for by some of the national youth awards—then we must be ashamed."

"But these are the standards set by the club movement, in one form or another, for a particular type of child. They do not attract the so-called 'unclubbable', and worse—so we read regularly—nor do they hold those children at whom they are aimed.

"May I suggest that what we need is to examine afresh the pattern taken by the young at play and then to compare it with the needs of the growing child and the adolescent. We accept that it is natural for boys and girls below a certain age to play together, and think it equally natural for them to play at being grown-up. We accept, in fact, their right to imitate the world around them. Yet as soon as a child is old enough to see through the pretence and demand the reality, we segregate him from his sister and try to fob him off with games and activities which seem only to put off the day when he will enter the world proper.

"The adventure playgrounds in this country, new though they are, are already providing a number of lessons which we would do well to study... For three successive summers the children have built their dens and created Shanty Town, with its own hospital, fire station, shops, etc. As each den appeared, it became functional—and brought with it an appreciation of its nature and responsibility....

"The pattern of adventure playgrounds is set by the needs of the children who use them; their 'toys' include woodwork benches and sewing machines. The play of the children is modelled closely on the world around them—and as such has a meaning that is understood easily by all types. We do not believe that children can be locked up in neat little parcels, labelled by age and sex. Neither do we believe that education is the prerogative of the schools".

★

THREE kinds of objection are raised to adventure playgrounds—unsightliness, danger, and expense of supervision. When a recent television programme about the lack of playgrounds at Govan,

Continued on p. 4

LAND NOTES

MAN has achieved considerable control over his environment, but the weather this year has indicated that there are still many limitations to this control. However in spite of this demonstration of man's fallibility, his achievements are massive and his sources of power tremendous. In spite of all this potential, mankind to-day is as insecure as his ancestors who were completely at the mercy of their physical environment. Man's social and psychological development has lagged almost to a fatal point behind his means of power so that these sources of power tend to threaten his existence to a greater degree than the natural catastrophes past and present.

To return to that oppressive subject, the weather, which has made this the most difficult harvest that I have ever participated in, many of the older farm workers go back as far as 1921 for a year to compare with this one. Those farmers that believe in massive doses of nitrogenous fertilisers which make for lush growth and soft straw, will have large acres of laid corn to deal with. I suspect that most of the highly soluble artificial fertiliser has found its way to the sea this year, without having much effect on yields. The yields which were quite promising have at the moment of writing been reduced by about 25%, as the ripe corn sheds and, some corn has even germinated in the ear. Should the weather continue to be adverse it will make things very difficult for the smaller farmers and for those who rely on large corn acreages for their income. The farm that has good variety of income earners is of course likely to fare best in a season like this. Those with grazing animals this year have had little difficulty in finding sufficient keep, the grass has grown in great abundance, and has shown that quantity is not necessarily synonymous with quality, for it has been difficult to keep up the butter fat and the solids (not fat) to the required standards. The cowman remarked the grass seems to go right through the cows without leaving much behind and hay has to be fed to balance the excessively

watery content of the grass.

The effect of a disastrous harvest could mean the bankruptcy of more of the smaller farmers. It will also result in farmers cutting staff to cope with their fall in income, which will undoubtedly make their workers seek other employment.

Agricultural activity is still affected by inponderables and in spite of the progress of meteorology it is still impossible to prognostigate accurately about the weather. If this had been possible I think many more binders would have been dragged out of retirement and off of the scrap heap and would have been turned loose into the fields at a much earlier date. The modern farmer, confident in the abilities of his self-propelled monster digesting a swathe twelve feet in width as it rolls majestically across the fields, has to wait until the corn is dead ripe before commencing harvesting operations. Now that the corn is so ripe the extra operations of binding and carting would result in much greater losses of corn. Personally speaking, if monetary considerations did not play such a large part in farming operations I would favour the cutting and binding method, as I think the maturing of corn in stook and stack produces a product of higher quality and ensures that more corn actually reaches the bag from the ear. With the combine comes the need of apparatus to dry corn and much more vermin-proof storage space. The corn stored in the ear is not so prone to attack by weevil or other insects, but often insecticides have to be used under modern storage conditions. Much of human value has disappeared with the departure of the older methods of harvesting and I am very much inclined to believe that very little has been gained of real value with this extreme mechanisation. The introduction of the binder removed the real grind out of harvesting while at the same time retaining the spirit of co-operative activity and achievement that sent the loaded wagons across the yellow stubbles. The effort required to hoist the sheaves on to the wagons is

not excessive and I think it is necessary for the human body to extend itself occasionally in social activity and to stop and thoroughly enjoy refreshment and respite beneath a growing stack of sweet-smelling corn. This is not sentimentalism; it is a recognition of the need to enjoy the work that provides us with our needs. Soon the hop-pickers will be deprived of the opportunity to go into the Kentish countryside to gather the ingredient that will go to make the beverage that they will later consume in the pub round the corner, as they will in the future be completely replaced by machines.

In a country such as Britain so much is taken for granted when there is such a large industrial population who have the baker call every day with their bread and the milkman with the milk, to whom a wet year means only a disappointing holiday, that they cannot comprehend the processes that result in bread and milk, the frustrations of a year's work that is swept away in a few weeks of rain. Even more frustrating are the things that happen to the forester who plans in terms of twenty, fifty, or a hundred years and in consequence of a careless fag-end, fire or bottle can find the product of many years nurture become acres of blackened stumps.

ALAN ALBON.

Now Ready!

Year One - Sputnik Era

Selections from Freedom

Volume 7
1957

266 pages paper 7/6, cloth 10/6

As with earlier volumes, to FREEDOM readers ordering their copies direct from F.P. the price of the paper edition is only FIVE SHILLINGS post free (U.S. \$1.00) Volumes 1-6 are still available at 5s. per volume (paper) and 10s. 6d. cloth.

Order Now!

BOOK REVIEW

THE STORY OF A LOVE AFFAIR

CONFESSIONS OF A EUROPEAN IN ENGLAND, by J. H. Huizinga. Heinemann, 25s.

J. H. HUNZINGA is a Dutchman who came to England before the war from New York. He needed to settle in some place that would be quiet, for he was working on a doctoral thesis, yet not too remote, if possible a world capital, he says, that would have some of the advantages of a village. His American friends unanimously advised London. This book is a description of his love-hate relationship with England, or perhaps with London (and the Home Counties). He has not travelled much within the British Isles. In its complexity, its twists and turns, its efforts to reconcile all the different pictures the author had in his mind of England, the book shows the futility of trying to sum up national character.

He began by believing England was a society of rigid classes, until a young debutante introduced him into Society, and what he saw in these exalted regions led him to conclude that the class system was flexible. He had thought the English were puritanical, but this section of the population was obviously not. He was not a social success however. He fell from grace. Perhaps it was due to a certain incident when, after mishearing the phrase "to pump ship", he repeated it in a very select gathering, changing the "p" of "ship" into a "t". Silent horror.

Anyway, whatever the reason, his invitations dwindled away, and he found himself alone in the great city. Then he discovered the real force of English puritanism. So he was right after all about that. Pubs shut at unearthly hours, and were inconvenient and uncomfortable, theatres and parks also closed their doors and gates when the night was still young.

"And so, once the cinema or theatre was over, there was nowhere to go and nothing left to do... but to fight one's way back home through the serried ranks of prostitutes who took over the West End at night and whose services formed about the only type of recreation which London offered to visiting foreigners after the scandalous hour of ten-thirty."

Later other friends were made, other doors opened to him, another section of the English population offered him hospitality. He now moved, not in Society, but in the middle class, or upper middle class, and the love affair was on again. These people were not puritanical but hedonistic, as hedonistic in their quiet way as the upper class people he had first mixed with. Merrie England, he concludes, is not dead. Then why, oh why, did they submit to England being so drab, with so many laws, such as the licensing laws, to restrict hedonism? These people seemed to take a sort of pride in submitting to these discomforts. Narcissism, he decided. Everything English is seen as admirable, even her defects. But he was not at the end of the contradictions, for there were rebels, some quite vocal.

And so it goes on and on. The pendulum swings back and forth. It is a humorous analysis. This continual effort to sum up and reconcile the contradictions that the writer sees in the English national character, and explain them satisfactorily to himself, takes us into the byways of history, as far back as the Norman Conquest. It is amusing, but rather futile.

Oscar Wilde, tired of Shakespearean controversies, once proposed to write on the theme, "Are Hamlet's Critics Mad, Or Only Pretending To Be?" Irritated by books on the English, who are not much different from most other nations, I thought of writing an article to "prove" that the English are predominantly a Mediterranean people, the majority of them are medium-sized and tend to be dark, that their democracy, fair-play, equality of sex and so on are survivals

of the New Stone Age matriarchal society, overlaid subsequently by Celtic and Germanic invasions. I believe as good a case could be made out for this as can be for the endless drivel about parliamentary institutions and "the rule of law". It would not be scientific, but then books on national character can never claim to be that, unless one includes in this category anthropological studies.

It seems to me that when you try to sum up the character of any large nation, with a long and complicated history, you are bound to run into endless and irreconcilable contradictions. Particularly if you try to invest the people in question with a sort of unique aura. National character is a complete illusion in the case of large nations. Even the Congo Pygmies have been described by different travellers in conflicting ways. Recently in France I made a bus journey of less than fifty miles. I should think, to the north of the town of Nice. At the end of the journey we were in a different world. The villages, remote from the coast, and secure in their semi-Alpine valleys, were spread out, the houses scattered. They were not so picturesque as the little fortified hill-top towns near the sea, but there was a much more friendly atmosphere. You felt open and free, although everything had to be transported up from the coast along winding endless mountain roads. The architecture was more like that of Switzerland. If the word "nation" means anything, these people were of a different nation from the coast-dwellers. When one considers that all over France the same variety probably applies, how can one possibly sum up the French national character?

Of course all Frenchmen have some things in common. But so do all human beings if it comes to that. Local patriotism seems to me the only genuine

kind. Anything wider belongs to the realms of pathology. You can love your own region, but love for a big country is love for an abstraction, and love for an abstraction always leads to disaster.

I cannot say that I have much national feeling in the ordinary sense. I love parts of the beautiful English countryside, and parts of some towns. Patriotic Englishmen, who would regard me as a traitor, are busily destroying the beauty of their own land, and this I bitterly regret. I think that some things are done better in one country, other things in another, but to me the national idea seems largely a myth.

Generally speaking, the English at the present day share the general European apathy and longing to be mastered. They have become very docile. But this is not peculiar to England. It seems to be everywhere. The whole world is moving towards totalitarianism. In England passions are cooler, and one is less likely to be hit on the head for one's political opinions, but this, though an advantage, is not enough to build up a mystique on. It is due to the relative isolation of the country and the lack of a land frontier.

Some people, most people, have a tremendous urge to feel themselves part of something greater than themselves. They want a nation or a tribe. The English, Mr. Huizinga claims, although personally modest, are collectively narcissistic. They love and admire themselves. ("When we stood alone", etc.) This is true for the English. It is true for all nations. Most individuals are personally modest, but believe their own country the finest in the world. It may be added that very few nations deserve the self-praise they are so generous with. Almost all countries are saturated with brutality and authoritarianism.

All nations are bombastic, conceited, taboo-ridden and sentimental. Yet there are good qualities in all of them as well.

Summit Conference Latest A Ridiculous Farce

THE Western proposal for a conference to be held to discuss the suspension of nuclear tests (see FREEDOM last week), has now been accepted by Mr. Krushchev. This must have come as rather an unwelcome surprise to the West, since it must have seemed to them that the proposal contained a sufficient number of unacceptable conditions* for Krushchev to turn it down immediately.

Naturally, whilst accepting the proposal Krushchev has made a few well-chosen criticisms of the conditions. He states that they are "clearly contrived", "hedging" and "mockery". The Soviet Union can "in no way" agree to the Western conditions for the negotiations, "because to agree to them would mean to doom the negotiations to failure in advance."

Meanwhile Mr. Krushchev, at the same time as he accepts completely and without reservation the conclusions of the Geneva meeting of experts on the possibility of effective control of nuclear tests, describes this control as an "artificial" condition and questions Western seriousness of purpose. He also lays down one or two conditions of his own: first and foremost as already stated, he rules out of court all the principal Western conditions, secondly he suggests that the conference should be brought to an end within two or three weeks.

It may readily be concluded therefore that there is a considerable divergence of opinion between what Mr. Krushchev and the Western Powers want to discuss. The difference is basically that the Soviet Union views a ban on tests as an end in itself, whereas the West regards the ban merely as a step towards real disarmament. The enormous cunning of this situation is that both sides leave themselves

with an opportunity to disagree and withdraw from discussion whilst giving the appearance of sticking firmly to an important matter of principal. Patently neither argument, according to its lights, is basically unsound; a ban on tests for its own sake is a step (albeit limited) in the right direction, and at the same time the object which ought to be achieved is disarmament.

The fact of the matter is that none of the Great Powers want agreement, they merely wish to give the impression of trying to agree. Both sides are quite obviously most anxious to get on with nuclear tests so that they may catch up or overtake the other in the latest developments. The West has not as yet agreed to stop tests, the Soviet Union has hedged the bet by stating that if the West continues tests (which it is doing) then the Soviet Union will reconsider the position.

It is all a ridiculous farce in which neither side has made a single sincere gesture, and is unlikely to do so—but it is all splendid propaganda for the naïve multitudes who really believe that politicians mean what they say.

A BAD WEEK! What about the next 17?

PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT! WEEK 35

Deficit on Freedom £700
Contributions received £452
DEFICIT £248

August 22 to August 28

London: Hyde Park Sympathisers: 2/-; Rhyll: K.M. 7/6; Merriott: M.W. 10/-; London: J.S.* 3/-; London: A.S. 1/-; London: T.F.* 5/-; London: M.W. 10/-; Nottingham: K.N. 10/-; London: W.H.T. 2/6; Wolverhampton: J.C.L. 2/6; Bath: H.J.C. 1/-; Belfast: D.M. 1/-; Huddersfield: A.L. 11/-; Sheffield: P.L. 1/6.

Total ... 3 8 0
Previously acknowledged ... 449 1 3

1958 TOTAL TO DATE ... £452 9 3

GIFT OF BOOKS: Buenos Aires: Comrades of T.U.P.A.C.

*Indicates regular contributor.

Mr. Huizinga's love affair drew to its close when Britain opposed the Schuman Plan for a United Europe. For Mr. Huizinga is not only an Anglophile but a believer in United Europe. The English detest the idea of forming part of a European federation. It does not fit in with their feelings of national pride. But the real break came with the Suez attack. It now appeared that the "government by gentlemen", which he had so much admired, could behave in a most ungentlemanly way when it felt its interests threatened. This will be no surprise to anarchists, but it was a shock to Mr. Huizinga, and the book ends in a certain disillusion, written in a tone "more of sorrow than of anger". But the fault lies not with the inhabitants of England but with Mr. Huizinga. He should not have been so incredibly naive as to imagine that there is anything special, apart from geographical isolation, in the English character, or indeed for believing there is such a thing at all. Books about national character are like books discussing the nature and attributes of God. They are dealing with something altogether intangible. When Britain declines to a really unimportant power the flow of books about her national character will, it is to be hoped, dry up somewhat. One can discuss nations in terms of political and economic interests, but not in terms of national characteristics.

I will draw up a national character of a country that we will call "Everywhere", for obvious reasons. The rulers of this country are pleasure-loving, but deter-

LETTER

Communal Living

DEAR COMRADES,

Will those of your readers who want to try out communal living and have their own ideas on the ideal set-up please write to me for a prospectus and questionnaire?

They can then be put into contact with others of like mind to themselves. In this way it is hoped to set up several vital communities of differing character from one another and so to find by mutual comparisons which arrangements prove the happiest.

If the scheme succeeds and more and more 'ordinary' people are won over to its advantages, is it too optimistic to hope that it may ultimately spring the trap of authoritarian government?
54 Hillfield Road,
N.W.6.

JOHN D. COOPER.

Adventure Playground

Continued from p. 2

Glasgow, raised the possibility of starting one there, a parks department official declared: "They may live in a slum, but there is no reason why they should play in one". This however is surely a misconception of the nature of play. The objection on the grounds of ugliness was raised at Minneapolis, and at Shanty Town, the annual report mentions that in a controversy about the untidiness of the site "petitions and counter-petitions were sent to the Town Clerk. The matter was debated by a sub-committee of the Council on two occasions, and it was decided that no action be taken". The only solution is in screening with fences or hedges, which is desirable anyway to give children the sense of enclosure in a place of their own.

On the score of danger, the experience of all these playgrounds seems to deny it. It was reported that the insurance company was so impressed by the engrossed activity at the Clydesdale Road (Paddington) adventure playground with its complete lack of hooliganism that they quoted lower rates than for an ordinary playground.

More skilled supervision is certainly needed than for other playgrounds, but against this can be set the much lower capital costs than for a conventional playground, and the fact that much public goodwill, assistance, gifts of junk and materials can be counted upon—to judge from experience so far. (Also under section 53 of the Education Act, local authorities may grant aid to the cost of employing a play leader). A great deal must depend upon the quality of the 'project leader', and his willingness not to lead. For the lesson of the successful adventure playgrounds is the same as that of the Peckham Experiment or David Wills' Hawkespur Experiment, the creation of "a kind of anarchy" in which creative activity can flourish.
C.W.

mined to hold on ruthlessly to the means whereby that pleasure is obtained, and are determined to sacrifice themselves—and others—to this cause. The people make good soldiers, and there is a general tendency among all classes to admire power and force, while almost everyone hopes to rise in society, or wishes that he could. Sexual attitudes are contradictory, but the churches regard sex activities as sinful (outside marriage), while most of the male population consider this rule applies only to women.

There has always been a struggle between the classes, but nevertheless "in time of crisis we are united". The present government is a coalition of the Socialist-Radical-Republicans, the Democratic-Conservatives-Progressives and the Liberal-Monarchical-Populists. Their policy is "full employment for all, and plenty of beefsteak".

After the collapse of the Roman Empire the country was invaded successively by the Vandals, the Goths, the Saxons, the Huns and the Lombards. After its conversion to Christianity (450 to 500 A.D.) it was invaded by the Magyars, the Balts, the Kipchaks and the Tartars. The coasts were raided, and sometimes settled, by the Franks, the Danes, the Saracens and the Seljuk Turks. This explains many of the paradoxes of the Everywhereian character, which is at once earthy yet profoundly spiritual, sensual yet puritanical. It explains the Everywhereians' profound sense of fair-play, their delight in inflicting punishment on criminals, their kindness to cats, their hunting and their bull-fights and indeed their general humanitarianism.

There is a profound antagonism between North and South. The Northerners regard the Southerners as lazy and immoral. The Southerners say that the Northerners are puritanical and hypocritical and not true Everywhereians. Nevertheless all foreign journalists agree with the Everywhereians' claim to be a unique people, with a unique social system, a harmonious blend of slavery with freedom, aristocracy with proletarianism.

Personally I believe in individuals and groups of individuals, not in nations, races, federations or empires. There are dangerous myths which lead to wars, slavery and death. In Mr. Huizinga they have led only to a gentle disillusion and an amusing book. He is a lucky man.

ARTHUR W. ULOTH.

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

Owing to the expiry of lease at the Malatesta Club no L.A.G. meetings will be held till further notice. New premises are being sought for the winter series of Lecture-Discussions.

CROYDON AREA

Will all comrades and sympathisers interested in libertarian activity in the Croydon area please communicate with:
S. E. PARKER,
228, Holmesdale Road, London, S.E.25

★ Malatesta Club ★

SWARAJ HOUSE,
32 PERCY STREET,

TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD, LONDON, W.1. We are sorry to announce that the Malatesta Club has been unable to secure a renewal of lease on its premises. They are looking out for suitable premises in Central London. Also a group forming a community would be glad to hear of a house in which they could harbour the Malatesta Club.

Every Wednesday at 7.30 (prompt) until October 8th.

BONAR THOMPSON speaks.

FREEDOM

The Anarchist Weekly

Postal Subscription Rates:
12 months 19/- (U.S.A. \$3.00)
6 months 9/6 (U.S.A. \$1.50)
3 months 5/- (U.S.A. \$0.75)

Special Subscription Rates for 2 copies
12 months 29/- (U.S.A. \$4.50)
6 months 14/6 (U.S.A. \$2.25)

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

MORE READERS

MORE FINANCIAL SUPPORT

IS

what FREEDOM

URGENTLY NEEDS