

Freedom

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Threepence

Defend the Shop Stewards

THE attempt by the managements of British European Airways and the Standard Motor Company to restrict the activities of shop stewards among their workers represents a serious attack upon those workers' organisations.

In view of the reactionary nature of the trades unions at their official level, there is not the slightest doubt that for the majority of workers the unions are effective in defending their day-to-day interests only through the shop stewards. If this organisation is interfered with, there will be no efficient means of immediate liaison between workers and management other than the local or district officials of the union concerned.

And most workers know the delay that is involved in trying to get attention to a matter in dispute from the district organiser, who is no longer one of the workers himself and may have to show concern with many factories in his area.

We dealt a fortnight ago (FREEDOM 12/12/54) with the dispute at London Airport in which 315 engineers were given dismissal notices for attending a meeting in working hours called by the convenor of shop stewards, Jack Peters. We maintained then that the engineers had been misled into stepping out of power and that their shop stewards' organisation was threatened.

More than that, in fact, has transpired. On the signing of a document agreeing to stand by all agreements made between union and management at official level and which maintained that shop stewards were unnecessary, all the dismissed men have been reinstated—with the exception of Mr. Peters.

No Sympathy from the Top

Under the constitution of the National Joint Council for Civil Air Transport, Peters can appeal against his dismissal, but the statement issued by the chairman of B.E.A. announcing his permanent dismissal said that Peters "not only acted unconstitutionally and against the authority of the management but also incited others to do the same and was guilty of grave industrial misconduct".

If Peters appeals, therefore, this charge will be considered by the Joint Council, which consists of the employers on one side and the union officials on the same side. Full time officials of the Amalgamated Engineering Union have not much sympathy with the shop stewards who, after all, take away some of their influence and are a continual bother to the even flow of happy union-management relations. Peters can hardly expect much sympathy or support from that quarter.

And since there has not been any great show of militancy among the engineers at London Airport it looks

unlikely that they—the only other source of support—will do anything for him anyway.

The Standard Motor Company had a very different experience when its management tried to suspend and sack four shop stewards in their various Coventry factories. There, the response by the workers was immediate and solid. All the 11,000 of them went on strike in defence of the stewards, halting completely the firm's production of 440 cars and 280 tractors daily.

The dispute began in the company's spares department at the Maudslay Road factory on Christmas Eve, when nine employees were given indefinite suspension notices for refusing to handle a job which they maintained had been placed "in dispute". This caused a stoppage of work, which in turn led to the dismissal of four shop stewards for organising meetings to discuss the issue—and then the 11,000 came out.

Management Think Again

This has had a salutary effect on the management. In a statement issued at the time of the dismissals it said:

"The company has no dispute with the trade unions, as it recognises their work in its establishments. It is (its) desire to operate agreements it has with them and to preserve the cordial relations which

have existed for so long. However, the company is bound to establish the principle that it has the right to manage its own factories and that when management decisions are made they must be observed."

The statement sets out what in the company's view led up to the dismissals and suspensions, and claims that in a series of incidents the instructions of the management were disregarded, although the management had given "prior warning" to shop stewards. These actions, it says, have left the management with no alternative other than to take disciplinary action against those concerned.

This action by the management, however, left the workers with no alternative

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Rail Dispute

ONCE again we go to press with no news of a settlement of the rail dispute. A Court of Inquiry has investigated and heard both sides, and is due to report four days before the date for strike action to commence.

This will give time for a last minute aversion. The railmen are in no mood to adopt a compromise and only one thing, as we see it, can avert a national strike and that is full settlement of their long-standing 15 per cent. claim.

Full preparations are going ahead on both sides, but we should indeed be surprised if the situation goes as far as threatened.

Politicians Disagree

A DISPUTE has recently arisen in Parliament over the proposal of the government-appointed commission on the boundaries of electoral constituencies that some of them should be re-drawn, to the disadvantage of the Labour Party. The B.B.C., a source which no-one can accuse of "sensationalism" announced that Mr. Attlee had even gone so far as to disagree with the Prime Minister over the matter; surely an event of revolutionary significance!

There is much in the British electoral system that must puzzle those from less fortunate countries, and one aspect of this must be the lengths to which even the interested parties go to ensure that the voting, counting, and the whole formal procedure should proceed with the greatest fairness. Officials are carefully supervised to make dishonesty a very difficult thing, and campaign expense allowances are strictly limited. There is, of course, no law against making impossible promises from the platform, but that would be expecting too much.

Readers of FREEDOM might have been surprised when, a few weeks ago, their anarchist literature arrived neatly postmarked with the imperative question "Are you on the new voters' list? Check now!" Another example of the diabolical way in which governments turn revolutionary propaganda to their own benefit! The foreigner might wonder whether, before actually urging a person to vote, one ought not to ascertain whether or not he is going to vote for one's own party, instead of throwing out the question promiscuously from the postmarking machine.

In some countries votes have to be cast verbally, in the presence of armed supporters of the party in power. In a recent South American election voters for the Conservative candidate were presented with a card thanking them for having done so, and without which no conservative industrialist would employ them. The States of Eastern Europe simplify the whole procedure considerably by presenting only one list of candidates.

But in England, the home of democracy, everything is different. In 1947 the Labour government arranged a committee to redesign constituencies, and it did so... to the disadvantage of Labour, who accepted it like good sportsmen.

During elections public speakers, canvassers, and almost the entire press gives the impression that while each would prefer people, as a gentlemanly favour, to vote for them, the really important thing is that everyone should use his (or her) vote. Exceptions to this are the *Daily Worker*, which as will be gathered from the above, takes a rather strong line on the matter, and the *Socialist Standard*, which permits its supporters to vote at every other election, if and only if they live in one of two or three widely separated and most unlikely constituencies.

Why are British politicians so unselfish and unambitious? Perhaps it is because they realize that it does not really matter to them who wins. Instead of the barbarous practice of the victors taking control of the army and police force, putting their opponents in jail, and taking all the high-salaried positions, they agree beforehand to share control of the armed forces, are all have well paid jobs.

A more important reason is that, not being enemies, or even rivals, the parties are chiefly interested in their mutual conspiracy to delude people into continuing their support of the institution of government. They realize that only by mutual aid and solidarity, among themselves of course, can they retain their hold on power and authority.

The greater the number of people who go faithfully to the ballot box, the fewer there will be to trust only in direct action; the more plausible the democratic constitution, the less attractive will social revolution appear; the more enthusiastic the politicians are in ensuring that affairs are conducted in the true, democratic manner, taking no thought for themselves, but being interested only in seeing that justice is done, the more difficult it will be to convince people of the futility of the idea of representative government. In fact the greater part of the stability and safety of British governmental institutions is due to the clever way in which governments have confused refractory elements, diverting their revolutionary efforts into harmless channels.

Therefore, our advice to the Conservative Party, if they wish to strengthen the present system is: Don't try to alter these boundaries. What are a few seats between friends? And if you do, it might make some innocent people suspect that democracy is not all that it is made out to be!

P.H.

Democracy in Tito's Party

(from a Balkan correspondent)

FOR the second time in a year the Yugoslav C.P. is in the news. Both in January and December 1954, its leadership found itself divided over the policies to adopt and the methods to be used in building what is described as a "socialist society". Then as now the quarrel was accompanied with the charges of "deviation" and "treason", and the inevitable expulsions which have always been one of the characteristics of the Marxist movement.

The protagonists in this dispute are the party machine and two leading Yugoslav Communists, Dedijer and Djilas. Both of them joined the Communist movement in their late teens, were active in it at the university, and faithfully followed the party line over the German-Soviet pact in 1939 and after June 1941. Djilas, a member of the Politbureau until January 1954, was in charge of Communist propaganda and gained some notoriety for his fulsome eulogies of Stalin. (After the break with the Cominform he found it just as easy to write some of the bitter attacks on the U.S.S.R. which appeared in the Yugoslav Communist press).

Dedijer, a member of the central committee up to a few days ago, is best known in the West for his strong pro-Soviet views at the peace conference in 1945-6 and as the author of Tito's official biography.

The quarrel between Stalin and Tito forced the latter to pursue policies which when examined more closely show an ever-widening gap between words and deeds. On the one hand he tightened even further his control of the State and C.P. machine to prevent Stalinist infiltration which if successful would have led to his political overthrow and physical liquidation. On the other he evolved an "ideology" which while keeping many links with his Marxist-Stalinist past was intended to win the support of those in the West and in Asia who distrusting either Washington or Moscow or both wanted something "progressive" and "socialist".

This dichotomy was bound sooner or later to create a division even within the hardened Communist leadership. Yugoslav reality is such that it is difficult to maintain for ever that the C.P. is merely an "educational organisation" or to boast of the steady progress towards socialism. Djilas unlike his colleagues had at least the courage to admit this in a series of articles in the Yugoslav Communist press in 1953. They created a sensation and seemed such a challenge to the party apparatus that Tito put a stop to it.

Djilas who in November 1953 had just received 98% of the votes in his constituency and had been unanimously elected to the presidency of the Yugoslav

national assembly, was just as unanimously deprived of this and all his other posts six weeks later. Few voices were raised in his favour apart from Dedijer's. The non-Communists enjoyed his strictures on the bureaucracy and remembered that he too was highly responsible for its existence. To the pro-Soviet Yugoslav Communists and the Titoists he was merely a "petty bourgeois renegade" spreading "anarchist" (!) ideas.

Djilas's downfall and retirement into obscurity was followed by a party directive to boycott him socially. Dedijer who was also under a cloud, refused to join in this and was subjected to what he described as "pressures". Fully aware of what their former comrades were capable in order to maintain "monolithic unity", Dedijer and Djilas placed their case before the world. They gave interviews to the *New York Times* and the *London Times* in which they attacked Tito's government. In that way they hoped to attract the attention of public opinion in the West and prevent their liquidation in secret.

This move proved quite successful, temporarily at least. They are not yet under arrest but have been already expelled from government organisations, denounced by their former colleagues in the C.P., and prevented from holding press conferences. The peoples of Yugoslavia who in the past had to fill the public squares more than once to listen to Djilas and shout "Djilas-hero", have now been told by no less than Kardelj, Tito's deputy, that the two are "dirty blackmailers" and that every honest citizen has the right to "spit" into their faces. Lastly, they have been charged by the public prosecutor with propaganda against the State under the very criminal code which they had helped to draft while they were in power and which as Tito's propagandists they had praised so much abroad.

The events in Belgrade are thus yet another episode in the struggle for power in Yugoslavia. Their chief importance lies in the fact that they prove once again the totalitarian nature of Tito's régime. This is only too readily forgotten in the West by those who have advocated help for Tito on account of the "liberalisation" and "decentralisation" of his government. It may also be noted that leading American and London newspapers have devoted more space and shown a greater interest in the fate of two ex-Stalinists and Tito's henchmen than of their more humble fellow-countrymen. The latter have had to endure much more at the hands of Marshal Tito than the two dissidents whose past in the C.P. made them useful to journalists, eager for scoops, as well as to politicians somewhat perplexed by the more intimate relations between Tito and Moscow since Stalin's death.

AN ANARCHIST'S NOTEBOOK

Worse than a Horror Comic

THE outcry that would follow the use of human beings as guinea pigs by medical research appears to be almost absent when it comes to research into the use and development of military weapons and military techniques. As we know, Hitler's generals were much more interested in the Spanish civil war of 1936 as a testing-out ground for bombing airplanes and newly developed weapons than in the political issues involved in that struggle; and more interested in giving their troops practical experience in real fighting than in any anti-Red crusade. In Korea too both sides were able to try out more new and deadly weapons that had been developed in the post-war years from the experience gained during the mass slaughter of 1939-45.

The curiosity of science knows no bounds, whether it is for the purpose of prolonging life or for its more effective destruction. The development of the airplane has required,

more than for any other machine, the use of human guinea pigs, and until such time as the human element can be eliminated from its control (and this will not be for humanitarian reasons but because automatic control will have proved more reliable than the human being) its development has been limited by the forces to which the human frame can be "safely" subjected, such as reduced pressures, and sudden changes of pressures, speeds and direction. Thus hand in hand the work of the designer at his drawing board and the human guinea pig in the laboratory have proceeded without even a squeak of protest from animal lovers or anybody else. Yet only last month the United States Air Development Centre at Alamogordo announced the result of a most horrible series of tests which were designed to find out not how fast man could travel, but how quickly a human being travelling at

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PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT! WEEK 52

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Previously acknowledged	768 2 9

1954 TOTAL TO DATE £772 12 9

VALUES & HISTORY

VALUES are the will to live that reaches the intellect, and through the intellect all categories of being, giving them reasons to be, and giving reason itself reasons to reason. They are the fulness and meaningfulness of conscious life, but more than consciousness they are life, seated therefore where life is seated, in each individual organism, in the beatings of its heart, a token of congruence between its heart and the world around. So when the immediacy of this congruence is obscured and its operation impeded, when the intellect instead of taking its cue from the heart to mark out meanings in the world takes its cue from the world to question the heart about its meaning, then the validity of values is felt through their absence, they are worshipped at empty shrines, and battles are bitterly fought to conjure them back.

The foregoing paragraph may be dismissed as a piece of emotional and metaphysical nonsense. But to speak of values with detachment is to speak of their trace, in their absence, for when they are present, not to the mind but in the mind, they incense and enthuse all its utterings. As for their metaphysical status, they certainly lie beyond the competence of physics, and indeed of all science for, as Weber pointed out, science is concerned with questions of empirically ascertainable existence, and not with question of worth.

By developing science and fostering the scientific outlook, by upholding objectivity over and against personal promptings, and by reducing everything to facts, a war is waged against human prerogative of rebelling against facts. Ironically, meanwhile, science is drastically and un-

critically raised to the status of supreme value. When a Dilthey then says that history knows nothing of absolute values or eternal norms, but only of values inseparable from particular historical conditions and whose origin can be traced and explained, he makes a supreme value of historical understanding, and unwittingly gives us to worship his hegelian bugbear turned inside out.

A psychoanalyst can turn any argument against this theory by imputing it to some complex in the person who puts it forward, and so can a communist be confirmed in his doctrine by any attack against it simply by detecting or assuming some vested interest on the part of the attacker in refusing to accept the communist truth. Though similar to that of the psychoanalyst and the communist, the position of the defender of values is inherently stronger. Values cannot be knocked down except from the vantage point of another value. Sextus Empiricus' analogy of a negative criticism being like a medicine that clears the bowels of all indigested food and of itself at the same time does not quite fit the case for it is the taking of the medicine and not the medicine itself which would have to be accounted for.

The most uncompromising view on the historicity and relativity of values is that of Spengler. He holds that each civilization is like an organism biologically determined, with its life-cycle and destiny, and that as all organisms are radically alien to one another so civilizations are mutually exclusive in the values they produce. In *Der Untergang des*

Abendlandes, however, he leaps over the morphological boundaries of the various civilizations to give us an insight into the particular structure of each; so that either they are not so mutually exclusive as he affirms the validity of his theory, as of any other, applies only to the particular phase of the particular civilization in which he happened to elaborate it.

It is one of Spengler's main tenets that man has no choice of values but must perforce adopt those offered by his civilization at that stage of its development which he is there to witness. According to personal experience, instead, a choice is possible as when, for example, a European of our times makes his the ideals of ancient Greece or China through an absorbing and sympathetic study of their language and literature. What Spengler contends is that such choice, if not altogether illusory, never carries historical efficacy or significance. Dilthey likewise insists on the impossibility for a man to go beyond the horizon of his historical epoch. But what are horizons and epochs, civilizations and their phases if not arbitrary constructions after the event, and on whose demarcation lines no two conscientious historians agree? What criterion will be followed in dividing the course and sweep of history into epochs and civilizations? It is interesting to note that two other German philosophers, Troeltsch and Meinecke, make their division rest on the particular values exhibited by each civilization or epoch, emphasizing that it is the particular set of values that makes an epoch or a civilization and not vice versa. They all fail, however, satisfactorily to explain how old values change and new ones emerge thus giving epochs and civilizations their particular aspect, or how the succession and heterogeneity of epochs and civilizations can be reconciled with the biological unity and continuity of the human species.

★

It was Chamfort, I believe, who said that "un amour défini est un amour fini". The same applies to other values. To be defined or simply to be studied they must be turned into objects, and what characterizes a value is precisely its being something other than an object. Once objectified it is consequent that philosophers and historians should catalogue values with other historical facts. Only when the historian lives imaginatively through history as an actor and co-participant will he feel values for what they are, inward and active, not alien and spent, dead things of the past, but in history and beyond, and it must be said, eternal. With Windelband and Rickert, not to mention Platonists and Christians, values are trans-historical, at one the source, the movement and object of faith. Conversely, when values are deemed historical, that is temporal, that is mortal, faith in them withers or burns up wildly into despair. Values are auto-central and absolute or they are not.

The absolute, of course, cannot be found in history or in any other realm of objects, but it can in the subject, in man, in the thinking, willing, loving, fearing, acting, fighting, suffering and mortal individual. He is aware of a world of objects, aware of other subjects, and of a world multipersonally agreed upon and scientifically accounted for, their own surroundings overcome them, and acting becomes reality, they argue about their real disagreements, forgetting the script, ignoring the cameras, improvising, and so naturally the performance is stopped. The scene ends in confusion, the producer giving Simon a black eye, and saying that he's not at all sure that the Corporation hasn't got a case against them for not being so happily married as they were supposed to be, to strengthen the moral foundation of family life. This is the hypocrisy of authority, direction and rule which crushes people's real sincerity, and then blames them for the faults slavery creates.

The producer is very amusingly portrayed by Ian Carmichael, and Mr. Roland Culver and Miss Coral Browne are extremely good in the best scenes of the play. The last act, unfortunately, lacks the ingenuity, wit and satire of the earlier part. D.M.M.

Are we still waiting to receive your subscription renewal to FREEDOM? Do you keep the milkman, the baker or the butcher waiting all this time? NO? Yet they can probably better afford it than FREEDOM. Is it perhaps that the milkman, etc. . . won't go on supplying the milk, etc. . . unless you pay promptly whereas FREEDOM arrives just the same each week whether you have paid or not? Yes? The argument is understandable but most unethical!

Simon and Laura are supposed to have a resuscitated quarrel in the televised scene, but their own spontaneous feelings in

THE VIEWS OF OTHERS

OPINION ON THE WAGE SYSTEM

MOST anarchists are encouraged whenever sincere support for some aspect of anarchist sociology is expressed by those who nevertheless do not accept our ideas in their entirety. In the current issue of the *Socialist Christian*, the editorial comment on the subject of strikes contains the following:

"The Wage system is the key method of capitalism. By it Human Labour Power is acquired, dominated and exploited. Under it men and women sell their capacity to labour to the owners of property, getting as prices, wages to cover the cost of maintaining themselves and families in working conditions. Selling their labour power, men cease to control the application of their own creative impulses. Wagerly like Slavery denies men's right to do God's Will 'on the job'. In every strike, to some degree, this holy claim is present. Woe to the Christian who ignores this when he condemns the method of the strike.

To-day, the strike is, unhappily, seldom a revolutionary act directed against the wage system, but is, in the main, the way of presenting wage-claims to meet

increasing prices. With the old gold sovereign now fetching £4, wage claims are inevitable: teachers, parsons, civil servants, policemen and members of parliament are—in one way or another—demanding and getting wage increases, it has to be agreed that what is good for them is the even more certain right of the busman and the docker . . .

The strike against compulsory overtime is a strike against the length of the wage-slave's working week which because it is against the wage system demands the support of every Christian. We shall be understood if we say that we stand solid with the strikers, but under our own banner.

Such strikes as these can never win their true objectives until they are carried through by the mass trade or industrial organs of the workers against the whole wage system."

Despite the fact that it is set in a specifically Christian context, the above has a far deeper revolutionary content than most of the nonsense propagated by the 'revolutionary' marxists, and one wishes wholeheartedly that more Christians would advocate these views.

Side by side with this straightforward industrial solidarity, the orthodox Christian doctrines seem very anachronistic. Religious fervour may have inspired the slaves of the Roman Empire in their risings against their masters, as it to-day encourages the supporters of the *Socialist Christian*, but the anarchist prefers to base his arguments on understanding and experience rather than on faith. Understanding of the structure of oppressive society and experience of the potentialities of men and women when freed from physical restriction and mental superstition provide a sounder foundation for revolutionary action than a mythical and mystical conception of the nature of man.

Despite this, anarchists, who also stand under their own banner in supporting reformist strikes while at the same time demanding the revolutionary overthrow of the wage system, are happy to find another group with the same industrial outlook. P.H.

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Theatre
SIMON AND LAURA

THE second act especially of *Simon and Laura*, a new comedy by Alan Melville (at the Strand Theatre), conveys most effectively the falsity and stifling atmosphere of modern society. Simon and Laura Foster are husband and wife, whose devotion to one another is one of the "public's" cherished illusions; they are famous stage partners, but their careers are rapidly on the wane. In reality they have interminable quarrels, and the first scene consists of their mutual vituperation, culminating in yet another determination to separate. However, a television producer is shown in and explains that the B.B.C. intend to begin a new serial to mirror the home

life of "ordinary" people, and invites Simon and Laura to act themselves as the ideal happily married couple. The producer is unaware that they lead such a difficult and quarrelsome existence, and mistakes this strain for "superficial banter". And so cameras, lights, microphones are installed in their house, as the programme is to be authentic, the television people coming in every evening to shoot the rehearsed and scripted daily episodes.

This symbolises the hideous rationalization and mass-production of human beings' very souls: everything is organised, directed, pried into, people have no true independence and privacy remaining. Man is no longer master of himself or the machines he has invented; millions of people are supposed to watch enthusiastically the sham acting of Simon and Laura who have really no home left, but are trapped in a senseless two-dimensional prison of pretence and the television screen. Our contemporary mechanized civilization is fatal to man's inner life, for it destroys his integrity, disfigures his emotional life, makes him the instrument of falsity and inhuman processes, and takes away from him all possibility of contemplation by a rapid increase in the tempo of life. Our era is sometimes characterized as that of the masses, of collectives, in the midst of which man loses himself. Simon and Laura lose themselves in this fantastic transformation of their lives into a claustrophobic television set, where they have to speak the lines written for them. Man's sense of being adrift in the modern world, surrounded by vast organizations and the continual interference and technicalization of the social order by authority and public "opinion", leads him to a sense of neurotic boredom and inner futility.

The programme is an enormous success, and the next scene is the day of the 200th performance: Simon and Laura in "real" life are considering getting divorced, and the satire and irony is increased when they are rehearsing a typically artificial sentimental scene, in which their adopted son asks the butler (who has been brought into the programme because he is so much like the general conception of a "stage" butler), "Are all married people as happy as Aunt Laura and Uncle Simon?" (In reality he is not their adopted son, and they detest having to act with him). Laura descends the stairs in a glamorous gown (which has to be returned the next day), speaks sham, stilted dialogue, and goes to a table, which is held before her by a technician while the camera moves into a close-up. The cameras move from side to side of the room (and on another level of reality the stage set) shooting several scenes, which brilliantly parody the B.B.C. serial technique. In this nightmare of inner unhappiness, and acted self-satisfaction and bourgeois happiness to please the viewers we see the existential tragedy and emptiness of modern life.

Simon and Laura are supposed to have a resuscitated quarrel in the televised scene, but their own spontaneous feelings in

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BOOKS A Modern Fable

SATIRES involving the fairies and giants and talking animals of child-lore are frequently written, but rarely addressed to children. A publisher's blurb about *Animal Farm* describes it as "a fable for the child of our time"; but in fact the child of our time would probably miss the whole point, and lose interest at the top of page four if not earlier. *Gulliver's Voyage to Lilliput* is of course a children's classic, but only after editing or rewriting by fairy-tale writers, who omit all the satirical detail, quite properly, because their readers would not be interested in it.

One must therefore admire the skill of the American writer Frank Tashlin, whose *The Bear that Wasn't* manages to be principally a book for children, yet a genuine satire as well. Detailed, whimsical illustrations take up the greater part of each page, leaving only corners and margins for the text; and the story, which is told in simple words and short sentences, with the repetitive, detailed style of good child-lore, will delight anyone old enough to look at pictures, but not yet too sophisticated for tales of talking bears.

Briefly, a factory is built over a hibernating bear. The bear emerges in the spring, and is standing bewildered in the factory yard when he is ordered back to work by a foreman. Naturally, he explains he is a bear. The foreman tells him he is "a silly man who needs a shave and wears a fur coat", and takes him to the manager, who tells him the same thing and takes him to the

executive next above him in rank . . . and so on. Eventually the President of the Corporation, still unable to convince the bear that he isn't, takes him to consult various captive bears, who should know a fellow bear when they see one. When they say the same as the executives, he is finally convinced, and submits to being given a man's work in the factory.

Some months later the factory closes down. The bear refrains from hibernating, and is very miserable because he doesn't know what a silly man who needs a shave and wears a fur coat would do, freezing to death in the snow. He solves the problem by hibernating, and lives happily ever after. (A more pessimistic satirist would have let him die).

One discordant note is the Author's note, telling us what the story symbolises. Like the "morals" tagged onto Aesop's fables, it is superfluous for those who can see the deeper significance of a story and a nuisance for those who can't. Fortunately it is printed on the detachable dust-cover. Minus dust-cover, the book is both a charming picture-book about a lovable bear, and a telling satire. In neither of its classes is it a great work; but it is honestly in both classes, and worthy of inclusion in the library of any literary anarchist, or of any romantic child.

Zorinov was expelled from the Soviet Writers' Union for an innocent-looking tale about a monkey who escaped from the Zoo; it will be interesting to see whether the Un-American Activities Committee have any comment to make on Tashlin's "Bear". D.R.

**The Bear that Wasn't*, written and illustrated by Frank Tashlin. (John Murray).

DON'T GIVE UP!

IN an editorial comment in the *Listener* (Dec. 16) to a letter published in its correspondence columns in which it was argued that the ordinary citizen counts for little today as he is "dwarfed, imposed upon, or brushed off by parliament, big business organisations, the Churches, local councils and the Press" the point of view is advanced that "for those who are not anarchists (gentle or otherwise) it would not be difficult to argue the other way". But, concludes the *Listener*, "All this is not to say that Mr. Priestley and his followers have not a persuasive case. True the machines may abuse, but they can also be used sensibly. The mere fact that the point of view of the anarchists can be heard suggests that our Society is not a soulless Juggernaut" (our italics).

We may perhaps be excused if platitudes now automatically raise our blood pressure even when they are well-intentioned—as obviously the *Listener's* editorial was. Another correspondent pointed out in reply (*Listener*, Dec. 30) that the fact that the anarchist view can be heard is not evidence that "society is not a soulless Juggernaut". "What really matters—he writes—is the audience it commands and the response (if any) that it stimulates". And he "ventures to suggest" that the audience is "extremely small (about one per cent.)" and the response even smaller. In our opinion he is, if anything, optimistic in his estimates.

Our own experience in following up the "Gentle Anarchists" broadcasts with an advertisement in one of the "progressive" politico-literary weekly with a readership exceeding 100,000, in which we offered details of anarchist publications as well as a pamphlet on "What is Anarchism" free of charge to all who simply took the trouble to send us a postcard, resulted in less than 100 replies, or .1% of that journal's readership. And if one takes into account that we were appealing to a relatively enlightened section of the nation, the results are indeed discouraging.

On this occasion the lack of response cannot be blamed on the quality of our propaganda, since the public to which we addressed ourselves was being invited to "sample" it for the first time in most cases. Nor can it be said surely, that the two talks by Mr. Priestley, on which the advertisement hinged, were lacking in forthrightness or were ineptly put over the air. Indeed the Radio critics were unanimous in praising Mr. Priestley's radio technique and some even thought his ideas worthy of serious consideration. The causes lie elsewhere and it behoves those of us who take more than a purely philosophical interest in social problems to try to understand them.

★

WE live in an age of speed, the symbol of which, is superficiality. Every year more of everything is produced; more cars and more books, more television sets and more delinquents; more laws and more bureaucrats. And always less time to live and to love, to relax and to think.

What has modern man done with the time saved by drawing water from a tap and not from the well; by the mechanization of food production, by the mass production of the utensils of daily life, that he has no time to think or act for himself? What are the forces that make him fear new ideas but not jet airplanes; that make him shun responsibility but not the hydrogen bomb?

Thousands of people have been killed in air accidents, yet more

(With most humble acknowledgements to Charles Duff and his vade mecum for all lovers of the sublime art of hanging: 'A Handbook of Hanging'.

"Off with her head!" the Queen shouted at the top of her voice.

THE Queen of Hearts was perhaps a little rough and ready in her methods of dealing with Alice at the trial of the Knave of Hearts. However she was not one to make a public spectacle of an execution, for did she not say to one of the officers of the court as the unfortunate Hatter was leaving—"and just take his head off outside"? Not, please note, merely 'take his head off' but 'take his head off outside'. Clearly the Queen was as humane in her desire to spare others the embarrassment of witnessing the sufferings of a fellow creature as is our own judicial system. It is, of course, a long time since offenders against the law of this land were punished by decapitation; hanging is the British way—there is something rather messy and foreign about hacking cold-bloodedly at the victim. Rope, which, through the centuries, has been such a vital tool of our sailors in their glorious exploits, is a natural and patriotic choice for the means of despatching from our society those less fortunate than ourselves.

This is not to suggest that there are only two alternatives: capital punishment has taken many forms since man first started living in societies. Perhaps the greatest variety and refinement in methods of execution has been achieved by that highly artistic race, the Chinese; for let there be no doubt about it, artistry is of vital importance to a well-planned execution. The deliberate taking of a man's life, which may not unreasonably be regarded as his greatest possession, is not a matter which should be approached slightly. Once the State or judge has taken the awful decision, then the machinery which puts it into effect must be of an impeccable efficiency, slipshod methods can only serve to bring the law into disrepute. A modicum of ritual is also most necessary, it can give an odour of sanctity to the proceedings which has been known to arouse an almost religious fervour in those privileged to attend. However, to more particular matters.

One aspect of Chinese artistry in this matter of execution is the great variety of forms they used. Davis, in his *Sketches of China* (London 1841), tells of a slave who, at the end of the Mongol dynasty, betrayed his master to some rebels for 10,000 pieces of silver. He was given the silver but also received another reward for his treachery. The rebel chief ordered 'a cauldron of boiling water to be placed in a car and caused the slave who had betrayed his master to be thrown into it. Then the car was paraded among the people while a crier warned them not to imitate his servant, that they might not share his punishment.' Davis quotes this from a book of moral exhortations where the incident is held up as a warning of how base behaviour is rewarded. Other rewards for perfidy in nineteenth-century China included sawing in two (the client was placed upright between two planks and a two-handed saw was used to effect a vertical division of the body); cutting in pieces with a sword (this was just a rather crude form of butchery); chopping in two with a knife—this was a much neater job, a

people than ever travel by airplane. But the adventure of discovering new ideas, of exploring the unknown, whether in social questions (or even in the arts) fills them with fear, a feeling of insecurity, and a sudden awareness of "responsibility for their dependants" (which seems singularly absent when they light-heartedly step into the belly of an airplane).

Anarchism, and the cause of freedom, progress so slowly to-day not because they have lost any of their validity but as we have repeatedly pointed out, because human values have become warped by a false materialism, and the world is deaf to the voice of love and reason.

That the moment appears so unfavourable for the success of libertarian ideas is, however, no reason for abandoning them. On the contrary, if we think that the world has become temporarily insane we serve neither our fellow beings nor ourselves by a self-imposed silence; even less by joining them in desperation and fear that perhaps it is we and not they who are insane!

"OFF WITH HER HEAD!"

sharp blow with a heavy sword on the supine body of the client, making a lateral division at the stomach; decapitation and strangulation.

George Ryley Scott in his book *The History of Capital Punishment* reproduces a number of interesting prints now in the British Museum, which illustrate some of these methods. In this connection it seems a pity that we have no official pictorial representation of our British methods—one feels sure that the Home Office could have produced a tasteful booklet for Coronation Year on one of the most respected of our institutions: an institution which Charles Duff refers to as 'a bulwark of the Constitution'. I fear this is just another example of the regrettable lack of imagination displayed by our bureaucracy.

Gutzlaff, another nineteenth century traveller, in his book *China Opened* (London 1838) records that 'capital crimes are punished with strangulation—a cross-cord being drawn tightly over the breast until the prisoner expires; or by decapitation, a punishment far more ignominious.' But even the Chinese rather lose their sense of proportion when they use the method known as 'the cutting into 10,000 pieces'. 'In this case the executioner fastens the criminal to a post, tears the skin over his head, and pulling it over his eyes, he mangles all the part of the body, or cuts the limbs off piecemeal... The head... is afterwards exposed to the multitude and carried through whole districts, with a description of the crime for which the malefactor suffered.' A good supply of clients for the executioners was ensured by the gratifying numerous crimes for which death was the penalty. This supply was further guaranteed by a law which stated that magistrates were in duty bound to find someone guilty in cases of homicide, otherwise they were themselves in danger of punishment.

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In this matter, as in so many other branches of science, it would seem that China was far in advance of our Christian civilization in the West; though there is a similarity between the capital crimes of the Chinese code and those of the Mosaic law. The Bible, wherein the Mosaic law is expounded, was for several centuries almost the only reading-matter available to the literates of this country—and no doubt also to the legislators. In addition, the influence and power of the Church at this time dominated the practical affairs of government. It is not then surprising that the Ten Commandments and their subsequent interpretations by the Jewish priests should have helped to form British law. Mosaic law made sure there was good scope for using the death penalty by making adultery, bestiality, blasphemy, incest,

Values & History

Continued from p. 2

to a god. By joining with other subjects in the same faith, that is by religion, it drew from it the assurance of a trans-temporal validity of values governing and conquering the reality of objects. Beliefs are no longer arbitrary or accidental when an individual is born and dies in them, knowing that they were before his birth and will be after his death.

Faith in science, as already pointed out, is itself a value, and so is faith in history. How, then, to reconcile them with the absolute when they seem to hunt it out everywhere? Under their scrutiny values are not absolute, but to be valid as values they must be believed they are or acted upon as if they were. The absolute is a necessity for the subject, and both the historian and the scientist believe in it insofar as they are subjects. Why would they otherwise persist in being scientist or historian when they could choose being anything else or nothing at all? Science and history are valid, that is significant, in that they contribute to the elaboration of values, to satisfy man's thirst for the absolute. This thirst can be objectively ascertained in the same way as physiological thirst, but both must be subjectively experienced to know how much they matter and what they mean. The tragedy of life however, does not so much result from a struggle between the absolute and the relative, between subject and objects, between values and facts as from conflicts between subject and subjects, absolute and absolute, value and value. Then a new kind of faith is demanded, faith in the value of those conflicts themselves, and then, if ever and more than ever, does the absolute of self demand to be transcended.

GIOVANNI BALDELLI.

rape, sabbath breaking, unchastity and witchcraft capital crimes. A list very similar to those of the capital crimes of this country 150 or so years ago. Roman law, another great influence on our legal system, added treason, corruption, seduction and murder to the list.

This country has, however, come a long way (I do not say progressed) since the days when the theft of a sheep would be punished by hanging. During the eighteenth century innumerable offences that could be punished with death were added to the Statute Book: these were, in the main, offences against property—such horrible crimes as poaching or stealing vegetables from the fields. But from the 1830's onwards the rot set in and many of these acts were repealed, until by 1861 only those crimes which are still capital to-day were left. These are treason, murder, piracy with violence, and setting fire to dockyards and arsenals. We have managed to progress a little since then as, during the war, two new crimes were added to the list—treachery and looting.

An interesting anomaly of the law in medieval and later times was the method of avoiding punishment known as 'benefit of clergy'. Originally intended to protect the priests from any rash temporal laws, it came to mean that anyone who could read could claim benefit of clergy and thus avoid hanging. The test of literacy was, in effect, the ability to read verse i of Psalm 51—which became known as 'the neck verse'. Benefit of clergy was abolished in 1827.

★

THE well-tried British way of execution ensures that death is almost painless by inducing instantaneous loss of consciousness. No undue reliance on gadgets like electric chairs, which by no means cause immediate death—there are numerous cases where a second dose of current proved necessary (Charles Duff gives details of some of these in his "defence" of the British method). No poison, gas or cyanide tablets. No butchery with guillotines or any of the cruder instruments. Not suffocation by hanging; just good clean dislocation of the vertebrae.

It is difficult not to feel a certain pride in the quiet skill and thoughtfulness of the men responsible for our executions. Viscount Templewood in his book *The Shadow of the Gallows* quotes in full a

Home Office memorandum on the subject; the consideration displayed by the authorities for the prisoner is most apparent.

"These [death] cells are equipped not only to accommodate the prisoner, but also the staff who keep him under constant observation while he remains under sentence of death. Separate lavatory, bath and visiting rooms adjoin the cell... Amenities such as cards, chess, dominoes, etc., are provided in the cell and the officers are encouraged to—and in fact invariably do—join the prisoner in these games. Newspapers and books are also provided... A pint of beer or stout is supplied daily... and so on. The preparations for the main event itself are most careful: 'By means of the official table of the average length of drop for height and weight with such slight modification as the physique of the prisoner requires, [the hangman assesses] the length of the drop. The execution apparatus is tested before the day fixed for carrying out the execution, the test being made with a bag of sand of approximately the same weight as the prisoner. The bag is left hanging overnight to stretch the rope'. The spiritual sustenance of the prisoner is not neglected—'On the morning of the execution it is usual for the chaplain to spend the last hour with the prisoner and remain with him until the execution is over.'

There is little need to give any further details—suffice it to say that the affair is planned to the last detail so that the prisoner shall be spared any undue suffering. The memorandum says 'There is no record during the present century of any failure or mishap in connection with an execution, and as now carried out execution by hanging can be regarded as speedy and certain.'

It is only fair to mention (as the memorandum does) that there were one or two unfortunate mishaps in the nineteenth century, particularly the case of a man called Lee who, in 1885, was hanged three times without the desired result. His sentence was subsequently commuted. Miscalculation in the length of the drop has been known to cause decapitation. But these are minor blemishes on a noble institution whose workings are too little known. Newspaper reports are often confined to a few lines in an inside page. If only the Home Office would issue a little discreet propaganda then the public could take a more intelligent interest in this matter and our executions would attract the attention they deserve.

M.G.W.

Anarchist's Notebook

Continued from p. 1

speeds exceeding 500 miles an hour could be brought to a standstill without killing him in the process. From the point of view of a layman it is difficult to appreciate the importance to humanity of such an experiment. However the human guinea pig, a Colonel John P. Stapp, was found and according to the Air Force report:

"He was strapped to a tubular steel rocket weighing 2,000lb., mounted on steel rails embedded in concrete, and propelled by the 40,000lb. thrust of nine rockets. This was all done at a height of 4,100 feet, for that is the altitude of the Air Development Centre. At that altitude, the Air Force reports, Colonel Stapp's 632 miles an hour is the equivalent of more than a thousand miles an hour at 35,000 feet, the normal cruising altitude of jet planes. The sled reached top speed at five seconds after it started to move. It had gone 2,800 feet. It carried no windscreen—it would have slowed him down. The colonel wore no special armour-plate or uniform, although he was protected by a plastic helmet with a plastic visor. He was strapped in by a nylon web harness on his shoulders and chest."

In one and a half seconds the speed of the sled was reduced from 632 m.p.h. to zero, and the Colonel survived. He came out of this horror with a few blood blisters caused by flying dust particles and a couple of black eyes acquired, according to the report as a result of his "eyes being thrown forward against his eyelids during the deceleration period." According to the Colonel his eyesight failed for about two seconds soon after the machine took off, and when he was subject to nine times the pressure of gravity. He saw "bright yellows and vivid reds" and the pain was "intense" and lasted for about eight and a half minutes.

Obviously delighted by the fact that the Colonel survived, the Air

Force announce that they hope in a future experiment to propel him at a speed of 800 miles an hour. Presumably the tests will be carried out with the same thoroughness used in the recent tests on the Comets when each part was tested to destruction. How valuable it will be to know that a man's eyes fall right out when he is brought to a standstill from a speed of x miles per hour in .y of a second!

Wasted Hours

WE can by a glance at one of H.M. Stationery Office's many publications know just how many man-hours have been lost in the course of a year due to industrial disputes, and this is then converted by the economic experts into loss of production of so many cars, or tons of coal; and the nation shakes its head and points an accusing finger at the delinquents. Unnoticed however are the hours lost by millions of people who have never been involved in industrial disputes, have never reached the office a minute after 9 a.m. nor closed their desks before 5 p.m. but who nevertheless, have never produced anything, or provided a service, which was of any use whatsoever to the community. One gets an insight into this paper world of business when some bright manager suddenly sees a way of effecting economies for his bosses (the public hardly ever benefits even indirectly) and then overnight what was an integral part of business administration is denounced as a time waster. In the House of Commons shortly before the Xmas recess a Conservative M.P. moved an amendment to the Bill of Exchange Act of 1882(!) which seeks to render unnecessary endorsement of cheques and similar documents. He thought that his amendment would be acceptable to the House because of the "economies it would effect in business and commerce" (our italics). His statistics are most impressive:

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INDIVIDUALISM

THE concept of rugged individualism, which is so often misinterpreted as freedom, tends rather to reinforce the fetters that make society the subtle conditioning shell from which none escape, especially when these so-called individual tendencies are, often as not, mere rationalisations for people who cannot find emotional stability. That they are the victims of society's conditioning, as indeed we all are, is understandable, but their personal tendencies, which they justify in the name of personal freedom, perform the task of distracting this type from the real problems of existence into a dream world of meaningless intellectualism, minor affectations and often floe and suicide. It is the new philosophy of defeat and cynicism. Unwilling, or rather unable, to recognise that man, the social animal living in a group, not only owes a certain amount of discipline and responsibility, but also possesses a tangible aggressiveness displayed in the desire to help his fellow creatures. This would be mutual aid taken to its logical conclusion.

It is often contended by the school of individualism that man may act in his unique way as long as he does not interfere with the happiness of other people, but the more diverse the activities of such individualism in their social relationships the more glorified become their activities as the uniqueness of their personality, which is considered unalterable and not to be interfered with. But within this structure lies the danger of justifying perverse and neurotic behaviour which is not always recognised as anti-social.

At times the tendency to enquire and analyse these personal mediums is strongly resisted by the people concerned as an enquiry into these tendencies might reveal the perverse and anti-social character of these forms. Deeper enquiries as conducted by analysis would reveal the motive power behind such activities and the complete irrationality of them. Personal equilibrium under such circum-

stances would undoubtedly disintegrate, as all expressions both physical and mental, tend to stabilise temporarily in the present social order of society. The naked revelation of motive behind our expressive pattern, conflicting as they must with society, would kill that equilibrium and would in fact force us to become that person so many have tried to become by superimposing upon themselves a political philosophy which does nothing but reinforce those tendencies which analysis would condemn.

The process of change that is in fact enquiry, renunciation, growth and the revolutionary is not easy, and one cannot hope to achieve the process fully. But I believe that the only true revolutionaries are those who have made revolutionary activity an integral part of their conscious and unconscious existence. This organic growth can only have its inception in childhood if any real change in the present structure of man has to be made.

It is the central contention of the individuals who have elevated the person on a pedestal of divinity, that actions which spring from the individual express his uniqueness which distinguish him from the normal herd. But the expression of the ego having itself been conditioned by environmental influences mirrors within its structure the contradictions of that environment. So, simply because actions and attitudes stem from the depth of the ego they in no way entail uniqueness and certainly little rationality, as is implicit in the attitudes and activities of society. This tends to suggest a dead end. For how can we relate things as being socially desirable or not since the ego cannot be trusted? What and where is the norm?

Accepting the fact that the norm is not a static state but a set of situations, the only state of true equilibrium is found in the natural laws that govern the existence of things in general. For those who refuse to accept the existence of the natural in all social and personal

forms because of lack of definition, do so because the natural norm has been lost in unnatural living conditions and attitudes. The recognition of the natural would revolutionize most ideas of to-day held unquestionably as correct. This is most applicable to what is considered correct and in fact "natural" in the social patterns of our existence. The "natural" one might say, is a state of matter which fulfils its function of existence and movement without any irrational interference. The natural always tends to exert itself from a state of tension to the alleviation of that tension, but it is nearly always suppressed or modified.

The way agronomy has utilized the land in our social state illustrates the above point, thinking of the earth in mechanical terms, thinking it works like a motor to be fed with petrol and made to run. The earth is organic and alive, assimilating and transforming matter from a state of uselessness to man to a state of usefulness in its own time and cycle, and makes fertile and excretes by the fact that it gives up its nutriment which enables vegetation to grow that which is basic to man's existence. The constant application of artificial manure and the concentrated rate of extraction can be described as the breaking up of the natural rotative patterns of the earth's existence.

Naturally in this case as in all cases it can only be a descriptive form and not a static norm or finality. But the earth in this descriptive form functions in its full capacity and in fact regulates itself. It is a greater recognition of these rhythms which will enable man to make real use and greater use of the earth to mankind's benefit and yet at the same time, not disturb its natural rhythm and potentiality. The wholesale destruction of animal life and vegetation must lower and disturb the productive capacity which mankind in its blind pursuit of unnatural values fails to recognize. The recognition on the other hand of the natural rhythms would evolve a new attitude in the people themselves. Man, too, has come under the aegis of this attitude and broken rhythm in our culture; he has been regimented and conditioned both physically and mentally and the natural rhythms of biological functioning have been completely disturbed and mutilated. Is it any wonder that man reacts to the world in the spirit of his own disturbance? It is here that

one must examine the actions of individuals who claim that their behaviour is in fact freedom from the fetters of

SELECTIONS FROM FREEDOM

Volume 3—1953

Colonialism on Trial

230 pp. paper 7/6; cloth 10/6

Defend the Shop Stewards

Continued from p. 1

but to take action themselves. And the management very quickly saw the light. It withdrew the suspension notices from the nine employees and has agreed to the re-instatement of the four stewards—after a conference between the firm and the unions.

And here lies the same danger as Jack Peters faces in his appeal against B.E.A. That the management and the union officials are to get together to discuss the status, function and necessity for shop stewards.

Already Standards have issued a statement saying that the procedure agreement between the company and the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions is to be modified 'so as to establish beyond doubt that the management have the right to manage their own establishment.' And this can only mean one thing—that the management intends to restrict the activity of the shop stewards.

Defence at Workshop Level

This is a dangerous situation for the workers. Their best field of defence is in the workshop itself, and here the shop steward is an essential link. The council of shop stewards is the nearest thing we have to a works committee on an anarcho-syndicalist pattern and it is a matter of prime importance for the workers that they should defend the organisation at this level.

The proposed 'modification' of the procedure agreement will give to the unions the right to make decisions with the management above the workers heads. At any level above that the shop steward, who is usually elected by the workers and remains with them in the workshop, union officials tend to drift out of contact with the workers. This applies

society. I think it is true that all social phenomena and movement whether on a personal basis or group plane is nothing but the attempt at the re-establishment of the natural, biological patterns or their prerequisites.

This process may at first not be recognised. The aims may be hidden but the final phase illustrates the object. True, man has created artificial needs which he satisfies, but they hardly contribute to the personal happiness which can only be achieved when the real shackles that bind him are resolved. Every living thing whose natural and spontaneous cycles are disturbed will react in a violent and uncommon manner. And man living in close proximity with his fellow beings has coined the phrase anti-social. So the attempt of individualists to act beyond the social norm; devoid of social responsibility to anyone except themselves, is in effect trying to establish their lost motility both physical and

FREEDOM

emotional. But motivated by conscience and frustration and not recognising the nature of their affliction, with no object in view they do nothing but perpetuate their own instability. This would not be so harmful if it were not for the fact that such action branded as freedom attracts those who know only that they are frustrated and have no idea as to the nature of the problem with no indication as to the purpose of their violent attempts. Violence, dope, liquor, violent jazz and irresponsible sexual activity with suicide are the only means open in the futile attempts to establish what has been disturbed by society. In man the sexual, and for that matter, all spontaneous activity which tends towards pleasure and would only naturally end there, is contorted and deviated by moralism, psychologically latent or conscious, or social institutions which reinforce the moralism.

S.F.

Anarchist's Notebook

Wasted Hours

Continued from p. 3

"Some six hundred million cheques required endorsement each year and it had been calculated that 2.5 million man-hours a year were spent signing cheques, which cost at least £1 million in wages. 'We cannot afford to waste the time of people on this fantastic and farcical fetish of endorsement'."

We warmly welcome this M.P.'s investigations. He has already found that 2.5 million man-hours are wasted on this "fantastic and farcical fetish" of cheque endorsement. He should not stop there, even if it earns him the opprobrium of all cheque-endorsers or drives them into the lap of Harry Pollitt and the *Daily Worker*. But he must beware lest the hours saved in cheque-endorsing are then lost by transferring these worthy upholders of the Bills of Exchange Act of 1882 to some other equally time-wasting occupation such as filling in forms in triplicate instead of in duplicate. He should know that there are also other experts to invent new jobs to keep the office busy and happy.

CIRCULAR HM(54)113

AFTER all, only a couple of Sundays ago a new system was started in our Hospitals as a result of Circular HM(54)113 issued by the Ministry of Health which will help to absorb some of the 2.5 million man-hours which the Conservative M.P. is fighting hard to save for "business and commerce".

Now, all hospitals will be required to collect and "account" for patients' tokens for cheap welfare milk and food. Tokens have replaced the old system of registering with milk suppliers and using ration books, but hospital officials complain that the new arrangement will mean so much extra clerical work at a time when their staffs have already been cut to a minimum that more important duties may be neglected. The secretary of a London hospital compared the new system to an "Orwel-

lian fantasy"—"a financial paper transaction between the Ministry of Food and the Ministry of Health which will save the Exchequer no money and which will bring no benefit to any patient in any hospital."

The Ministry, in its six-page circular, regrets that a certain amount of extra work will be entailed, but hospitals "will no doubt find it convenient to add milk and vitamin tokens to the list of articles which patients are customarily asked to bring with them on admission."

So, cheque-endorsers of Britain, even if the ground is to be taken from under your feet by the evil machinations of this inhuman Conservative, your skill and experience will not be wasted. You can always turn to endorsing milk tokens, and feel comforted that it is just as useless an occupation as endorsing cheques.

LIBERTARIAN.

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

LECTURE-DISCUSSIONS

Every Sunday at 7.30 at THE MALATESTA CLUB 155 High Holborn, W.C.1. (Nearly opposite Holborn Town Hall)

JAN. 9—S. E. Parker on ANARCHY, REVOLUTION AND THE INDIVIDUAL.

JAN. 16—Jack Robinson on THE CINEMA

JAN. 23—Rita Milton on THE FUNCTION OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PRESS

JAN. 30—Frank Hirshfield on THE FAILURE OF PACIFISM?

INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS

Every Thursday at 8.15.

OPEN AIR MEETINGS

Weather Permitting HYDE PARK Sundays at 3.30 p.m.

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Bits of Sanity

A 260 Mile Footpath

Any evidence that the whole nation is not speed mad, especially when one reads that by 1965 it will be possible to fly to New York in 75 minutes, is, for the present writer, at least good news. The following item is culled from the *News Chronicle*:

A 260-mile footpath right round the Cornish coast will be open to walkers in the New Year. Plans for the path—the first coastal track of its kind in Britain under the National Paths Act—have been completed by the Cornwall planning authorities and approved by the Minister of Housing.

Six planning officers walked the path in stages and drew up detailed maps. These recorded every stile and stepping-stone.

"The path clings as closely to the cliffs as we could get it," Mr. H. W. J. Heck, county planning officer, said yesterday. "There are still several gaps where local authorities are negotiating with land-owners, and there are places where the path has to be made, but it should be completed in the New Year."

It is rather sad however to observe that it needs a National Paths Act to bring this about.

A Footnote to "Georgia Story"

THOSE Tele-viewers who witnessed the horrors of the deep South in the last century in *Georgia Story* last Sunday (how many, by the way, phoned up the B.B.C. to protest that it was not suitable Sunday entertainment?) will be interested in another Television programme put out in America last week. It was an appeal to help expand a Negro school in a small Mississippi community, and in a week it brought in \$400,000. An A.P. report from Hollywood (Dec. 22) states that:

The National Broadcasting Company announced to-day that sixty-six bags of mail already processed contained \$217,500 for the school of Dr. L. C. Jones, 70 years old, who appealed Dec. 15 on Ralph Edwards' "This Is Your Life" programme.

Sixty-four bags of mail are not yet processed. N.B.C. said these were expected to contain an additional \$200,000.

Mr. Edwards last week told the story of the Negro educator who started teaching two students while using a pine log for his out-of-doors desk.

His school now covers 16,000 acres and he has 500 students. Mr. Edwards made an appeal for 1,000,000 people to send in \$1 each to assure expansion and continuation of the institution.

At the most, we know, this gesture proves very little. The resistance to anti-segregation in schools is still very strong in many parts of America (why indeed should the school—an exclusively negro school—for which the appeal was made,

be expanded and thus act as an excuse for continuing segregation in that community?), and negroes, however improved their situation may be compared with what it was fifty or a hundred years ago, is still not one of equality with the white man. Yet... must one, for that reason, not welcome the warm response this appeal has received from a section of the American public?

Incidentally, how many people in this country who saw the T.V. play last Sunday were able to project their thoughts to the fate of the millions of Africans in Kenya and see their struggle in rather a different light from that in which it has been presented by the gutter press and the government? Did some even review their own attitude to the unhappy immigrants from Africa and the West Indies who have "invaded" our shores in search of work and in the desperate hope that we here are more enlightened than the white *herrenvolk* over there?

Another Dent in the Armour of Racism

SYDNEY (WP).—Betty Zooch, a hitherto unknown 16-year-old aboriginal girl, was catapulted into prominence and the national conscience when the conservative *Sydney Sun* came to her rescue after finding she had been sent to a detention institution for two years for stealing \$1.12 and 36 cents' worth of tobacco.

Public opinion was aroused when the *Sun* revealed Betty's story. Orphaned at four, she spent nearly 12 years at the Cootamundra Aboriginal Girls' Home, where she received motherly care and grew up happy. At the age of 16, however, the time came for her to be placed out in a private household to earn her living at domestic labour. The change confused her, made her moody and resentful. The theft followed. When the authorities made her offence serious, numerous Australians stepped forward to declare that Betty's chief wrong was simply her colour. She was not permitted to enter the home of Dr. Walter Wearn, Treasurer of the Far West Health Scheme, even though he offered ideal family conditions.

The *Sun* kept hammering away. More and more people who had known Betty came forward on her behalf. Deputy Opposition leader R. W. Askin said he doubted whether the girl would have been treated so harshly had she been white. The campaign became irresistible. As a result, Betty has gone to the Wearn home, happily on the way to a better chance. R.