

SUSPECT THEIR PROMISES WHEN THEY START

Going a-Wooing

As the electioneering racket begins to get under way, the various baits which the politicians hope will encourage us to swallow their hooks, and to make their appearance, and the baits are pretty stale. If there is anything which confirms our opinion of the poverty of thought current in politics to-day, it is the staleness and superficiality of the policies of the electioneering

mentally, both parties are making their appeal to the people on the record of the government of the last six years. The Conservatives are attacking it and the Labour Party, apparently, smugly content that they have a good record, are not affording to rest on their laurels, admitting, perhaps, some shortcomings, but claiming that no other party would have done better. At the latter point we are inclined to agree. Anarchists do not believe in politics only because political parties are dishonest. Most of them are our criticism of existing conditions—which might be answered by a more idealistic conception, the politician, could ever be produced in sufficient numbers to be effective—goes much further than we maintain that any political party taking on the government of a capitalist state, has to act in well-defined ways. The rules of the game demand it, and although official differences may be apparent in the various political programmes, in practice—they operate in much the same.

Labour's Tory Policy

We pointed out last week the growing similarity of the party programmes, and their sham arguments develop, the differences become less and less. For all the years of the Labour government, we have had operating in name a Tory foreign policy. This was admitted from the very beginning of the Labour rule, when Ernie Bevan took over the Foreign Office and announced his policy of "continuity". And certainly, the British soldiers, sailors and airmen who since 1945 have had to carry on the battlefields of the world the "continuity" policy of the men who sit in offices, the fact that we had a Labour government instead of a Conservative must have seemed a very academic distinction indeed.

As the nationalisation of industry after industry took place, too, a retreat from the so-called socialism which inspired the first take-over began to be apparent. The structure of the iron and steel industry—the last to be taken over—is very different from that of coal-mining—the first. Not all the steel industry has been

nationalised, to start with, only the biggest firms having come under State control, and among them, competition, on the good old Tory principle, is encouraged.

The Tories' Labour Policy

On the other side, the Conservatives having realised that the Welfare State is here to stay, are claiming that they thought of it first. While maintaining their opposition to nationalisation, they are announcing that they will hand back to private hands only two of the State's industries—steel and road transport. And it is interesting to note that these were the only two which were, before nationalisation, completely in private hands and were making a profit. The power industries—gas and electricity (and water)—were partly under municipal control, and the railways and coal mines had been either losing money for years, or growing steadily more inefficient through lack of capital replacement. These industries the Tories are quite happy to leave in State hands.

And while Labour are wooing the middle classes, to get their votes, the Tories are now wooing the workers, to get theirs. The latest stunt from Conservative headquarters is not only the suggestion for an Excess Profits Tax—except on profits ploughed back as capital—but also the plotting of a "Workers' Charter", to be worked out with the employers and the unions "to secure greater unity and co-operation in industry by giving work people security, incentive, and status, and to encourage co-partnership and profit-sharing". Are we really expected to fall for that sort of stuff?

Incidentally, in his speech at the recent T.U.C. Conference, Hugh Gaitskell suggested that maybe production bonuses and profit-sharing schemes might be the answer to the Socialist search for incentives in an inflationary period.

For years the Liberal Party has been the only one putting forward co-partnership and profit-sharing as parts of their policy. Now both the Labour and Conservative Parties are picking at the rags of Liberal thought, seeking patches for their own threadbare theories.

Ignoring the Fundamentals

What a farce it all is! All the arguments, all the venom, the mud, the hullabaloo of an election—what does it all mean? The fundamental questions are the very ones which the parties choose to ignore.

We, the ordinary people, who seek nothing but the satisfaction of our simple needs in return for our just contribution

to society; who seek to live in peace with the peoples of all nations, neither exploiting nor being exploited; who have our creative abilities and would find satisfaction in using them to the full for the benefit of all—what have we to gain by choosing between one set of masters or another?

The nagging fear at the back of all our minds of another world war, is a fear which the continued existence of government—no matter what its label—will make a certainty. Both Tory and Labour are agreed on re-armament—even the "rebels" in the Labour Party object only to the degree of re-armament—and they both carefully skate over the obvious fact that none of their promises can come to fruition because—to put it in a nutshell—they are hell-bent for destruction.

We shall do well to resist the advances of those who woo us with such tawdry offerings, for such dangerous ends.

CHARLIE CHAPLIN SAYS HE IS AN ANARCHIST

FOR years the Communists have claimed the great film comedian, Charlie Chaplin, as, at least, a fellow traveller. And the current American hysteria, which labels as Communist anyone not a patriotic enthusiast for the American way of life, has helped the illusion.

Now, however, in an interview with Paul Holt, published in the *Daily Herald* 25/9/51, we get Chaplin's own admission. Holt writes:—

"I asked him if he was a Communist. Down in the valley men hate him because they believe he is."

"Communist? I'm a comic!" he said, as though to be a comic was more important. "I can't understand Karl Marx, so how can I be a Communist? I think . . ." he said, pondering. "I am an anarchist. I wish . . . I wish governments would go away and leave people alone more. People can get along without governments. I can."

SYNDICALIST NOTEBOOK

Co-operation Through Authority

SIR GEORGE SCHUSTER, speaking at a Ministry of Labour Manpower Exhibition last week stressed the need for a new attitude to Industrial Relations. He said, "The ideal objective, should be to make each industrial unit a harmonious, live co-operating community spontaneously working together for a common purpose."

This may sound very much like an anarchist attitude to industry. But in case anyone is under the illusion that Sir George is putting over an anarchist "line", let us pursue his remarks a little further. He assured the meeting that he was not advocating what was usually known as workers' control, as it was "impossible to conduct a modern industrial enterprise successfully without the exercise of authority, without the guidance of leadership, and without the practice of discipline. The rank and file could not themselves supply the creative leadership which was required."

When Sir George speaks of spontaneously working together, for a common cause, we know he means the successful "exercise of authority". How meaningless can words become?

WHY DO THEY DO IT?

WE have, when necessary, deplored the "workers right or wrong" attitude so prevalent in left-wing movements. We think that organised labour often behaves in a very foolish way. We had, for example, recent strikes against foreign labour in industry, and whilst we recognise that unity is strength, we believe it only to be so when it is the unity of all workers, in all industries and in all countries.

There is another case in point, where two thousand workers from a Glasgow engineering firm struck against the refusal of a fellow worker to rejoin their union (Amalgamated Engineering) after he had resigned for personal reasons. The man left his job after eleven years, rather than rejoin. We do not yet know the

DISHONOURABLE ARMIES

MILITARISM is seldom subjected to dispassionate examination. Those who regard war as a necessary evil are content to leave it at that and discuss it no further. For anti-militarists it is so self-evidently wrong that again there can be no real discussion, only denunciation. Of course, such a generalisation is only incompletely true. FREEDOM tries to examine the place of war in modern life and so examines some aspects at least of militarism. Then there are those, like Mussolini, who expound a philosophy of war as not an evil but the cradle of certain virtues. Herbert Read, in some chapters of *Poetry and Anarchism*, examines this view as put forward by an Englishman, Douglas Jerrold. But FREEDOM at one end and Douglas Jerrold at the other are exceptions. In the main, it remains true that militarism is generally undiscussed, only supported or denounced.

A recent correspondence in the *Times*, however, has broken through this general rule, with the rather surprising (to some people) result that the views of anarchists have been to some extent vindicated by people who certainly do not share anarchist general convictions.

Honour of the German Soldier

The subject blew up following some remarks about the honour of the German Army in the course of comment on whether Germany should contribute to Europe's defence. Obviously, if the European defence forces are to contain elements of the German Army, it will not help co-operation much to stress the atrocities, brutalities, war crimes, etc., committed by German Generals. But the storm broke when Mr. R. T. Paget, K.C., M.P., declared that the German Army fought well and honourably and compared its commanders to Field-Marshal Montgomery or Alexander. He has also published a book attacking the trial of General Manstein (for whom he acted as defence counsel), which has called forth a lofty, if somewhat unconvincing

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CHARLIE CHAPLIN.

rebuttal from the former Attorney-General, Sir Hartley Shawcross.

Paget's letter provoked a storm of criticism. One writer, Mr. D. P. Waley, quotes Mussolini's dictum "Believe, fight, obey," and declares that German soldiers who carried out atrocities in obedience to orders from above were guilty: "If the men who serve in a European army are to have a code of 'Crederet, combattet, obbedire,' they will not be soldiers of a 'free' Europe in any sense."

Occupation Authorities

Louis Lévy, writing as vice-chairman of the Socialist International, reminds readers of the shooting of hostages and the mass execution of civilians carried out by the German Army. "It is not even necessary," he adds, "to refer to Poland." Stueplnagel, the Commander-in-Chief in Paris during the occupation, writes Lévy, "was not a member of the S.S. nor of the S.A., and was probably not even a Nazi: he was a general of the regular army, believing certainly in the honour of the Wehrmacht. The trouble is that the sense of honour of General Stueplnagel, of the great majority of the German generals, and of their champions like Mr. Paget, is quite different from the sense of honour of the common people in Europe."

Another writer, C. J. Hamson, points out that German militarism kills the "soldier's sense of personal moral responsibility." But, unlike the other writers so far, he seems to have an uneasy feeling that unexpressed nationalism is present under all this argumentation, for he concludes his letter thus: "Mr. Paget indulges in comparisons between the Wehrmacht and the Allied armies. It is probably true that the allied armies committed atrocities. But, if he believes in comparisons which seem to me irrelevant, would he cite a single instance where any of the forces in the west systematically committed atrocities in pursuance of superior orders?"

Allied Atrocities

Paget, himself, thrown on the defensive was able to come back with some powerful body-blows, but at the same time exposed the weakness of the militarist position. In an able letter of 28th September, he wrote: "Mr. Churchill has said that the Germans must contribute (to European defence, that is) on honourable terms. Captain Liddell Hart has quoted General Eisenhower's statement 'recognising that the Wehrmacht fought honourably, and Mr. Eden has endorsed that statement. This and the release of the Wehrmacht commanders is necessary if German soldiers in a European army are to respect themselves or be respected by their own people.' Such is a logical position for those who see armies as the essential elements of alliances and political line-ups."

Paget scores in drawing attention to the fact that "the honour of a soldier"—which he admits to be "an inadequate creed for a fully civilised human being"—nevertheless has "on countless occasions caused soldiers to mitigate the savagery of political directives. The student of military history is constantly being struck by the fact that in war the politician is almost invariably more savage than the soldier, and this includes democratic politicians."

"War is Horrible"

Finally, answering Mr. Hamson's challenge regarding allied atrocities committed under orders, Paget declares: "A second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, at a time when it was known

THE POPE ATTACKS SEX

THE Pope has recently launched a vigorous attack on "sex books" urging Catholic fathers of families throughout the world to unite to combat "this plague". He is reported to have declared that "this sexual propaganda exaggerated beyond all measure the importance and the significance of sex in normal life".

The Roman Catholic Church in every country is the main bulwark against progress in regard to legislation affecting sexuality, or provision of facilities for birth control advice. The "Catholic vote" deters all political parties from campaigning for progressive sexual ends. Despite all this, it is fair to say that sexual morals have undergone something of a revolution in the past thirty years. Abstinence and ascetic codes of behaviour are gradually being recognised for the life denying forces they are.

Nevertheless, despite the enormous volume of books on sex (and

sometimes because of them) the attitude of society is still predominantly anti-sexual. The Pope shrewdly plays on this when he declares that the "sexual propaganda . . . seemed to take no account of the experience of the ages that sex initiation and instruction could only be gravely unhealthy and prejudicial unless closely linked to constant discipline, to vigorous self-control and, above all, to resort to the supernatural forces of prayer and the sacraments."

It is necessary to say once again that "discipline" and "self-control" (meaning abstinence rather than the proper realisation of natural desires in healthy love associations) are the seed bed for neuroses, sexual delinquency and sadistic crimes. And that the sex-denying teachings of religion lay the foundations for the almost universal unhappiness in marriage.

New Views on Godwin's CALEB WILLIAMS

In 1794, the year after the appearance of William Godwin's *Political Justice* the great classical exposition of anarchism, a novel by the same writer was published under the title *Things As They Are; or, the Adventures of Caleb Williams*. Although the last reprinting of this book was half a century ago, it is attracting a great deal of attention from literary critics, and we summarise below some of the new views on this book which appeared to Shelley "as a wind that tears up the deepest waters of the mind."

THE revival of interest in the life and writings of William Godwin, so far as the reading public outside the anarchist movement is concerned, began with the publication in 1946 of George Woodcock's *William Godwin, A Biographical Study*, and in his foreword to this book Herbert Read wrote, "in the years that lie immediately ahead of us,

HERBERT READ ON BRITISH ART

CONTEMPORARY BRITISH ART by Herbert Read. (Pelican Book, 3/6d.)

IN this interesting Pelican there are seventy plates, six of them in colour, a biographical section and a list of books. There are also twenty-seven pages of text being a "report on the situation of the arts of painting and sculpture in Great Britain at the mid-point of the twentieth century", and mentioned therein are the names of over one hundred artists. It is therefore surprising to find that some really important artists working in the period under discussion—from 1910—should be left out entirely, and some mentioned so cursorily as almost to negativise their achievements. And although Herbert Read in his opening paragraph explains the difficulties he has been faced with, nevertheless one feels that mention should be made of the work of Eric Gill in estimating the significance of the revival of British sculpture, and of Bernard Meninsky, Mark Gertler, Sam Haile, and Gerald Wilde in painting, particularly Wilde who so accurately anticipated the contemporary scene ten to fifteen years ago. Also, it is to be regretted that the brief reference to Jankel Adler recording his influence on three of to-day's younger painters, conveys nothing of Adler's own considerable achievement. He did spend the last ten years of his life here and much of his best work was produced in England.

However, these omissions cannot detract much from what is an extremely useful little book. The sections dealing with Henry Moore and Graham Sutherland are most helpful in the further understanding of their work, and the final pages are given over to a summing-up of of the situation of modern English art which is perhaps the best thing in the whole book, containing as it does popular arguments against modern art and some very effective answers to them. ROY SACKMAN.

FREEDOM BOOKSHOP

- William Godwin, *A Biographical Study* George Woodcock 5/-
This 260-page biography described Godwin's life and ideas with many extracts from his writings.
- Selections from *Political Justice* William Godwin 3d.
Introduced by George Woodcock.
- On *Property* William Godwin 6/-
A reprint of the essay on property from the original edition. Edited by H. S. Salt.
- On *Law* William Godwin 1d.
An abridgement of Godwin's chapter on law.
- The *Little Fellow* P. Cotes and T. Niklaus 15/-
"It is a great achievement thus to enlarge the frontiers of sympathy. Mr. Cotes and Miss Niklaus, in their calm but stimulating study, have, as is right, examined Chaplin very seriously, regarding him as an artist and a poet as well as a superb comedian. That, to my mind, is the way in which he ought to be approached."
—HAROLD NICHOLSON in *The Observer*.

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his name and his message will be re-animated." In the same year the University of Toronto reprinted the *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* in a three volume edition edited by F. E. L. Priestley, and this edition was made available in this country in 1948 by the Oxford University Press. Last year, Messrs. Allen and Unwin reprinted their edition of the section on Property from *Political Justice* and published *William Godwin: A Study in Liberalism* by David Fleisher. Another book, *Godwin and the Age of Transition* by A. E. Rodway is announced for publication this autumn. But so far no publisher has re-issued *Caleb Williams*.

Godwin's declared intention in his *Political Justice* to the larger audience of novel-readers, and he says in his preface:

"What is now presented to the public is no refined and abstract speculation; it is a study and delineation of things passing in the moral world. It is but of late that the inestimable importance of political principles has been adequately apprehended. It is now known to philosophers that the spirit and character of the government intrudes itself into every rank of society. But this is a truth highly worthy to be communicated to persons whom books of philosophy and science are never likely to reach. Accordingly, it was proposed in the invention of the following work to comprehend, as far as the progressive nature of a single story would allow, a general review of the modes of domestic and unrecorded despotism, by which man becomes the destroyer."

The plot is summarised by George Woodcock as follows—

"A feud arises between two country gentlemen, Tyrrel, a coarse bully, and Falkland, a cultured man who has imbibed all the 'poison of chivalry'. Tyrrel humiliates Falkland in a quarrel, and is murdered by his rival who allows two innocent yeomen to be hanged in his place. Caleb Williams, Falkland's secretary, chances upon his secret and is kept silent by the threats of his master. Eventually, he tries to escape from his service, but is caught and sent to prison on a capital charge of stealing jewellery which has been secreted among his effects. After several attempts he escapes and joins a gang of thieves, whose nobility of action is used admirably to accentuate the corruption of law-abiding society. He then flees to London, where he is detected, and brought to trial, but his master, fearful of exposure, does not appear, and he is set free. His freedom, however, is illusory, for wherever he goes the agents of his enemy follow, stimulating the prejudices of the people among whom he lives, so that he becomes an outcast from their society. Eventually, Williams is persecuted to the end of his endurance and resolves to expose his master. He and Falkland are brought face to face, and in a dramatic scene in which Caleb speaks with a sincerity that moves all the beholders, Falkland, a dying man, confesses and praises the rectitude of his accuser."

"Into this story," George Woodcock comments, "Godwin contrives to work all the principal ideas of *Political Justice*, and to expose all the major injustices of his day. He describes eloquently the tyranny by which landowners were at the time destroying the peasantry. His indictment of the prison system is made more formidable by his personal indignation at the sufferings which many of the radicals underwent while he was writing *Caleb Williams*. From these partial tyrannies he demonstrates the general tyranny by which the great in wealth and position enslave the minds and dwarf the lives of their weaker neighbours. The positive institutions of society are means to uphold this tyranny. Coercion and punishment are shown in their full folly and injustice. The doctrine of necessity is invoked to explain the waywardness of criminals, and the benevolence of a society of equal and free men is shown as the antidote to social evils. But it is also emphasised that such a condition can be attained not by force, as the admirable thieves attempted, but by the power of education and example."

Mr. Roy Fuller, writing in *Tribune* (24/3/50) on *The Importance of Caleb*

*The last edition in the author's lifetime was that of 1832 in the "Standard Novels" series and the last reprints were in Routledge's "Half-Forgotten Books" in 1903, and by George Newnes in 1904, both long out of print.

Williams, concentrates upon the book's anticipation of the modern detective story. He remarks on "the subtlety and power of the apparatus which Godwin chose, surprisingly in a way, to demonstrate fictionally the depth of penetration of politics into life. Standing on the threshold of the age of industrial capitalism, Godwin found almost instinctively the symbolism which novelists were ever after to use to express their revolt against that age or their ambiguous relations towards it. The novel of crime, of suspense and pursuit, was not invented by Godwin but in a very real sense he was the originator of its modern development. His influence lies on Bulwer Lytton's early novels to the point of plagiarism. There are very strong links between Lytton and Dickens, and, of course, between Dickens and Wilkie Collins. The latter novelist is the obvious forbear of Conan Doyle and the detective story proper . . .

"But the idea of Godwin's which is of most interest and importance is that of the criminal as revolutionary. Williams, falsely accused, is thrown among criminals who are almost all depicted in a favourable light and whose crimes are raised to the status of deliberate aggressions against the injustice of society. The apotheosis of these criminal figures is Captain Raymond, the leader of a band of thieves with whom the fugitive Williams finds refuge. When Williams tells him the story of his persecution by his pursuer, Falkland, Raymond comments that this was only fresh instance of the tyranny and perfidiousness exercised by the powerful members of the community, against those who were less privileged than themselves. Those who saw the human situation in its true light, Raymond goes on, would take arms in their defence while it was still in their power, and set the unjust laws of the majority at defiance."

"One must note, too," says Mr. Fuller, "the character of Gines, the detective of *Caleb Williams*. As we might expect, Godwin shows him in the clearest symbolic light. He is introduced as a member of Raymond's gang—its most violent and unscrupulous member. Later he deserts and resumes his former occupation of police spy. He ends by being employed by Falkland to track down and finally to hound Williams."

"All this is a measure of the depth of

Godwin's criticism of society. In later English crime novels the author's sympathy for the criminal wanes, and turns in the end to abhorrence. And the character of the detective progresses from the malignant Gines through the merely ineffectual, obsequious and illiterate Nabben and Sharp of Lytton's *Paul Clifford* and *Night and Morning* to the kindly and able Sergeant Cuff of Collins's *The Moonstone* and thence to the god-like Sherlock Holmes *et al.* In these trends we may see the gradual acceptance by the artist of an age which is still unjust but whose morality has become too powerful to be challenged."

Writing in *World Review* (June, 1951) on *The Novels of William Godwin*, Mr. Angus Wilson introduces his interpretation with these words:

"The increasing pressure of governmental power in every guise—left, right and centre—has reawakened interest in the theories of political anarchism . . .

"*Political Justice*, so influential in its own day, has been once more re-estimated and found, despite its occasional absurd dogmatism and its quaint air of pedantry applied to life, to be a valuable statement of the fundamental liberties which humanity must always protect against the drive for increased power that inevitably lies beneath the claims of rulers of whatever political shade. Godwin's belief in human perfectibility, his conception of individual benevolence as universally latent, and only requiring suitable education to be universally active, must appear psychologically naive to Stalinist, Catholic and Freudian humanist alike, for all those, in fact to whom the conception of original sin or of an elect are dogmas. Nevertheless, so much has been seen and felt of the tyrannies which emphasis on man's guilt and corruption are made to justify, than an assertion of his innate goodness and powers of love, with the consequent demand for his full freedom to express them, rouses a responsive welcome in a bewildered generation, increasingly impatient of the claims of its rulers to restrain and control it for its own good."

Turning to *Caleb Williams*, and to Godwin's later and less remarkable novels, Mr. Wilson says:

"It is, I believe, the conflicts and themes of the novels, their remarkable

if obsessionist, psychological insight, and their strange moral ambivalence that fill in the gaps in Godwin's political views, that refute the charges of naiveté, and reveal him not only as a courageous opponent of the cruelties and injustices that scarred the surface of eighteenth-century order and decency, but also as a man peculiarly sensitive to the spiritual terrors and despairs that lay beneath its intellectual composure and certainty . . . It is notable, perhaps, that in these same novels may be seen the symbolic expression of that obsessive hatred of authority—father, State or God—that found full outlet in *The Revolt of Islam*, *The Cenci* and *Prometheus Unbound*. For Godwin, I suspect, from the earliest days of his Calvinist childhood, the lack of intimacy of love, of warmth in life, were spiritual agony which an adolescence concentrated study could not banish. The authority of his minister-father, of the decrees of Calvin's elect was the harsh source of this agony, this vacuum of affections. In *Political Justice* he sought to express his positive belief in the goodness of men, his negative refusal to accept the family as its means of oppression. In *Things As They Are* *Caleb Williams*, he declares his ceaseless fight against the dark authority that refused him the love he had needed against the society that supported authority."

In a broadcast on June 14th Mr. Walter Allen develops this view. "*Caleb Williams* is much more than a good novel," he says, "a masterpiece; and it's a masterpiece never received anything like its due—except from Hazlitt. No interest, as the historians imply, only . . . What matters is that it is of, as it were, permanently topical. Mr. Allen maintains that Godwin self unwittingly "put the critics wrong scent," and that "especially significant in the novel gives it its permanent value, is which Godwin did not know doing."

"For what is important in *Williams*, is the relationship between Williams and Falkland. This ship is altogether at odds with Godwin's explicit intentions. For if we believe the novel is really about the inner life of the spirit and character of the man into every rank of society, we must believe that in some sense Falkland is a representative of government and Godwin, of course, hated the concept of government. But Williams adores Falkland even when

Continued on

PLANNING AND DESIGNING

Things We Can Live With

AN exhibition called "Adventure in Town Planning" which has just been held at the Institute of Contemporary Arts illustrates designs for the replanning of London by the staff and students of the School of Architecture attached to the Polish University College, London. With diagrams and models they illustrate the final stage of an imaginary long-term redevelopment of thirteen acres of London together with an overall master plan. (The proposals were illustrated in *Picture Post* for 8/9/51.) How are we to appraise such an exhibition? Is it to be looked upon as an exercise in what Prof. Smigielski calls the almost forgotten art of three-dimensional planning or is it to be thought of as a solution to the actual planning problems which London presents? The organisers emphasise that the first alternative is the exhibition's aim, and they point out that what they describe as "the artistic aspect" of planning is neglected to-day since "town planners are now more concerned with social and economic aspects than with the art of shaping physical environment". But since their "spatial language of three-dimensional planning" is being applied to actual areas of an actual city one cannot help being struck by the arbitrary nature of their approach. Finding that certain areas of London have a local character, Fleet Street—the press, Chelsea—art, Soho—food and entertainment, and so on, they have, in an almost entirely rebuilt London, given these same local aspects to these areas.

There is thus a mixture of the "tear-em-down-and-start-again" attitude and the "conserve-the-local-traditions" approach. If one adopts the first attitude, why respect sentimental tradition and keep Eros in his place in Piccadilly Circus, and if one adopts the second, why replan in the rectilinear fashion of these beautifully executed models which illustrate a city of a character very different from that of London?

The Polish architects point out (and we have continually stressed this in *FREEDOM*) that the rebuilding that is actually being done in London is as incoherent and indiscriminate as though no plan at all had been made. And while their exhibition, with its emphasis on long-term aims, reminds us that we don't see the wood for the trees—that in thinking about details we ignore ultimate ends—it is equally true to say that the same lack of vision affects the smallest details of urban landscape. The local authorities who erect fences of chicken-wire, who plant public gardens in the *Daily-Mail-Ideal-Home*

Exhibition style, who invoke the Town and Country Planning Act to prohibit fly-posting and then permit the enormous advertising sites of the brewers and home-perm manufacturers, are hardly likely to show more discrimination in bigger things.

We recently quoted a Lancashire sanitary inspector who declared that

WHAT CAN BE SAID OF LONDON?

LONDON of the past was one of the loveliest cities in Europe. What could be said of London to-day?

A casual walk in the City of London confronts one with incoherent and indiscriminate rebuilding challenging the general opinion of building restrictions. The history of wasted opportunities after the Great Fire repeats itself. There are not many places left in London from the historic past; these few places are now in danger of being destroyed;

The proposed Colonial Office in Westminster precinct—the Acropolis of London; the case of Carlton House Terrace, one of the few buildings of good scale and proportions around St. James's Park; the huge, soulless structures under the Lessor Scheme, springing up in various parts of Central London—these are a few of the alarming examples which could be multiplied.

It can hardly be disputed that no new values are being added to the visual appearance of the Metropolis and the existing values, the historic inheritance, are gradually in the process of destruction.

This is happening in the period which is widely considered as the era of great town planning development. The Town and Country Planning Act 1947, vested in authorities an unlimited power of control over human environment. This revolutionary act of legal planning embarked the nation on a great experiment, which may change the physical structure of towns and country in the years to come.

The idea leaps to mind, what irreparable damage could be done, taking into consideration the present low level of civic art, if economic conditions and prospect of realisation suddenly improved!

—W. K. SMIGIELSKI.

adult education began round the kitchen sink. In the same way, W. R. Lethaby, a philosopher of town-planning whose ideas were too simple for people to understand them, used to say that town planning began with white-washing of the backyard. Until we have learned what he called "town-tidying", and "conservative surgery" which Patrick Geddes advocated in his work in India, we cannot hope to make a success of the "artistic aspect of planning" that is worrying Professor Smigielski and his students.

The local authorities may have failed to learn what Lethaby and Geddes and William Morris tried to teach, but the architects of the South Bank Exhibition, which closed last Sunday, did not fail. For what was most significant about this exhibition was not the objects on show inside the buildings, but the buildings themselves and their surroundings. There we could see the effect of good design in all the little details of urban environment for which the *Architectural Review* has coined the word *townscape*, and in the street furniture which composes it.

Street furniture—lamp standards, telephone boxes, coffee stalls, letter boxes, signposts, sandbins, litter baskets, telegraph poles, and bus stops, was discussed by Lord Latham in his address to the "Design Congress" organised by the Council for Industrial Design last month. "Our modern street furniture is street clutter," he exclaimed, "and no-one seems capable of restoring order out of chaos." Lord Latham ended his speech by urging that "design policy should be the interest and care of the highest level of management" and that the "lower levels of management and those they commissioned be given the fullest freedom to exercise their brains, their skill and their imagination with encouraged enthusiasm."

We disagree profoundly! For while we are not well enough versed in the niceties of precedence and status to know where the line of demarcation lies in the managerial hierarchy between the "lower levels of management" and the upper levels of workers, what we are concerned with above all is that everyone should have "the fullest freedom to exercise their skill and their imagination." Then perhaps design and planning could become more than an exhibition frolic and more than an academic exercise. For, as somebody else said in a casual remark at the Design Congress, "The purpose of design is to make things we can live with."

C.W.

AFFAIRS OF REPUTATION

In his films, Charlie Chaplin's main stock-in-trade is the situation of the man, weak and pathetic figure though he may be, never endingly against huge forces of convention and its various guardians, whether the rich or the police themselves. The few films he has made in the past twenty years have shown an increasingly apparent social criticism culminating in the frank and private versus public murder which is "Monsieur Verdoux". It is no surprise therefore when Chaplin was an anarchist. Now his own reported statement to the effect.

It is a surprise to the informed world of his films and of the world, perhaps. Yet for years it has been whispered that Chaplin was a Communist, or Communist sympathies. In fact, he was to some extent influenced by the general attitude to Communism.

The Communist Parties have made an established practice of all sorts of progressive and noble characters of eminence as well. In France, for example, Louis Blum, the heroine of the Commune and a outspoken anarchist. In America to-day they imply that Joe Louis, the I.W.W. songster, was a Communist, though few organisations are more bitterly hostile to Communism than the I.W.W. Even more recently they claim the anarchists, like Vanzetti, while Durruti, an outstanding revolutionary figure in the Spanish Civil War, and an opponent of Soviet intervention, would have been "if he had been" say the Communists, "one of their claims for William Z. Foster as a devoted follower of Stalin are, perhaps, more ludicrous."

The effect of such whispers, however, is to tie up any progressive with the cause of Stalinism. But to be effective it requires ignorance on the part of the public. The reaction is quick to use the same implication against revolutionary or progressive individuals and so becomes the ally of Communism. Meanwhile, there are not lacking those in the progressive ranks who imagine they can "use" Communism, or influence it; whose vanity makes them easy game for the Party.

In everyday parlance one is often surprised to hear someone say of the bearer of advanced ideas that he is "a bit of a Communist". Now quite apart from the identification of an independent individual with a party whose face and reputation and policy and tactics are continually changing, this kind of thing is utterly confusing for the cause of advanced ideas. Instead of being judged for what they are worth, they become obscured behind a hedge of political prejudice and loyalties. Nothing could well be more damaging to the cause of progress in ideas, which demands before everything more clarity of thought, not less.

Communist taints have a way of sticking, and it is often not enough for some well-meaning progressive figure to deny that he is not a Communist at a time when Communism is unpopular. In general, it is more convincing for a man, instead of saying what he is not, to state unequivocally what he is. Communism is not healthy in America at the present time: Chaplin shows his courage when he declares himself

DISAPPEARANCE OF A PEOPLE

WHAT has become, after ten years, of the 450,000 Volga German colonists whom Stalin by a secret decree of September 24th, 1941, had deported to Siberia and to the Asiatic possessions of the Soviet Union at the beginning of the Russo-German war?

What is the fate of these peasant settlers from the banks of the great river in the provinces of Saratov and Tamara, who ten years ago still constituted their own "Soviet Republic", and of whom the *Great Encyclopaedia* published in Moscow in 1929 said these words:

"The development of the economy and the rational culture of the Volga Germans makes rapid progress towards a better and happier livelihood. The Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic of Volga Germans has become a flourishing Republic of socialist culture."

Where now are the members of this little nation, who were suddenly uprooted en masse and whose "Soviet Republic has been "Russified"?

The first news on this subject has been made public in Germany by a former engineer from the Junker works, who was deported to Russia in 1946 with several hundred German technicians

from the Eastern Zone, and who after his return to Germany, escaped and reached the West.

The *Stuttgarter Zeitung* of 8/8/51 gives the following account:

"Working in an aviation factory near Kuibishev, during the year 1948, this engineer one day met a score of young women who were waiting for the boat to take them back to their place of work. They spoke German correctly with the slight Swabian accent which the Volga Germans have never lost since Catherine II in the years 1764-1773 made them settle in Russia. They told him that their families had been taken away in the autumn of 1941 from the villages of Marienthal-Friedensfeld, Warenburg, and Wiesenmüller, for an unknown destination. The operation had been sudden and unexpected, without any warning. Nothing could be taken with them, neither household goods nor personal effects. The older children were separated from their parents, husbands and wives were parted and the long journey into the unknown began for each, under the charge of the Soviet Government. From a few letters received later by the girls, they learnt that their parents were in Siberia where they worked on the collective farms in very poor conditions.

"The girls themselves worked, they said, in a cement works forty kilometres from Kuibishev. In all there were 500 German girls there, in a work camp. In the evening at nine o'clock everyone was to be in her numbered bed, where they were counted like cattle before being shut in until morning. None of them had any of the personal documents indispensable for moving about in Russia. To go as far as Kuibishev they had to have a special permit. They were compelled to do the heaviest work for the lowest wages in conditions inferior to those of the Russians employed in the same factory. It was forbidden for them to marry. Thus they were all filled with the sense of being slaves with no hope of any possible amelioration of their lot.

"When asked whether the Volga Germans had, after the declaration of war, shown any opposition to the Russian authorities, the girls replied with a categorical 'no'. The Volga Republic was run with absolute loyalty. The Russians envied its inhabitants because of their relative prosperity.

"Thus the Soviet state, needing to find room for the refugees from the eastern provinces had seized the opportunity to 'liquidate' the Volga German colonists—whose autonomy had been

proclaimed by Stalin himself—and to settle in their lands the refugees from the frontier regions.

"The engineer had another encounter with a Volga German who was employed as a truck driver. His wife, with four children, was on a *kolkhoz* near Kasakstan, while his parents had been deported to Uzbekistan. His family had lived before the war near the town of Engels (formerly Pokorvok) the capital of the Volga Republic. He himself, as a driver-mechanic had been sent to an industrial district where he had been attached to a state building enterprise at Biesmyaka. He lived there in a labour camp with thirty of his compatriots—whose families were scattered throughout Siberia. The driver and his companions had, naturally, no right to change their jobs, he could not drive on any road but that between his workplace and the town. He had been promised that his family would be permitted to join him, but this promise had not been kept.

"Such are the thanks of Stalin to the German peasants of the Volga, who, in their zeal, had offered, from January 31st, 1926, to make their republic an example to the whole country in the modernisation of Soviet agrarian economy!"

FOREIGN COMMENTARY

FREEDOM IS GROWING . . . ?

SPEAKING last week at a ceremony in Washington, at which the United States Constitution and Declaration of Independence were sealed in new protective cases, Mr. Truman said that "by resorting to the worst evils of ancient tyranny the Soviet rulers have held their citizens in terror and bondage, while freedom is growing in the rest of the world." And though the report of the speech does not add between brackets [loud applause] we do not doubt that in fact his words were received with smug approbation by those present. There can surely be no stronger opponents of the Russian system than the anarchists, who were among Lenin's first political victims. Yet we would never be so stupid as to put forward as an argument against the régime in Russia that "it holds its citizens in terror and bondage". It is just not true, at least within the meaning given to these words by Mr. Truman. There are obviously millions of people in Russia who are—to a greater or lesser degree—fanatical supporters of Stalin and his leaders, and who are convinced of their own happiness within that régime. It may be argued that they cherish illusions about Stalin and of the true meaning of happiness, but no more than those who agree with Truman that "freedom is growing in the rest of the world."

Mr. Truman also said "Soviet citizens live in fear. Their society is a jungle through which the naked power of government prowls like a beast of prey making all men afraid." From this sentence it is clear that Mr. Truman wants us to believe that all men are afraid in Russia and from the previous sentence quoted that in all countries outside Russia's sphere of influence "freedom is growing".

How ironical such a statement is just when the whole world is in the process of preparing for another war (though we have yet to discover a single person in any country who wants war) and peacetime conscription has now become the rule even in those countries such as America and Britain where up to 1939 it was unknown. *Internationalist's* revealing article in last week's *FREEDOM* should be carefully read because he effectively explodes the Truman myth that "freedom is growing" in the anti-Communist nations. As he rightly points out, we must face the fact that if the present trend continues, in a generation or two there will be no more civilians; all will be soldiers.

Nowhere in the world in fact is "freedom growing"—for everywhere in the world government is becoming stronger, more ruthless, more centralised. And

to be an anarchist, unpopular and illegal for three-quarters of a century. But, whatever the official American attitude towards it, Anarchism in America as elsewhere is clearly differentiated from Communism or any other political organisation in having an entirely honourable history.

freedom can only "grow" where men are in control of their lives, for as Herbert Read has so well put it, "freedom . . . is a positive condition—specifically, freedom to create, freedom to become what one is." And how can that be when we are being herded like cattle by those who think they know best what is good for us?

THE KOREAN INFERNO

THE *Manchester Guardian* has been publishing a series of outstanding articles under the main heading of "The Korean Purgatory" which make no attempt at whitewashing what is really happening in Korea, and the picture that emerges is so ghastly as to be almost unbelievable. It is impossible to summarise them; the descriptions of the plight of the refugees should cause a wave of indignation which should place the politicians responsible for the Korean war and for the delay in declaring an armistice in the same category as the German war criminals. Also in that category should be placed those journalists who are urging that the war shall be continued. The *American New Leader*, which sees Communists lurking in every corner, has come out with an hysterical article on "Appeasement in Korea" (10/9/51) in which it accuses the American political leaders, Republican and Democratic of joining in "tacit appeasement because each fears that it will be accused by the other of needlessly prolonging the Korean war . . ."

"The necessity for the cease-fire is ac-

cepted without debate, although there is no evidence that the public demands it and much evidence that our wisest leaders of both parties fear its consequences. After all, only two months ago, the Gallup poll showed a majority in support of General MacArthur's militant proposals, and it is hardly likely that the majority supports the opposite policy today. As so often in recent years, the political leaders, not the public, have failed." (Our italics.)

Listen to the *M.G.* correspondent's description of the Korean inferno: "The first wave of refugees—I was about to say of the attack—broke over the province of Seoul under the impact of the Chinese invasion. From Pyongyang, the Communist capital, alone, three hundred thousand Koreans fled southward. In the frightful cold they died in their thousands on the roads. Babies on their mother's backs became little frozen corpses, thrown by and by into a ditch. Children at death's door were dispatched by their parents. Files of refugees passed over the frozen rivers and were drowned when the ice collapsed beneath their weight. As the old people came out of an ice-cold ford, the veins could be seen bursting on their legs.

"In Seoul there are five [hospitals] crammed with patients and lacking everything—medicaments, beds, doctors, staffs. In one which I visited there were a hundred patients, with two doctors, three assistants and fifteen nurses to look after them. Dying people lay in the corridors. Children covered with blood

lay on stretchers; they had been struck by fragments from exploding mines. There were victims of napalm bombing, their bodies one vast burn."

We suggest that the *New Leader* and their "democratic" buddies send Dr. Gallop to Korea to enquire what "the public demands" there. And to Mr. Truman one might ask, "Is this an example of the 'freedom' that 'is growing in the rest of the world'?" Who knows but that in our world of atomic and bacterial warfare, "freedom" will become synonymous with death?

LIBERTARIAN.

ITALIAN LAND SEIZURES

Land was yesterday occupied by peasants in a wide area to the south of Rome. The action was on a larger scale than any that has taken place for some time, and the obvious co-ordination behind it suggested careful planning.

Some tens of thousands of peasants took part, and police, sent from Rome in large numbers, intervened to remove the men from the land; 34 were arrested.

The occupation was apparently organised by the *Confederterra*, the Communist-dominated agricultural union, whose notices *Terra e non guerra* (Land and not war) have recently been prominent in the areas concerned.

One of the main regions occupied was north of Rome, around Civitavecchia. Here, according to the union, the reason was that, though land there was due to be expropriated under the land reform law, not one acre had yet been distributed.

The Times, 25/9/51.

THE KOREAN WAR Document for the Record

ONE of Pusan's worst tragedies, and one of the most significant ones, was the scandal of the "reserve army". Credit must be given to the Assembly for its courage in putting an end to the scandal. At the time of the first retreat of the Northerners in face of the advance of General MacArthur's troops in the autumn of 1950, the Communists had taken with them to the north the whole of the youth of Seoul; all the boys and men between fifteen and thirty years of age and all the girls and women of sixteen to twenty-five—in all a quarter of a million young people. When the great Chinese thrust southward came in January 1951, the Syngman Rhee refugee Government at Pusan took alarm at the prospect of a further mass kidnapping, and ordered the call-up of all the young men and their transfer to the south. This had a double advantage: they would be out of reach of the Northerners and they could be formed into a second army alongside the Regulars. The organisation and training of this "reserve army", as it was called, were entrusted to the "National Guard", the paramilitary youth organisation which the Syngman Rhee Government had called into being.

"This mass call-up took the form of an immense police raid, which was especially drastic in the regions near the 38th parallel. It is said to have rounded up 700,000 young people, but in the absence of any sort of official record, the figures cannot be checked. The round-up took place mainly in the winter, amid frightful cold. In the panic

together and sent under strong guard, on foot, by road to the south. Thousands fell exhausted on the way or died of cold, or fled. Those who reached the south numbered a little less than 400,000.

"In the environs of Pusan and in the northern provinces, they were parked in camps surrounded by barbed wire. The number of camps is stated to have been 54. The recruits remained there for five months, doing nothing, and dying of cold and hunger. Nothing had been organised for them; nothing had been planned, and there were no instructors, apart from a few National Guards in charge of the camps. There were no arms for this future army. Above all, there was no clothing, there were no blankets, and the food was appalling. The unfortunate young men died in the camps like flies. After a few months the 'reserve army' was composed of starving hordes among whom dysentery and tuberculosis were rampant.

"The National Assembly was horrified. It was found that the head of the organisation, Brigadier-General Kim Youn-keun, a soldier of long service who had risen from the ranks and who had been honoured by the President's confidence, had dipped deep, with a number of accomplices, into the fund of twenty milliard won (almost four million dollars) provided by the Budget for the reserve army. They had actually sold the rice intended for the camps, and millions supposed to have been expended on clothing, feeding, training, and arming

of the principal leaders or had served to reward their accomplices.

"The Assembly enforced the resignation of the Defence Minister and the dissolution of the National Guard. The new Minister of Defence cut out the abcess, in spite of every official effort to hush up the affair and protect those responsible. General Kim was arrested. On July 19th he was court-martialled at Taegu and sentenced to death, with four accomplices. The guilty persons had pocketed five milliards of won (nearly a million dollars). For how many deaths had they been responsible? An opponent of Syngman Rhee gave a figure—fifty thousand. This, no doubt, was greatly exaggerated. But, since no list of the recruits had been drawn up, the exact number of victims will never be known. It should certainly have been possible to count the survivors as they left the camps.

"For they were simply turned out; the gates of the camps were opened and they were put once more on the road. Most of them were ill and withered to the bone. They were abandoned, without resources and without regular rations, for they were no longer anybody's business. Many died in the overcrowded hospitals of Pusan. Others wandered about the regions of the South. The rest returned northward. They kept together in gaunt, violent bands, singing the 'Internationale'."

—By Robert Guikain, special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* and *Le Monde*.

The Conspiracy of Elections

(from an Indian correspondent)

THE people are not asked before elections what they like to have, but are told what they must think they should have. And the people who vote, do so according to the dictates of their favourite party. Public affairs are exploited by all parties. They all say, choose us to rule, for the other parties are deceiving you and want to impose their rule over you. The people are made to believe that their interests are the parties' interests and the parties' interests are their interests. Don't think of your own affairs, they all plead. The people have no choice except among those who confuse their minds and make them fight one another to put others in office.

People are asked to put the seal upon their own doom. That is political democracy. It is supposed that the elected are the representatives of the people and "therefore" serve them. That is called "representative government", and it is supposed to be government of the people, by the people, for the people. But in fact it is a dictatorship by a part of the elected over all the people.

If, in a general election, only one party gets the absolute majority in parliament, it means not only that this party is the dictator but that the votes of all those who have voted for others have been rendered valueless, nullified. They have lost their rights of representation in the parliament. They are as good as dead so far as the parliament is concerned, although some of the men whom they voted for may be elected. They are helots till another general election takes place.

If the parliament has a party which is bigger than others separately, but has not a majority for any party, an absolute majority, then there may be a coalition. But in the coalition, all parties will not be in the cabinet. That means those electors who had voted for others not represented in the cabinet will have no effective voice although they have voted "their" representatives. Thus all their votes are wasted, and go into the waste basket or dust bin. Yet they are called "people's representatives" even by those in parliament who are in an ineffective minority. These may be half

of the members of the parliament. They will talk but nothing will change, as if they did not exist there. In an English constituency, only those who poll highest, whatever the total number of votes cast to other, rival candidates, are elected. Thus often a minority gets its candidates elected but they are supposed to "represent all". That is nonsense. It is a lottery. The man who carried away the first prize represents all and does good to all who have lost. The voters for the defeated candidates have to wait until the next election. And they start the game over again! The voters of these candidates have really no representation in the parliament during the intervening years. The parliament is the nation without the representation of the defeated voters.

The fact is that the moment I vote for another, I lose my rights. I cannot be present there and argue for myself. A lawyer is a typical "representative" of the people. He represents his client, whether the client loses or not. If the client loses his case and has to pay out, he will earn all the same. If the client has to be sent to jail, the lawyers will not say: I will go to jail for you. It is the client, whom the lawyer represents, who has to go to jail, all because the client cannot say what he wants. He has to bear responsibility for the lawyer's foolishness. If not rogery! In many democratic countries, the "accused" are not allowed to plead for themselves. So it is in every parliament. The voters

have to pay according to the conspiracy of the lawyers sent to conspire together in parliaments. The people's case is safe in their hands. The people have only to obey and—pay. Nice representation this. It is for this conspiracy that all are asked to go to polls. They are muddled by promises to do good. Vote the conspirators to conspire against you, so the leaders and newspapers say day in and day out. That is people's representation and people's democracy alike. Elect your own hangmen, they say.

The fact is that no-one can represent another and be identical in interests with the represented. The electors cannot vote every day and have to wait for the next elections. In the meanwhile, the elected are allowed to vote for themselves every day as it suits them. Representative government is proxy democracy, Ersatz or substitute democracy. There is probably democracy among the proxies but not among the represented. It is not government by the people, therefore of the people and for the people. The symbol, called parliament, does not become the reality by election. An idol is not God, but a symbol of stone or wood or something else. Living democracy cannot be proxy democracy, in which election kills democracy. Either all must be able to represent themselves at all places in all matters daily and hourly or there will be no democracy but a sham in that name.

Politics is illusion.

DISHONOURABLE ARMIES

"A Moral Duty to Disobey"

Continued from p. 1

that Japan was seeking to surrender, for the scientific purpose of ascertaining whether a plutonium bomb was as effective as a uranium bomb. A mass fire raid was carried out on Dresden on February 13th, 1945, at a time when we knew Dresden was packed with refugees, and approximately 250,000 refugees were killed that night. These things were done in accordance with superior orders. Do not let us be too self-righteous. In war horrible things are done by both sides."

War is horrible, but the reconstruction of armies, including the German Army, is necessary! German soldiers are wrong to obey orders but what about our own? These questions arise without prompting from anarchists, or anti-militarists.

Mr. A. K. Hudson, sheds some more realistic light in a letter of 26th Sept.: "The honour of the German soldier" is a dangerous, hypnotising phrase; it betrays a way of thinking which is altogether out of place in the year 1951. Whatever may have been the case in the fourteenth century, to-day the plain fact is that the conscripted soldiers of any nation are citizens in uniform... if he is given monstrous orders... he has a moral duty to disobey, whatever the cost to himself." And he concludes: "Actually, 'the honour of the German soldier' means, to the unbewitched, as much or as little as 'the honour of the German doctor' or 'the honour of the German grocer'. For the bewitched it has a mystical significance, which embodies a constant political and social threat."

Morality—or Discipline?

It remained for the Hon. William Douglas Home to point out some more inconsistencies and absurdities. He compares Mussolini's "Crede, combatter, obbedire" to Tennyson's "Their's but to do and die." And he accuses all the correspondents of missing the point. "The point is not morality, it is military discipline; the argument is not German, it is international." This writer trenchantly con-

cludes: "I wonder how Mr. Waley would write if the correspondence were headed 'The British Soldier.' Would he write... If the men who serve in a British Army are to have a code of 'Crede, combatter, obbedire' they will not be the soldiers of a 'free' Britain... If he did so, and he is—as I suspect—a civilian, he would be preaching not Conservatism, nor Socialism, nor Liberalism, nor Communism—all of which creeds insist on military discipline—but pure anarchy. If he were a soldier he would find himself in the guard room in peace time and in Wormwood Scrubs in war time. And quite rightly. No army can exist without its discipline. What has Mr. Waley to say to that? Perhaps he will consider laying off the German Army so that he may do his homework first?"

It might appear from Douglas Home's letter that he is in favour of discipline, and that his reference to anarchy is derisive. Actually he has special authority in what he writes. For when he was in command as an officer after the invasion of Europe in 1944, he received orders to bombard a town which had already surrendered—and he refused to obey the order. As a result he was court-martialled and sentenced to a year's imprisonment. This was in a democratic army.

Pacifist Action Holds Up the Army

IN view of the correspondence we have recently published on the issue of violent or non-violent resistance to the State, we have pleasure in drawing attention to a recent instance where passive resistance was—apparently successfully—put into operation in Wales.

The Sunday Times (30/9/51) reports:

"Military traffic to and from the Army training ground at Trawsfynydd, Merioneth, was held up for more than three hours yesterday by a group of 120 Welsh men and women who formed a human barrier in the road at the en-

FREEDOM LETTERS TO THE EDITORS A SUBJECT RACE IN ENGLAND?

I WAS very interested in the letter of "Dromengro" (see FREEDOM, 22/9/51) and Augustus John's letter in FREEDOM, 29/9/51). In my boyhood days, 60 years ago, I lived with gypsies, and as my grandmother was a *tatcho puro ratti*, a genuine old pure blood romany, I know much of their make-up. The gipsy has always been lied about by people who could never understand his mentality, for they are a type apart from the orthodox.

Regarding these new inflictions imposed on them, I cannot see any escape for them in this island, they are penned in, in a country much centralised. In Nazi Germany, Hitler had many thousands killed in the gas chambers, but many got out of Germany. Stalin tried in many ways to cajole the gypsies into being cogs in his workshop, but in spite of all the water-tight regulations in the U.S.S.R., many escaped, and got even farther off than Kirghistan, for gypsies have many ways and means of their own.

There is, however, no such escape here, no frontiers to get across into a new country, and I am afraid that the gypsies are doomed to be driven off their open air life on the road to herd into the slums of the cities, where they will carry on an existence somehow, minus the time-clock. But as gypsies will not fit in with town life, they will gradually be eliminated—a slow process of getting rid of a nuisance in the machine age.

The armament drive, the export drive, the work-harder produce-more stunts are probably the cause of the latest inflictions on the gypsies, but they are not of the type to fit in with compounds. The word lazy is often applied to the gipsy. This is another lie—one should see them pea-picking, hop-picking or on any farm-work paid for by results and not for fixed wages, to see how they work. Gipsy women tramp miles with the basket in all manner of weather. The gorgio woman couldn't do it if she tried to, for one day would suffice for her and she would hurry back to the ease of the workshop next day.

I take exception to the heading, "A Subject Race in England," for the gypsies, persecuted in every way in every age, but never subjected, are a people who in rags feel superior in the wisdom of life to the gorgios who submit like sheep to the loss of individual freedom. The gipsy will tell you that the things he knows are not found in books, but learned from life, a life less fettered, less restricted than is the life of the gorgio, and he is scornful of the most cherished customs and duties and fetters of civilisation, he will laugh at you inwardly.

Though gypsies are very proud of their individuality, in their life they are very communistic, and have not the reverence for private property so general amongst gorgios. To me anarchism is the nearest approach which offers much to a people who are lovers of freedom. Certainly they know nothing of anarchism as a philosophy of life, but I feel it has more in common with their make-up than any other system.

Generally with the gorgios the gipsy is secretive, furtive, due to past persecution and always on the alert expecting a blow of some kind, but among his own people he is open, never smug, and as is their nature, free. The heritage of the road has been the gipsy's for centuries. Now it is to be wrested away from him by the welfare state. It is a most foolish thing to drive the gipsy into the towns, but it is just part of the octopus which aims to destroy what is natural, in every direction.

Moss Side.

PANI-MENRI

FRANZ KAFKA

THE references to Kafka in Mr. Isaac's remarkable article, "The Gipsy of Anxiety" (FREEDOM, 15/9/51), lead to mind a cryptic entry in Kafka's diary in 1913: "Don't forget Kropotkin."

Mr. Max Brod, Kafka's editor and biographer explains that Kropotkin's memoirs, and those of Alexander Herzen were his favourite books.

London.

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NORTH-EAST LONDON DISCUSSION MEETINGS IN EAST HAM

at 7.30 OCT. 17—Albert Meltzer THE INTERNATIONAL ANARCHIST MOVEMENT Enquiries c/o Freedom Press

SOUTH LONDON Meetings suspended for the time being.

Readers interested in possible future activities, please contact S. E. Parker, c/o Freedom Press.

GLASGOW OUTDOOR MEETINGS at MAXWELL STREET

Every Sunday at 7 p.m. With John Gaffney, Frank Leech, Jimmy Raeside, Eddie Shaw

BRADFORD At the MECHANICS INSTITUTE (Saloon)

Monday, Nov. 19th, at 7.30 Eddie Shaw on THE APATHETIC THROG

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CALEB WILLIAMS

Continued from p. 2

hates him; one might say that his very curiosity about him is a manifestation of his love for him; and at the end, when he is driven in final desperation to inform on Falkland as a murderer and Falkland reveals himself, in his confession of guilt, in his true nobility, and then dies, Williams is struck down by the most bitter remorse."

The root of Williams's miseries is a single daring intellectual speculation, that Falkland's manifest guilt can only have arisen from his having committed murder. But Godwin himself had just committed, in the writing of Political Justice the most daring speculation of his time; and it was a speculation, as he well knew, that at that particular moment in history could easily have brought misery down on him, in the shape of a prison sentence and probably transportation to Botany Bay. That he escaped the effects of Pitt's repressive legislation at all is still somewhat surprising.

But while this may explain Williams it doesn't explain Falkland, who, whatever else he may stand for, cannot stand for the arbitrary power of William Pitt. To explain Falkland I believe we have to go behind Political Justice and further back into Godwin's history... When he

revolted against and rejected predestination and the God of Calvinism he wrote, "The right of the creator does not extend to the making of an innocent being, in a comprehensive sense, and with a view to the whole of his existence, miserable. God himself has not the right to be a tyrant." Therefore, he overthrew God, and having done so, he went on to finish the job by overthrowing, on paper at least, the very bases of secular government. But thorough-going intellectual though he was, emancipated as he might think himself to be from Blake's "mind-forged manacles", he was still tied to God emotionally by the profoundest sentiments of fear and remorse, tied to him even by love.

"My conclusion is, then, that Caleb Williams is not, as conventionally assumed, an allegory of the political state of England in the seventeen-nineties but the symbolic statement of its author's relation to God in all its ambivalence. I believe the symbolism arose naturally through his concentration on his fable of relentless pursuit and flight; which is itself an archetypal human situation. And the beauty of symbolism is that the symbol, when used successfully as Godwin used it, can never be reduced to any single meaning, can never

be pinned down precisely or translated into any one concept. It is its every ambiguity, shadowiness, that makes the symbol so potent to disturb the mind. And the potency of Godwin's great symbols in Caleb Williams remains; which is why when reading the novel to-day we are struck by its astonishing topicality, its affinity with the novels—and the relations outlined in them—of writers like Kafka or Graham Greene; why we recognise a kinship with Orwell's Nineteen-Eightyfour—for who is Falkland in one aspect if not the "Big Brother" of an age politically more innocent than ours?"

★

What is the true significance of Caleb Williams which as Mr. J. Isaacs in his new book on Twentieth Century Literature, says "grows in stature with the passing of time". Is it as he said, "a psychological thriller with a political motive"; is it as Mr. Allen says, "drama of the soul"; is it as Mr. H. N. Brailsford said, "the one great work of fiction in our language which owes its existence to the fruitful union of the revolutionary and the romantic movements"? The novel which can give rise to these varied interpretations is worth reprinting, and we, like Mr. Brailsford, hope that a publisher will be found to put it back into circulation.