

Frontispiece

ON GOING NAKED

by

JAN GAY

WITH DECORATIONS BY ZHENYA



NOEL DOUGLAS

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INTRODUCTION

THIS book does not presume to be a thorough or discursive presentation of NACKTKULTUR. It is written only with the hope that its readers may be reasonably diverted by the adventures of an American woman who last summer turned from the private to the public practice of nakedness; that it may encourage a few people who need encouragement in this delightful and salubrious procedure; and that it may spread a little wider that tolerance which is gradually developing, even in America, toward the right of a man to go without his clothes.

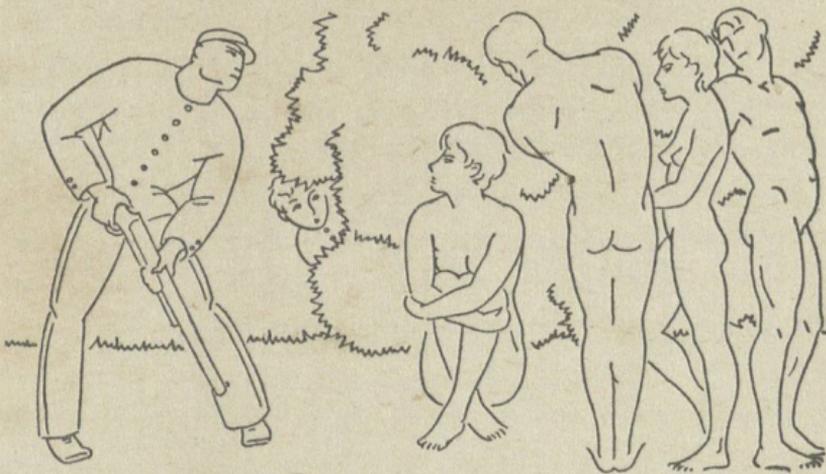
The author has for years taken pleasure in going without clothes whenever temperature and circumstance were propitious. Hundreds of times and in a good many places she did this without the knowledge or criticism of other people. A dozen or more times, chiefly in America, she was discovered at the practice. The reactions of the people who found her without clothes furnish a cross-section of the opinion toward nakedness that exists in that country. If in the next few years there is a wide swing toward freedom to go naked, this record may serve as reference to future students who sit cross-legged in the research libraries wearing not so much as a loin-cloth. But the dank coldness of libraries, as well as most indoor temperatures, is one of the important factors which will deter nakedness from reaching such proportions as to put couturiers and shirtmakers completely out of business.

A summer's travel in Germany, where for the first time the writer mingled with large groups of strange naked people, served only to corroborate the belief she has held for a long time, that it is one of the grandest feelings in the world to go around without clothes. Whether one prefers to do it alone or with a lot of other people is a matter of choice. Her preference is the former. It is, no doubt, a matter of prejudice. She does not like crowds of dressed people either.

There is no compromising about nakedness. One has either to like it and tolerate it, or not go where it is being done. For that reason one of the ablest commentaries in English on the nudist movement is T. Cushing's *Barely Proper*. This one-act satire contains the perfect situation for a presentation of the subject. It concerns an Anglo-Saxon with the stable prejudices and modesties plumped into the middle of a highly respectable German family of ardent nudists. His presentation to the parents and relatives of his fiancée takes place at a naked coffee-party. The academic father, the athletic brothers, the dowager aunt, the debutante cousins—are all revealed to him on this first afternoon. The confused young man has either to accept his fiancée's family with their eccentric ideas, or abandon his matrimonial project. There is no marrying her and closing his eyes to her immoral practices.

On Going Naked, then, relates the adventures that befell one young woman in a long experience of private nakedness and a briefer participation in organised nudist movements. She did not return to

America filled with zeal to go out at once and form large nudist societies, although she would be glad if they existed there for the sake of those persons who have neither the courage nor the facilities to practice private nakedness but who might participate in such group movements. She does advocate, however, the greater prevalence of reserves, or preserves, or simply places where nakedness is sanctioned, a few of which already exist in various sections of the United States.



CHAPTER ONE

PRIVATE NAKEDNESS

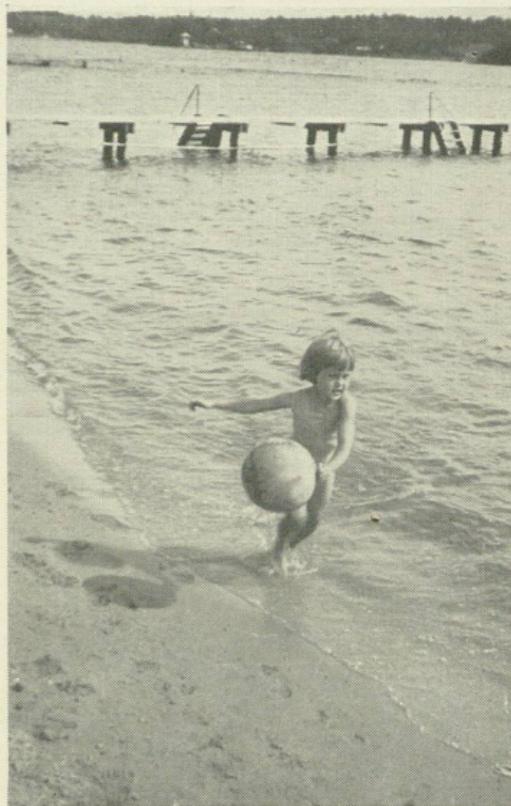
I GREW up in the pre-bare-leg period, a member of the household of my grandmother. In the strict Protestant environment of my youth, of which an immoderate modesty and shame of the body were strict tenets, it was more of an adventure to take off one's clothes than may seem reasonable to people of enlightened rearing. From the time that I was four years old I was told, "You are a big girl now, and must not appear before your uncles without any clothes."

My disobedience of this injunction was frequent. One of the clearest recollections of my childhood is of a summer storm when I ran out naked into the yard to feel the rain pelting on my body. The grass was newly cut. Little pools had formed on the hard

turf. I rolled over and over in the puddles. When I was discovered the cut grass clung to my hair and my wet body. I was spanked, but I have never forgotten the pleasure of that afternoon.

Another memory of my fourth or fifth year is of a day in the threshing season when I was permitted to ride from the farm to the village on a wagon of threshed wheat. I squirmed my bare toes among the grains. I thought how nice it would feel to lie in the wheat without clothes, so I took off my brief jumper. A little later the astonished farmhand who drove the wagon turned to find a naked child lying on his load of wheat. His admonitions to me to put on my dress did not move me. He knew how horrified my grandmother would be to learn that he had driven to the village granary with her grandchild naked on his wagon. So he turned the team and drove back to the farm, where one of my uncles with greater authority snatched me from the wagon, dressed me and spanked me. But I have never forgotten the feeling of the warm grain against my skin as I lay on the wheat, pouring it over me in handfuls, like sand at the beach.

An episode of this same period was the advent of a boy cousin for a visit to the farm and our repairing to the granary for mutual inspection and investigation. When we were discovered we were accused of "playing naughty." This was not true. I had never had a boy to play with before, and he knew little about girls, so we were simply remedying the lack in our education. This boy was the son of a Methodist minister. We were not only spanked but told that



CHILDREN AT PLAY

we should never get to heaven if we ever took off our clothes in front of anyone again.

At six I moved to a small village, still a member of my grandmother's household, and there began that horrible maleducation in sex which is so frequently the lot of village children. It had for me some connection with nakedness. In the orchard of a neighbour was a bed of sweet-scented violets. I liked to lie among the plants, to smell the flowers and the damp earth. One day Evan, my playmate, came past and saw me lying there. He asked what I was doing. I answered, "Smelling the violets." He came and lay beside me. Some time afterwards I came upon a field of clover. The sun was hot. I took off my clothes and lay in the clover. Evan came to find me. He took off his clothes and lay beside me. Some of our playmates came and discovered us. They spread the rumour that Evan and I had been "playing naughty."

I am not sure how wise Evan was. Actually, I did not know. To be sure, we had been lying there in the clover without clothes, but whether that was "what grown people did," whether just to be naked together constituted "playing naughty," I did not, for a long time, find out. My life and Evan's were made miserable by the taunts of our friends and the scoldings of our families. The other little boys and girls stood somewhat in awe of us. They thought we had actually dared to do "it." Our protestations that we had not done anything only strengthened their belief. Finally, one Sunday afternoon, Evan and I retired to a hayloft, neither of us entirely

certain what to do, but determined to make an effort to justify the rumours concerning us. We were, however, under strict surveillance by our families and just as we were removing our clothes we were come upon by Evan's older sister. She dragged us before a family council and we were both beaten. But for her timely disturbance we might then have discovered that "mystery" upon the edge of which I hovered for many years. Our final taking-to-task destroyed my comradeship with Evan, my first companion in naked sun bathing. We were both so tired of being scolded and teased that for a number of years we scarcely spoke to one another, although we were daily at the same school.

My early objection to clothes may well have been due to the kind and superabundance of garments that I was obliged to wear. Winter clothes had a stern basis of long woollen underwear, with long black stockings, a flannel petticoat and a woollen dress. At night the underwear was discarded for a flannel nightgown. Even this change was not commonly sanctioned in our village. Many other children kept on their weekly suit of underwear day and night, changing on Saturday. It was a common practice of the country people thereabout to "sew up for the winter," that is, put on heavy underwear in the first cold weather and retain the same garment without change until spring.

The average child to-day is dressed with far greater attention to hygiene and comfort. Little girls who have gone to their tenth or fourteenth year, winter and summer, with short socks and legs bare to far

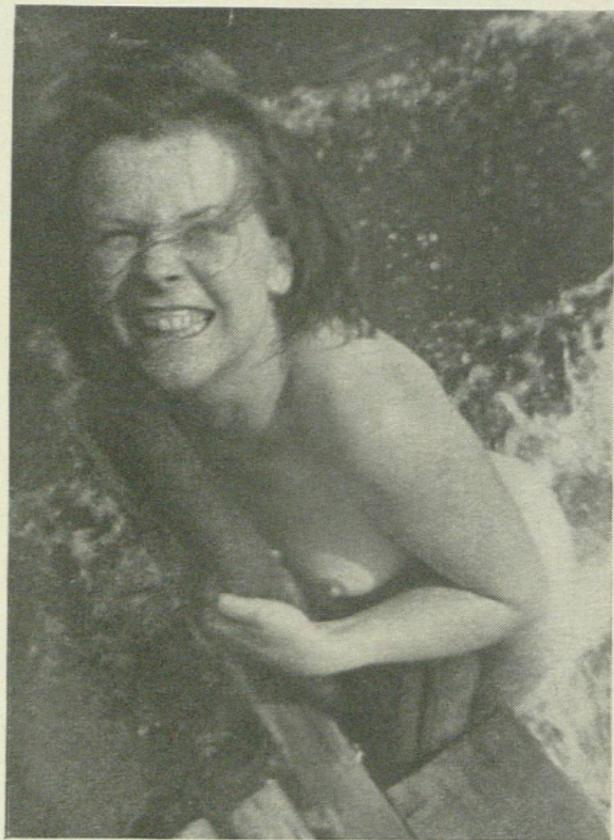
above the knee; who have worn soft, brief undergarments instead of knee-length, stiffly starched muslin drawers; whose dresses have been short, comfortable and simple; who have been brought up to have casual respect for their bodies instead of a kind of awe and curiosity concerning them—these little girls will not, probably, take hungrily to nakedness, as I did, in a youthful quest for liberation from the frightful clothes of my generation. Questioning my contemporaries, it seems that in the East and in Europe modern ideas of clothing children had already penetrated during the first decade of the twentieth century, but certainly they were totally unheard of in that part of the Middle West where I spent my childhood.

From the time I was seven until I was fourteen I associated chiefly with girls. Made ashamed by the episode with Evan (although I knew that on the first occasion we had been blameless, and that the second was prompted only by the false accusation laid upon us), I was during these years afraid to take off my clothes lest I should be caught and further accused of immorality. On the rare occasions in summer when I was permitted to go bathing in a creek with the girls I lingered long behind a bush in the interlude between dress and bathing dress (it was then still bathing dress, not bathing suit). The only times during those years that I was permitted acquaintance with my naked body were in my Saturday baths. I lifted my arms in front of the open window and thought how nice it would be to run out into the sunlight with nothing on. But remember-

ing the pride of my family and the censure of the town, I forbore this pleasure.

On the death of my grandmother I went to Kansas to spend the years from thirteen to sixteen as an unwelcome guest in a hypocritical and fanatically religious household. I was the dark little slattern in a family of blond and beautiful children. Grace and charm were instinct with the two girl cousins who were my age. Awkward and unhappy, in badly cut clothes, I was at great disadvantage beside them all day. My only self-assurance came at night and early morning when I was without clothes and knew my body to be straight and well-formed. I wished that the family might assemble naked. Then I should not have such great odds against me, for the blond cousins had narrow chests and stooping shoulders, and the domineering aunt flat feet. So my secret indulgence in those years was to stand, night and morning, naked before my window, which was screened by a large tree. Sometimes on summer mornings I stepped through the window on to the porch roof for a moment of sun and wind, then hurried in, fearful lest I had been seen.

Once during this period, in a spirit of daring, I stole a rowboat, crossed to a sandy island in the Kaw and there took off my clothes to lie in the sand for an afternoon. I was extremely unhappy, with that desperation of adolescence which does not know where to turn for understanding or guidance. I thought of jumping into the muddy river and trying to drown. I went to sleep lying naked in the sun. When I wakened I was more tranquil and found it



CHILD STUDIES

possible to return and endure my uncongenial surroundings a little longer.

Then came, after a ten-year interval, the second experience of bathing naked with a boy. I was in a college town, going to summer school. A quite commonplace young man who sold automobiles invited me to go swimming. There was a dam in the river which made a gentle fall just right to stand beneath. "How marvellous this would be if we had no clothes on," I said. "Do you mean it? Would you dare?" asked the astonished young man. "Of course," I answered, taking off my bathing suit to feel the water pounding deliciously over my body. With some hesitation my companion followed suit. A party of students in canoes came round the bend. We stood breathless in the shadow. They passed without discovering us. I should, of course, have been expelled if I had been discovered and reported. Unfortunately it was the end of the school season. Shortly thereafter I left the college town and was separated from my first adult companion in nakedness.

There followed years of greater freedom to go naked when I chose, so that whenever I found myself in any isolated field or forest, or alone and likely to be undisturbed in a room of comfortable temperature, I took off my clothes.

* * *

A few of the dramatic encounters I have had with violent anti-nudist public opinion may serve to indicate the general status of nakedness as it was privately practised in America up to 1931.

I spent the summer of 1929 in an apartment in Murray Hill, on the top floor of an old private house in the East Thirties. Our windows looked out across a wide backyard garden to similar houses and apartments in the next street. I shared this apartment with another woman.

Throughout that hot summer we made existence bearable by going about naked or nearly naked in the late afternoons and evenings. The nearest windows of our neighbours were half a block distant. Across our windows the silk curtains were usually drawn, but occasionally, on stifling afternoons and nights, we pulled those back to coax in any passing breath of air. We paid little attention to our neighbours, although we were sometimes conscious of their scrutiny. However, we went about our own lives and at the end of hot clothed days came home and luxuriated in the relaxation and refreshment of going without clothes.

One evening at six o'clock I had just come home exhausted and irritated by the heat and had as usual flung off my clothes and taken a shower before I did anything else. Someone knocked at the door. I called out, "Who is it?"

"A police officer," was the reply.

"Just a minute until I get some clothes on," I said, unknowingly pleading guilty in my first statement. I hastily put on a dress and admitted the policeman.

He was a pleasant young man with a fair sense of humour. "I've come," he said, "to investigate the charges made by a woman living opposite you. She

says that you expose yourself indecently in front of the windows.”

I roared with laughter. There was nothing else to do. Here was a policeman come to chastise me for going naked, and I not only naked but confessing it when he came to the door.

“We do go about without clothes,” I answered. “Is there any reason why we should not undress in our own apartment if we choose?”

He ran his finger around the edge of his uncomfortable high collar and said, “Well, no, I suppose there isn’t any reason and I’m not saying I wouldn’t like to do it myself, but your neighbours are complaining, so I had to come and investigate. The woman who lives in the apartment facing yours came to the police station to report you.”

“I don’t believe she could see us unless she used opera glasses. It is a good 50 yards from our windows to those opposite. I can’t see into her windows with the curtains drawn, so I don’t believe she can see into mine.”

The policeman went to the window and stared thoughtfully across at my neighbour. She was an elderly lady who sat all day in a chair, rocking back and forth and peering curiously into all the windows within her range of vision.

“I won’t tell you that we don’t go around in our apartment without clothes,” I said to the policeman, “because we do. But I don’t see what concern it is of the people in the next block. Are you going to arrest me for trying to find some solution to New York’s heat wave?”

"Well, lady," the policeman answered, "I see your side of it, but, on the other hand, if this woman comes to the police station again and demands that we arrest you, we'll have to take you along just the way we find you."

When the interview ended the policeman went away with a friendly warning to keep our curtains well drawn. We didn't stop going without our clothes on those hot summer nights, nor did the policeman come back again, so I assume that either my neighbour's vision grew weaker or the next time she went to the police station she found the officers following our example.

* * *

One week-end of the same summer we went to the country. I had access to an estate in upper Westchester County which had been abandoned since the death of its owner. We had camped many times in the hunting lodge beside the lake, and although usually dressed on land, we always went swimming naked. On this particular visit, being a congenial party of four, two men and two women, we decided to spend the day in the sun and in the water without clothes. All went well until the middle of the afternoon. John and I like swimming, so we swam long and far up the river against the current. When we had floated back down to the dam where Hall and Zhenya waited for us we were exhausted and cold. Meantime they had had a briefer swim and a bath in the shallow water.

My teeth were chattering and John was trembling

with cold, so Zhenya towelled me vigorously, while Hall gave John a rub down. We were just about to settle ourselves for a nice nap in the sun. All day we had been making jokes about, "Here comes somebody," or "There is the constable." So when John said, "I think I see someone moving over there in the bushes," we didn't pay any attention to him, thinking it just another false alarm.

John and Hall chose the sloping bank for their siesta, while Zhenya and I each curled up on a shallow step of the dam. We were lying there quietly when suddenly a voice boomed out, "You got to get off this property!" We all turned astonished to see a tall lean man confronting us. With him was a boy about ten years old.

I distinctly remember this moment because it was the first time I had ever been accosted by a stranger when I was naked, and I recall feeling no shame when I replied, without running to cover, "I am a friend of the Townsend family and have for years been spending week-ends here, camping in the old lodge."

He put down the rifle he had carried somewhat ominously over his arm and answered, "The property has been sold, Miss. It is going to be turned into a country club. The Townsends don't have no say in the matter no more, and you got to get off the property."

"All right," I said. "We shall leave. I didn't know the property had been sold. I am sorry we are trespassing. Just as soon as we get dressed, we shall go away."

Not a word all this time of the fact that we were unusual trespassers, or that none of our party was wearing any clothes. The keeper of the property had got sight of us some time earlier and waited to see some impropriety committed. When he saw that we were not engaged in clandestine love-making; that we were, in his words, "behaving ourselves," he came out and told us to go away instead of driving us out at the muzzle of his gun. Also, when he found no shame in our manner and saw that we were perfectly at ease with one another, the circumstance of naked men and women bathing together seemed less immoral to him.

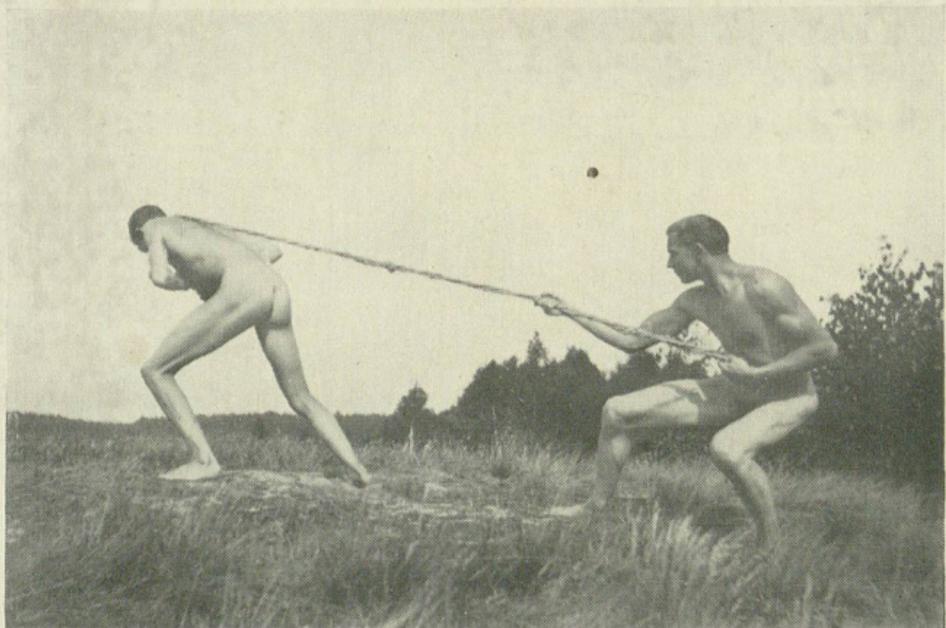
The funniest thing about the incident was the attitude of the little boy. I feel sure that it was his first experience of seeing adult persons without clothes. He kept peering out from behind his father's coat-tails with eyes full of wonder and astonishment.

The keeper walked away toward the main road. We dressed and gathered together our belongings. We walked to the car which was parked beside the road. The keeper was waiting there for us.

When he saw us with our clothes on and passengers in an automobile, he seemed to find us more rational human beings. He said, "To look at you now, nobody'd ever think you'd pull a crazy stunt like taking all your clothes off."

"Don't you ever bathe naked in this lake?" I asked.

"I ain't done it for twenty year," he answered, "though when I was a young 'un we used to sneak up here and go swimmin'. But we was just boys together,



TUG-OF-WAR



GYMNASTS

no girls along. I never knew no modest woman as wasn't ashamed to take off her clothes before a man. You look like nice girls too, and you didn't do anything you shouldn't. I don't understand it at all."

"You see, we're not ashamed of it," I answered. "We believe that it is good for our bodies to give them a little sun and air when we can. It is different with you—every day you work out of doors, but we are cooped up in the city day after day, winter and summer. We like it too, like the feeling of air and sun and water on our naked bodies. The fact that we are two men and two women doesn't have much to do with it. Don't you see that men and women can be as unconscious of one another's bodies as people of the same sex?"

"Well, you got to prove it to me," he said, "but I'd been watchin' you close on to an hour before I let you know I was there. If I'd caught you doin' anything you shouldn't, I'd have marched you in to the county constable, sure as shootin'. When I saw you weren't up to any monkey business I decided I'd let you off easy. Go along now and don't trespass here no more."

We drove away, waving to the not unfriendly upholder of law and order before we turned the corner. The little boy returned our farewell with great vehemence, daring only then to manifest the intense interest he felt in these curious strangers whom he had seen without clothes.

All the way home we laughed about our booting off the Townsend property. It was highly entertaining to watch the indignation of the agent give

way to an almost friendly tolerance for our "crazy goin's-on," as he called it; to see the little boy gulp wide-eyed at his first lesson in comparative anatomy (including as it did one athletic figure, one not so athletic, one slender female, and one too-rounded one).

There is much to laugh at in any gathering of naked people. It is friendly laughter—for undoubtedly I look as funny to you as you do to me, if not funnier!

* * *

Long Beach has always been a favourite retreat for New Yorkers who desire some privacy for their bathing, whether dressed or not. In the years when it was our custom to spend Sunday among the remote dunes, or to go at evening to the stretch of beach only a little beyond the frequented part, we enjoyed long hours of swimming and lying in the sand naked, without molestation.

Latterly privacy has not been obtainable along the beach, although the great majority of bathers venture no more than fifty yards from shore. So the hardier swimmers of our party made a practice of going out beyond the crowd and there taking off bathing suits for half an hour's untrammelled swimming. It was quite simple to keep one's swimming suit safe over an arm or knee. One day, however, the inevitable loss of a bathing suit occurred. I communicated my distress to a companion, who hurried ashore to get a blanket. This he brought out into the water, exciting a good deal of curiosity

among the bystanders. I swam in as far as it was feasible and, keeping close behind my rescuer, managed finally to get to the beach and to the bath-house clad in a bedraggled blanket. The life-guard thought I had just been saved from drowning and came to give first aid. We told him the true predicament. This he repeated to the beach police, who promptly came in search of the miscreant who had dared to swim naked at a public beach. By the time he came storming into the women's bath-house, however, I had regained the anonymity of clothes and escaped notice.

* * *

One winter we made a long Mediterranean voyage on a French steamer, to whose captain we had letters of introduction. This amiable gentleman showed us many unusual courtesies, but none greater than placing at our sole disposal for an hour every morning the deck which roofed his cabin. Each day we went up the ladder from the bridge, past the officer on watch, to this highest deck of the ship, where, with all the ship below us, and a vast panorama of sky and sea above and around us, we exercised or lay naked in the sun, as we chose.

One day, the ship having left port in the morning, no sailor was posted on guard duty at the foot of the stairs and a distinguished visitor having come aboard, the captain was showing him over the ship, when, to their surprise, they came upon three women lying naked. Explanations were forthcoming, but neither then nor at table, where we met them daily

for a fortnight longer, did these French gentlemen reassume a natural air toward us.

It was on this same journey that at Jaffa, walking along the beach, I met an Arab who was taking his wife to bathe in the sea. She followed him reluctantly to the harbour. He rolled his trousers above his knees and waded into the water, pulling her after him. She discarded only her sandals to enter the sea. She wore no garments except a dress and veil. Her long black dress grew wet and clung to her calves and her knees and her thighs as he pulled her, struggling, into deep water. There he produced a sponge and proceeded to give her a thorough scrubbing. He lifted her dress and sponged her knees and her stomach and her breast. He turned her around and applied the same measures to her back and buttocks. They were only twenty yards from shore, but the Arab did not hesitate to lift his wife's dress to her shoulders and give her a thorough washing. All this time, however, the black veil that hung over her face remained there, and although he bared all his wife's body save her face, he rigorously kept that covered. After she was scrubbed to his entire satisfaction he led her out of the water and they walked away up the beach, the woman pulling her wet dress away from her body and fanning it in the breeze to dry it.

I was greatly tempted by the clear shallow water of the harbour, and in the absence of any other loiterers than a few urchins (this was during a period of fighting between the Arabs and the Jews, and the city was largely deserted) I decided that I too would

take a bath in the harbour. Leaving most of my clothes on the shore, but retaining a chemise as a sop to the standards of the British Army in case Tommies who patrolled the beach at intervals should pass, I waded into the water and swam in the harbour while my uneasy companion waited apprehensively on shore.

It was a delightful swim. The water was clear and warm, the sky was blue, the beach was of fine white sand. On that peaceful, deserted shore it seemed unbelievable that a mile or two away in the town the Arabs were firing on the small boats from our ship which were trying to land several hundred Polish Jews who had come to live in Palestine.

* * *

If it still existed I should not reveal the whereabouts of a long, narrow road between two seas, in the heart of New York, that used on summer nights to belong only to me. But, alas, the little reservoir in Central Park has fallen victim to some politician's lust for contracts, and now only a boggy ash-heap stands where once was a lovely swimming pool for the hardy. Even more than swimming in the forbidden reservoir (for I was not agile in climbing up its sloping sides) I enjoyed the midnight possession of the road that traversed it. Grass grew on this narrow strip of land that divided the small reservoir, and no one patrolled it. So on such nights as I could not sleep, or desired to walk alone, I disregarded the low wall which was the only barrier to the reservoir and walked

out upon this roadway from which nothing was visible save the water on each side, the surrounding trees, and the distant lights of 59th Street.

Here I walked up and down, barefooted, on the soft grass, and on warm nights took off my clothes to feel the wind on my body. To be alone, quite alone, in the heart of New York, and naked, lying on grass, seemed a distinct achievement. Two or three times I swam in the reservoir, but it was difficult to get a footing on the slanting paving-stones, and the strenuous exit made the swim scarcely worth while. On the last occasion that I swam there alone I had such extreme difficulty in getting out that I had almost resigned myself to floating as long as I could and then giving up and drowning, when at last, exhausted, I clambered up on to the road. I had barely put on my clothes and left the road to make my way along the wall when a flashlight was thrust into my face. I inquired at once, "Are you a policeman?" The intruder replied in the affirmative, and I had no great difficulty in assuring him that I was not on a murderous errand but had simply come to walk in the park because I could not sleep. Then I hurried away before he should notice my wet hair and chattering teeth and from those deduce the whole extent of my night's activity in the park.

Not long after that a party of expert swimmers who went at night to the same reservoir were caught and taken to court. At their trial they pleaded for the setting aside of that body of water, which no longer served as part of the city water supply, as a municipal swimming pool for which there is crying



GERMAN CHILDREN



CHILDREN BATHING IN THE GRÜNEWALD, BERLIN

need in the centre of the city. Their plea was not heeded and the lake is now destroyed to make way for one more dusty space in a dusty city.

* * *

A last experience of nakedness before we left America was threefold, including a naked dinner party, a forum on nudism and the making of a film with naked actors. The dinner party was in the studio of a sculptress. One of the prominent furnishings of this studio was a large naked stone lady who reclined on a low bench. There was always an inclination on the part of inebriated guests to embrace her, but when they flung ardent arms around her she proved to be less acquiescent than she had seemed to befuddled eyes.

On this warm evening as a fitting preliminary to my later engagement we dined without clothes. The dinner guests, half a dozen women, followed the example of the stone lady and reclined on low couches to eat. The only interruption was the occasional entrance of waiters from the restaurant downstairs with successive courses which obliged us to disappear hastily beneath tapestries and couch-covers until the servants had gone. It was a hilarious dinner party. When I had to leave the dinner party to go and listen to a discussion on the theory of nakedness, I was sorry not to take all these ardent practitioners with me.

The lecture hour this evening (as opposed to the laboratory practice that preceded and followed it) was a forum at which Mason and Frances Merrill,

authors of *Among the Nudists*,¹ were the chief speakers. A strangely assorted gathering of people came to hear this first (so far as I know) public discussion on the nudist movement to be held in New York. The audience comprised a number of people with "axes to grind," such as the verbose English atheist who wanted to know whether the nudist movement denied God. If it did, he and his fellows would give nakedness their ardent support. There followed half an hour of one of those pointless digressions which make most American forums frightful bores in contrast to similar symposia in Paris, where the French, with greater wit and logic, have an admirable capacity for keeping to the subject at hand.

The outstanding feature of that meeting, where clothed people squirmed through a hot evening, was the pointlessness of the discussion. The speakers, quoting largely from their book, added little to the information of listeners who had read it. It was interesting, however, to discover what kind of people had written the first book on "nudism" to appear in the United States. There could, outwardly, be no better salesmen of nakedness to puritanical America than this young married couple of extremely conservative manner and conventional bearing. To an uninformed bystander they would have seemed almost the last persons in that gathering with enough daring to take off their clothes.

After the meeting I inquired of Mr. Merrill whether there was a nudist camp near New York that I might visit before setting out on similar

¹ Published by Noel Douglas, illustrated, 10s. 6d.

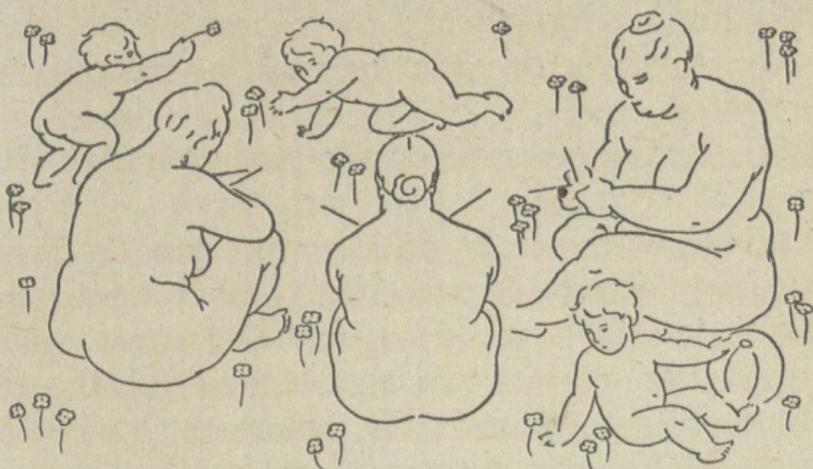
excursions in Germany. I learned that there was one, but the preliminaries to gaining admittance to it required a longer time than the few days I had before sailing.

The third part of our nudist evening was the making of a film. After the forum I went to the apartment of one of the men. We were a group of intimate friends—an artist, an architect, an advertising man, a young wife-and-mother, a writer. It was a warm evening. My companions had heard with envy about the naked dinner party. We decided to undress. The advertising man, older than the rest of us, was the only one who felt even momentary embarrassment. He had, he assured us, never taken off his clothes before more than one woman at a time. His embarrassment wore off shortly and would not have existed at all, I think, if we had been out of doors instead of in the house. It takes a good deal of sang-froid to make nakedness accord with the artificial trappings of a New York apartment, with drinks and jazz and upholstery, with movies and electric lights and bookshelves filled with limited editions.

Our host was an ardent cinematographer. The films he had made ranged from round-the-world travel to typical *ciné bleu* performances given by guests in his house. For the recording of these he had small Klieg lights. He had often urged some of us present to make films for him, but we had refused. On this night, however, when we were all naked, we decided to make a film which would not depend upon sex for its motif. Utilizing some Viennese masks

which hung on the wall, we proceeded to play a Greek masque with ritual of kneeling maidens and much high tragedy. We used no costumes, only masks and daggers and a ceremonial statue of the Virgin.

The older man manipulated the camera most of the time. The young architect, who was physically quite beautiful, was the hero. The three women composed the chorus. We worked long into the night to perfect our masque. Alas, before the reel of film was developed the cinema library of our host was dispersed and in part destroyed. I did not see the result nor do I know the fate of our attempt at classical revival.



CHAPTER TWO

INTRODUCTION TO NACKTKULTUR

AFTER years of surreptitious nakedness in this country, I was interested to learn of German *Nacktkultur*, which I understood sanctioned a general freedom to go naked in Germany. Visits to a number of nudist centres in 1931 convinced me of the error in my understanding. There is no general freedom to go naked in Germany. German law does sanction, and a wide public approves, the existence of organisations formed for the practice of nakedness in specific places set aside for that purpose. The inherent love of exercise and country holidays which is characteristic of the German people induces a widespread tolerance toward their countrymen who carry sport to the extreme degree of practising it without clothes. The current trend to abolish all

social classes has turned a large political group to the practice of nakedness as a sure basis of equality.

Still, with all these factors in its favour, nakedness is not as casual as I had understood it to be in Germany, and even in the centres where I mingled with large groups of unclothed people there was a definite feeling of the obligation to go to a specific place for the specific purpose of going naked, which robbed the procedure of much of its spontaneity and charm. To have to join a club and as a conscientious member of that club take off your clothes in company with a lot of none-too-congenial strangers who are taking off their clothes, is not to me the happiest way to go naked. On the other hand, if one's only opportunity to discard clothes is through joining a club and gaining access to the park or country place in the possession of the club, that is infinitely better than nothing. Moreover, the Germans are great "joiners." They adore clubs. Sundays and holidays find the woods full of glee clubs and sporting clubs, knitting clubs, professional clubs and Esperanto clubs. Hence the formation of nudist clubs satisfies the German desire to be a member of something. Obviously, too, in the early combating of public opinion, it was important for these organisations to have a certain amount of solidarity.

We reached Germany early in June. Landing at Bremen, we spent a day in that fine old town dominated by the medieval statue of Roland and by the Rathskellar where thirsty Americans have their first taste of old German vintages in surroundings

sacred to the best traditions of German drinking. We took a carriage and drove slowly through this old Free City, coming at last to the market place with its historic town hall and business houses built by the sixteenth-century burghers.*

Going on to Hamburg late that afternoon, we stopped for ten days in a house made memorable by its feather beds and its balcony over the Alster. From this balcony we saw a world of sailing boats and swans. Germany with its innumerable small lakes and waterways is full of sailing boats, but this was our first experience of them. The swans nested just below our windows in curious bath-tubs on legs. One end of this bath-tub was opened to the water so that the mother swan could swim in to her nest, which stood dry and safe at the higher end. We watched the awkward cygnets make their first forays into a world of straw and water. Leaving the warm nest where they had spent their first few days, they were reluctant to step into the cold water and unaware that they would be able to swim when they got into it. The old quarter of Hamburg, with its merchant houses leaning over to look at their pointed gables and mullioned windows in the canals, became familiar to us in long walks at twilight.

The first Sunday in Hamburg I arranged to go out to their "Gelände"¹ with one of the *Freikörperkultur* groups of working people. An attribute of all the nudist parks, which I discovered that day for the

¹ This word is one of the few foreign ones that must be used throughout this narrative—in the sense of the park or country place specifically set aside for use by the nudists.

first time, is that they are so completely hidden that one must have an expert guide to find them, or spend half the day walking around in circles looking for them.

The place to which I was directed on this day was called Duvenstedter Brook. I found the right train and bought a ticket to the designated station. On the train I looked curiously at my fellow passengers, trying to determine in advance which of them might be going to the same destination. There were fathers and mothers with scores of children and picnic baskets. They seemed to be too heavily laden to be going to a nudist colony. Finally I decided upon a young man and woman who were dressed briefly and exactly alike in blue training suits, white berets and tennis shoes. Their only luggage consisted of a collapsible canvas boat and a meagre bag of food, so I decided to follow them.

The chief complication of my day consisted in believing that the word "brook" was the same in German as in English, so that I was looking for a stream and not a forest by the name of Duvenstedter. We got off the train and I followed this boy and girl a long way through the country until we came to the narrow river where they launched their craft. This was my first experience of visiting a German nudist park and I was a little timid about making inquiry. When I finally asked them about the place they were rather shocked and disclaimed any knowledge of such a group or its recreation ground. The young man informed me with some indignation that this was his fiancée and although they were

dressed in the unconventional sports garment, they had no intention whatever of taking it off.

I went on to make further inquiry but, whether from fault of my inadequate German or antagonism on the part of the people I accosted, it was fully two hours before I found anyone who had either heard of the place I was trying to find or who was willing to direct me there. I was just on the point of hiring a canoe and going out on a nudist debauch by myself, when, making a last attempt, I asked a man who rented boats whether he knew of the place. With some disdain he told me it was about two miles away, and I started again down a hot dusty road to look for it, thinking as I went along that it was rather silly to go to so much trouble to seek out a group of other people without any clothes, when I could have had a pleasant day alone paddling down the quiet stream and tying up at some lonely spot for a sun bath and a swim without prying eyes to disturb me. However, I had set out to find this park in the Duvenstedter Brook and find it I would if I didn't get there until sundown.

It took a Swede, a crippled man, a young couple who would rather not have been disturbed, and a lady with bare legs on a bicycle to get me finally on to the right path. By following this last person and wading a muddy brook I came into an isolated corner of the forest where flashing naked bodies showed me that at last I had reached the destination which I had been seeking several hours.

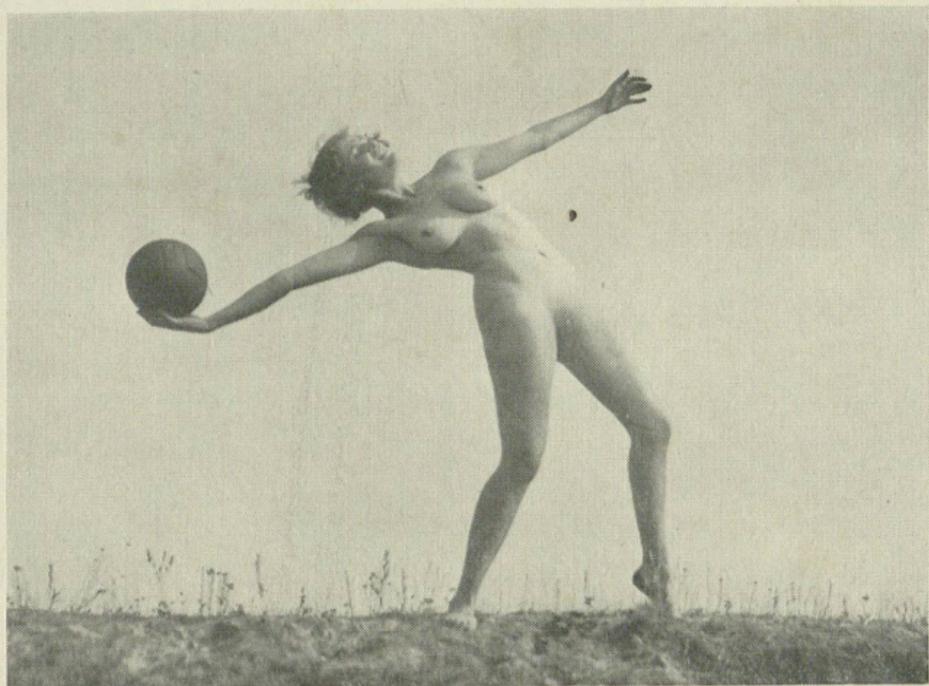
Somewhat chagrined at my stupidity in taking a whole morning to locate the place, my vanity was a

little appeased when my host congratulated me on finding it at all. He told me that really one got off at the station before the one to which I had bought a ticket and that ordinarily one needed a map with specific landmarks to find this hidden field which they purposely kept so secret.

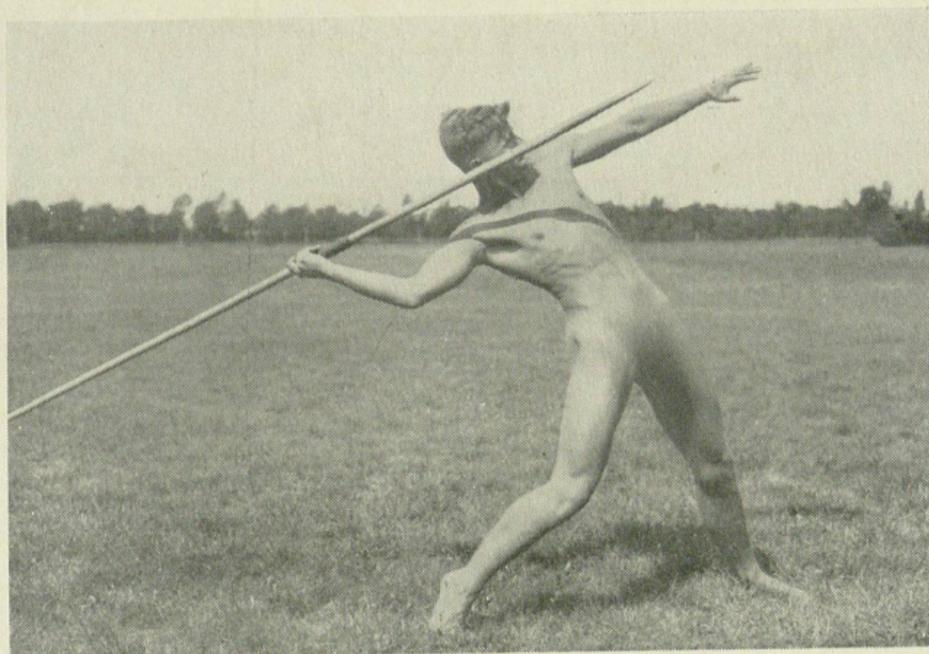
This was my first experience of mingling publicly with a large group of unfamiliar naked people. In America I had gone with groups of from two to twenty congenial and tolerant friends to swim or to exercise without clothes in isolated country places. I knew from the literature on the subject more or less what to expect, and I was prepared for the groups of young men and women playing handball and doing various gymnastic exercises in the cleared fields. Also knowing the German type of figure, verging as it does in maturity on bulk and thickness, I was not unprepared for the protruding abdomens and the swaying curves of the older people.

I confess, however, that I was a little taken aback by the combination of shaved heads, huge paunches and scrawny legs—the three held together by extremely upright military carriage, which characterised so many of the older men. Perhaps it was because I saw them first in quantity, rather than individually, that the German matrons with their bulging, pendent breasts and broad, flabby buttocks gave me a shock of surprise.

I had always believed theoretically, as I came later to see in practice, that anyone, no matter how unshapely, is better for a coat of tan. But in the first half-hour that I spent with these Hamburg *Licht-*



STUDENT, ADOLF KOCH SCHOOL



JAVELIN THROWER

freunde I was a little surprised at the willingness of men and women of assorted shapes and sizes to appear unclothed in so large a gathering.

There were about three hundred people there on the day of my visit. They were largely working people from Hamburg. About a fourth of them were without employment or other income than a small dole of about 8s. a week. It cost about 2s. to come out to this place by train, so it is apparent that they believed in the pleasure and value of the day spent in the open or they would not have dedicated to it so large a proportion of their meagre incomes.

Of the people I talked to, one was a fireman on a Hamburg-American steamer plying between Germany and South America. He told me that his greatest pleasure after the confinement in the hold during six-week-long voyages between the two continents was the day he spent in the nudist park near Hamburg (he was hardy enough to come out here in the winter as well as in the summer) and similar excursions which he made into the country near Rio de Janeiro with sympathetic German friends.

Another was a woman I had first seen down on her hands and knees scrubbing out the city office of this group late Saturday when I had called to make inquiry about this Sunday excursion to the country. She was the wife of a workman who had long been ill and without employment. She eked out their scanty living by cleaning offices and extended her services to the Lichtfreunde headquarters purely for love of the movement. She was an intelligent,

simple woman, kind-hearted and completely imbued with the belief that one's body is a sacred charge that must be kept in good health at whatever sacrifice of garments to adorn it. She owned only the shabbiest clothes but spared no expense or labour to earn the money to take herself and her child to the country on Sunday, her only free day.

There were house painters, street cleaners, dock-hands, factory workers, seamstresses, housewives, manual labourers of almost every kind, with their families. Most of them had had little education, but they were interested, as are most working-class people, in the economic and political questions of their country. This was not, however, one of the socialist organisations. Their most pronounced doctrine, and with some of these people the naked cult almost approaches a religion, was the development and exposure whenever possible of their bodies to sun and air.

The leader of this group was a man of more education and culture than most of the people who composed it. He lent all of his fine energies and qualities as a leader to organising this group, arranging for meeting-places in the country as well as in the city, directing sports, keeping the morale of the group on a high plane, and giving spiritual as well as practical strength to these working men and women who through this Lichtfreunde society escaped briefly from the drudgery of their everyday lives or the desolation consequent upon having no work.

One of the pleasanter activities of this group was

the development of its property, which was newly acquired. If there is one environment which more than another lends dignity to a naked man it is his engagement in outdoor manual labour. Here men were cutting down trees, clearing away brush, damming the stream to enlarge their swimming pool, levelling off a new playing field. Their brown bodies with muscles tensed and sweat pouring down their backs and faces presented an argument for working unclothed which would be difficult to refute. After working for an hour or two, instead of standing about in sweat-soaked clothes, they jumped into the water for a bath and a short swim. Their bodies were fresh and clean again, and dried quickly in the sun. They worked with such good will, with such evident pleasure in the tasks they were performing, that it was a joy to watch them. The German peasant (and the twentieth-century labourer is his counterpart) takes pride in the work of his hands.

These men, whether they had spent the week in a factory or in tramping through the streets searching for work, turned with equal enthusiasm to the unaccustomed labour of cutting down a tree or digging a ditch. Play of strong muscles in the sunlight, song of eager voices in the still forest, employment of human body in healthy outdoor work—who can deny that these are fine things for any race of people?

Not every member of the community was inspired by ideals as high as those of his neighbours. This group had three unflinching standards: No tobacco,

no alcohol, no meat. Some of the older men who subscribed to the theory of spending a day without clothes still could not bear to deprive themselves of a pipe, a bottle of beer and a length of their beloved wurst on a holiday in the country. In the course of the afternoon, as I explored the outskirts of the Gelände, I came upon a half-dozen big-bellied old fellows hiding behind a hedge and smacking their lips over these forbidden delicacies in a manner worthy of an American speakeasy. They had the air of sheepish schoolboys caught in some prank when I came upon them and begged me not to tell Bruno, their respected leader, that they had betrayed the tradition he was trying to establish.

When I started back to the city my first friend the scrub-woman and another woman, whose friendliness was in proportion to her body, large with the bearing of many children, walked with me through the forest to direct me to the right station so that I might not lose my way again. We walked for a mile or two through this wood of stately ancient beeches. The women spoke to me of their simple yet desperately urgent problems of securing food and clothing and education for their families. We walked beneath these century-old trees, past a deserted castle, over a leaf-covered road soft to our bare feet. Nothing broke the forest's silence except the occasional crackle of underbrush when a rabbit scurried past or the voices of some distant party of hikers singing as they walked.

Here were peace and quiet and beauty which, so close to an American city, would be available only

to millionaires, yet only an hour by train from Hamburg these two women from the city slums and a casual stranger had all this forest to themselves simply for the taking.

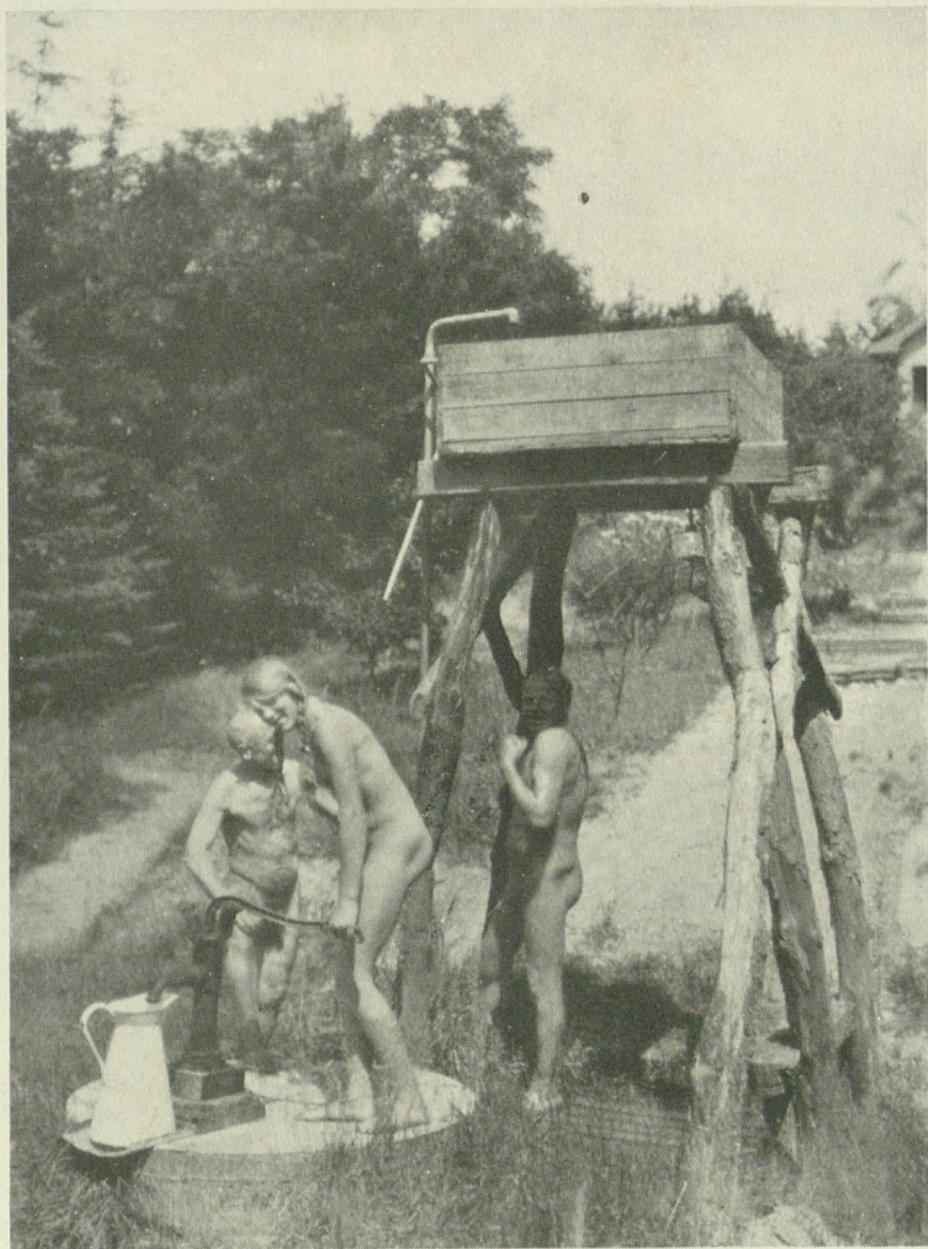
I said good-bye to them with regret. Here was one example of the benefit of public nakedness. Probably these people would not have had the opportunity or the initiative to come singly or in small groups to the country where they could exercise or rest without their clothes. Through the efforts of Bruno Heyer, their leader, and their own co-operation, they had acquired the right to develop for their purposes a small part of this state-owned woodland. They could go unclothed on this property dedicated to their purposes. Here no one could forbid their nakedness or challenge their right to do as they chose. They worked or played freely and without concern as to the possible penalties they might have to pay for this new freedom. By coming here in considerable numbers their expenses were low enough to permit the poorest of them to have this much needed day in the country as a rest from long hours of labour and residence in crowded, sordid city tenements. It was their chief pleasure, their only recreation—this day in the woods where all were equal irrespective of their station in civilian life, and where the young, completely impoverished man with a perfect body was the superior of ill-developed men in more fortunate material circumstances.

This group of Hamburg working people also had access to a city gymnasium where they met weekly

for sports and exercise, shower-baths and violet-ray treatment. These city meetings had less importance in the summer when every week-end brought a day or two in the country. But in the winter when they had no other escape from days in factories and nights in crowded rooms, these evenings when their bodies might escape for a few hours from binding garments and their spirits find some surcease from the toil and problems of every day were a godsend to them.

Some of the members of the group came to the Gelände on Saturday and spent the week-end there, sleeping on the ground rolled in blankets or under small tents. There were no facilities here for cooking food, so most of them lived on bread and cheese, milk and fruit and raw vegetables. This, while one of the simplest of the parks I visited, was by no means the least pleasant. All of the people, even those who found it difficult to obey some of the rules, seemed so tremendously to enjoy being here. Whether they played games or worked on the land, took naps in the sun or sat knitting earnestly, as did a circle of statuesque matrons, they all seemed to be having a good time at what they were doing.

This was not noticeable in every nudist group that I visited. The Germans are a serious race, earnest and often stolid. They carry this stolidity not only into their work but into their play. I grew tired of seeing set jaws, clenched teeth and unsmiling faces in games where the participants might well have smiled and taken their playing a little less seriously. In considerable contrast was the French group, the Amis de Vivre, whose quarters during that



THE PUMP AT KLINGBERG

summer were in anything but an atmosphere of gaiety. These gloomy surroundings peopled by a society of deadly earnest Germans would have been almost unbearable, but livened by Gallic humour they became only a little more sombre than the adjacent Norman countryside.

* * *

I had a ticket for Stockholm and intended to go directly there from Hamburg, but, discovering that Lübeck lay on my route and remembering that Klingberg was near Lübeck, I decided to stop there on my way.

Klingberg has been celebrated with enthusiastic detail by Mason and Frances Merrill in their book, *Among the Nudists*. It has also been given considerable mention in the German literature of *Nacktkultur*. Therefore I was not unprepared for nor completely unfamiliar with the place before I went there. Its presiding genius, Paul Zimmerman, met us at the Lübeck railway station with a copy of *Among the Nudists* held like a banner for identification. I think I should not have mistaken him without it—a little brown gnome of a man, the skin drawn tight over the bones of his small body, hair cropped close, not perfectly at ease in sack coat and hat or in urban surroundings. Apparently he took us for schoolgirls who would prefer the sugary sweetness of mazagran to the sterner pleasure of a mug of good beer in the fine old Schiffsgesellschaft with its benches and tables that harboured the ships' captains of the sixteenth century, for unknowingly or not, he

deprived us of a delight which we did not know until our last day in north Germany, by recommending to us a coffee-room instead of this fine old alehouse as a place to spend the hour we had to wait for the train to Dorf Gleschendorf.

While we were waiting in the station there was great excitement. The Danish police from Copenhagen were coming to pay a visit to the police of Lübeck. Lübeck is a quiet place now and has forgotten the activity and splendour of those great years of the sixteenth century when it vied with Nuremburg for the honour of being the most important Germanic city and they compromised by agreeing that Nuremburg was the greatest inland town and Lübeck the greatest port. On this afternoon all the townspeople were out to greet the visiting Danish police. We walked down the platform between files of officers of the law of the two respective countries drawn up in military array to salute each other. At least we had a friendly police escort at the beginning of our adventures among the nudists, although we might encounter a less friendly one in the course of them.

Aboard the little train for Dorf Gleschendorf we had opportunity to study at closer range this man, who was to be our host for a fortnight, and hear the story of how he came to found Klingberg and eventually turn it from a private to a public (that is, public in a limited sense) park for nudists.

Twenty-five years ago Zimmerman, a school teacher, acquired a stone barn a couple of centuries old which stood on the shore of the Ponitzer See.

He moved there with his wife and on the land surrounding this barn he began to make experiments in agriculture, planting a forest of young pine trees on the then barren sandy hills surrounding the lake. His experiments were successful and now the young trees have grown so that to the uninitiated this forest seems little different from many far older ones encountered in Germany. He converted the barn into a dwelling-house where he lived for twenty years, raising there not only young trees but a family of three daughters according to ideas that he had long cherished.

Chief among these was a belief that young children have little more need of covering in temperate weather than young animals. His daughters grew up almost unaware of clothes during the months that they spent in the country. Zimmerman is an ardent scholar of Nietzsche. There are two or three curious ironies in his life: one that, though he held a Nietzschean attitude towards women, all his children should have been girls, his life passed largely in the companionship of women, dominated by a shrew; another that of these three daughters reared in an environment so favourable to health, one should be an incurable invalid.

First Zimmerman extended the hospitality of Klingberg to his friends and his enlightened relatives who liked to take advantage of the freedom of this young pine forest on the lake shore and go there to spend long summer days without clothes. Then, receiving from citizens of Lübeck and more distant cities requests that they be permitted to share in the

freedom of Klingberg, he gradually enlarged the circle of his guests to include any person who came accredited either with an introduction or with a statement of his own honourable intentions.

For several years these guests were lodged in the Waldschänke, the reconstructed barn which was his original purchase. As the number of visitors to Klingberg grew, cottages were built to accommodate them—first the Pfalbau, which stands by the lake and is the most convenient residence imaginable for bathing. Next, his pines having grown to a respectable height, he started peopling his forest by building rough one-room shacks here and there through it. These, too, are delightful places to live in. I have known no happier wakings than from the nights I spent in one of these shacks to step out of my door into the forest without the handicap of clothes or the fear that someone would discover me without them.

A less happy, though doubtless a needed and practical development of his property, is a modern house after the ugliest school of North German architecture. Perhaps it seems uglier than it is because it stands out so starkly while the simplest of the cabins is surrounded by trees. Part of its lack of charm for me is that with this building is associated the institutionalised character of Klingberg. Here is the public dining-room, where the guests are assembled three times a day to eat the none too palatable vegetable diet which Klingberg provides.

Due perhaps to my personal prejudice against anything that smacks of institutions, I disliked extremely the routine of waiting for a bell, rising in

a body, marching to the dining-room, sitting down to a long table and at a given signal devouring cereal and dry fruits, pounds of bread, potatoes and other starchy foods, rising in a body after an unsatisfactory meal and again in a body retiring to the park across the road.

Not the least tiresome aspect of these meals was the long eulogies of Nietzsche and the endless recitations of romantic German poetry with which our host regaled us. There are certain times when a discussion of Nietzsche and the recital of romantic poetry are welcome and highly pleasurable; but, when one has dined unsatisfactorily and is itching with unaccustomed sunburn, it becomes an unpleasant social duty to attend to the philosophic and literary pronouncements of a garrulous German, even if he be the founder of a splendid Freilichtpark like Klingberg and promoter of an enlightened civilisation such as exists there.

In Klingberg we lived in a shack at the top of a hill in the middle of the pine forest. It was a rough cabin with two wooden bunks, a wash-hand stand, a shelf with clothes-hooks, a table, and a view. The view—between trees and over the tops of trees, across the lake to distant blue hills—compensated for the slight discomfort of the furnishings. Holstein cattle grazed, as was proper, in these Holstein meadows. They lent an air of peace and usefulness to this place where a large proportion of one's time seemed to be devoted to selfish and not very useful endeavours.

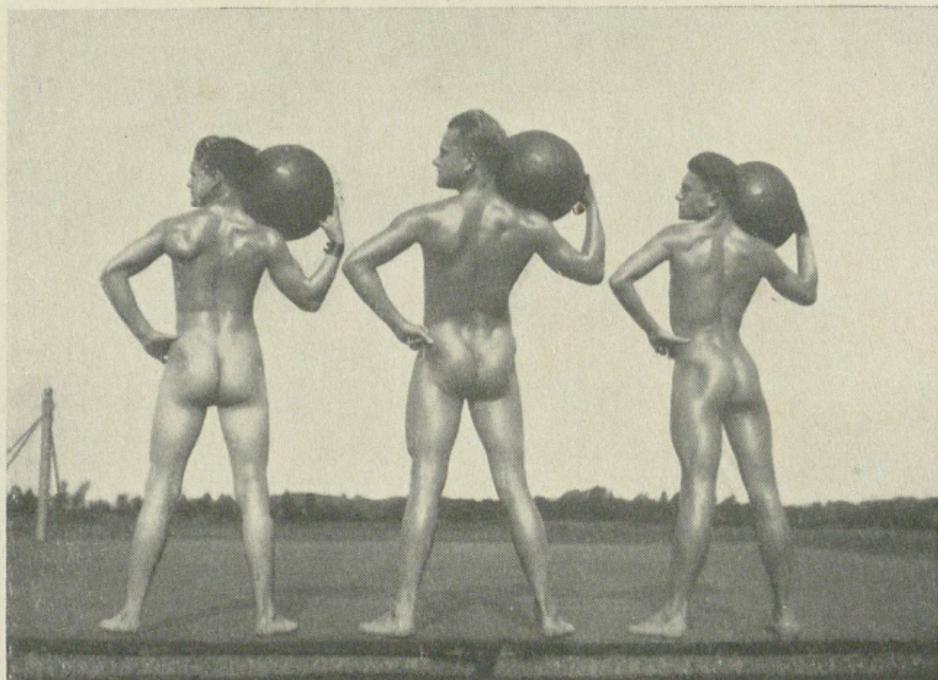
I wakened early every day and stepped out of the cabin on to soft pine needles, to walk through the

quiet morning undisturbed by my fellow guests at Klingberg. By paying the minimum amount of attention to the other people who were living in the park we had an almost ideal existence there. Save for the hour before breakfast when I went to the gymnasium class, it was possible to spend almost all the rest of the day alone.

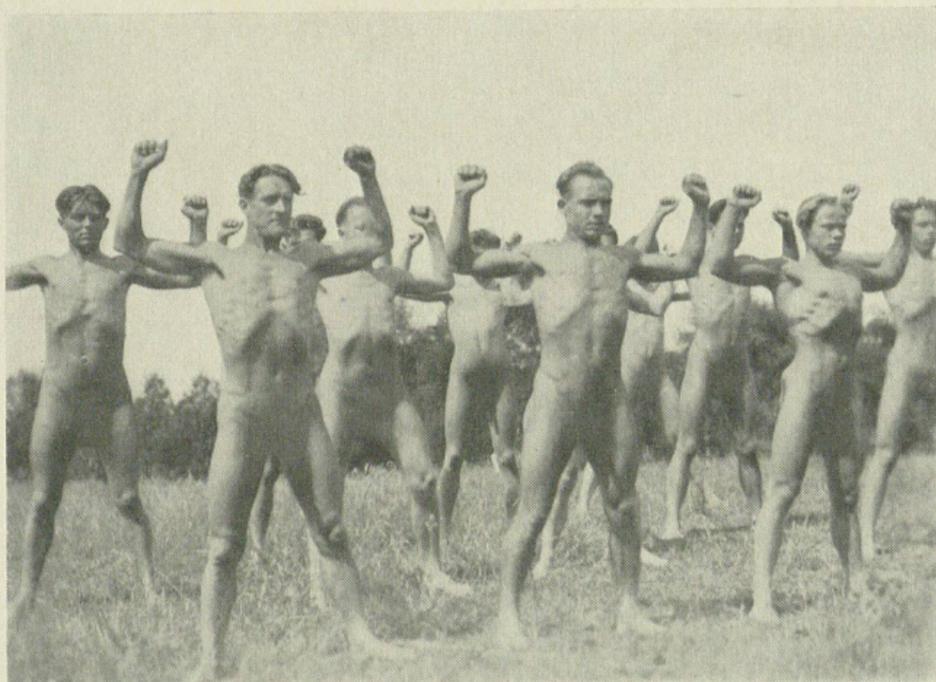
This morning class was very different from those setting-up exercises which are the bane of most camp communities. The instructor was a young man who had studied with the dancer von Laban. The exercises which he taught were founded on the von Laban dance routine, but since they resembled those I encountered in various other nudist centres, they seem typical of a general rather than a specific form of the new German gymnastic.

The exercise consisted of deep breathing, relaxation, and rhythmical movements of the body to the beat of the tom-tom. We ran, leaped, swung our arms and legs, bent our backs, and stretched muscles long unused. The first two or three days I was stiff and weary from these exercises, but reluctant to acknowledge how lazy my body had grown. I persisted until, after a week, I could follow with fair accuracy the instruction of the agile teacher.

Two or three things combined to make me an enthusiastic member of this morning gymnastic class. First, the water in the pool was exceedingly cold and a plunge into it direct from bed left one gasping whereas after twenty or thirty minutes' active exercise the temperature of the water was not such a shock. Second, the instructor was a handsome



ATHLETES



GYMNASTS

young man with golden hair and a bronze body, guaranteed to make even the least susceptible of his students desire to emulate his grace and be reluctant to earn his ridicule and adverse criticism. Also, a girl who had been his pupil for two or three years was a member of this early-morning class.

This young man and woman leaping over the dew-wet grass, their bodies moving in harmony against a background of green forest and gold sunrise, made a pattern of such grace that one hated to present the grotesque spectacle of an awkward body moving awkwardly on the same playing field. So with the two quiet beautiful young people for example, the fresh country air in one's lungs, the feel of wind and sun on one's body, it was pleasant to move and to dance in the early mornings. That one moved stiffly, danced badly, was a circumstance to be remedied—and even a week or a fortnight of this exercise made one visibly nimbler, bettered one's posture and renewed consciousness of a great many muscles whose existence had long been forgotten.

No less exemplary than the good dancers were the bad ones. There is no better way to learn to leap than to watch one man leap high with legs straight, head poised, toes pointed, and another scarcely clear the ground with knees bent and body crouched in crab position. By striving to approach the excellence of the first and avoid the burlesque of the second one finally achieves a creditable performance of these simple exercises—running, walking, leaping—which are so great a joy when one is naked out of doors.

People who have not been in a gymnasium class

of men and women without clothes, instructed by a young man similarly unclothed, inquire whether there is not a great preoccupation with sex, whether one is not unduly conscious of the sex of one's fellow students, and particularly of the instructor. From my own experience, and that of habitués of nudist parks with whom I talked, I should say that this preoccupation is not great. To be sure, the first time one enters such a class one is aware of other people's bodies to a considerable degree, but when one mingles all day, day after day, with naked men and women, a penis comes to be not much more unique than an elbow or a knee, and little more remarked; and the contours of one woman seem very much like those of another, save that certain of them are more shapely.

Unless one is prurient or pathological, he or she very shortly becomes almost wholly indifferent to the sex of naked men and women. There are, to be sure, a few members of such a community whose curiosity overcomes the ethical agreement under which they enter a nudist park. Two such people were at Klingberg—both older men who came to the gymnasium class as spectators, not participants, and who were constantly following and observing the young women. They were twice forbidden to come to the class. After the second warning, when they were discovered peering through the trees, one was sent away from the park and the other permitted to stay only on the condition that he suitably limit his association with the younger guests.

Another frequent question is whether there is not a

good deal of flirting and promiscuity between naked men and women. I reply without hesitation, there is not. Few things are so conducive to chastity as the observation of a great many unattractive human bodies. To see a young man who looks very well with his clothes on, and then to see him undressed and realise that those square shoulders were only pads, that his trousers covered the skinniest of legs, that his chest is hollow and his back crooked, makes him much less favourable an object for flirtation than he was when these deficiencies were not apparent. To see a young woman who was svelte and chic in well-cut clothes, and then to meet her undressed and realise that the gown covered a pasty body with flabby breasts and uneven hips is not to make that young lady more desirable. These are the types for which clothes do most. One holds few illusions concerning a fat man, even when he is wearing clothes, and of a fat woman even fewer, so that lack of clothes is with 90 per cent of people certainly not a seductive measure.

There remains of course the 10 per cent with bodies exceedingly pleasant to look upon. Most of these are the boys and girls much given to athletics and activity of one kind or another, so that they spend most of their energy in games and exercise, and have not a great excess left over. Few people are honest enough about sex to desire it openly in full day when they are naked.

Typical of this attitude is the instance of a young man and woman, both with beautiful bodies, who were in love. They would have been engaged to

marry, save that the young man was out of work and had no means to establish a household. All day long this boy and girl were together, naked, playing or swimming or gardening or lying in the sun. He did not touch her or lay his hand upon her body while they were both undressed. However, at evening, when they had both put on clothes, he became as any other importunate lover, scarcely able to keep from caressing her, when he had not once made any gestures towards her unclothed body. I think they had not been lovers, because their attitude was rather one of desire heightened by incomplete caresses than of possession. But, be that as it may, I observed them for several weeks and can vouch that however greatly the young man desired the girl he made no untoward demonstration of this fact in the long days that they spent together naked.

* * *

Merrill's book, *Among the Nudists*, is an accurate, well-documented report of the nudist colonies in France and Germany visited by the author and his wife, and includes a fair historical statement of the growth of the movement in Germany. In my opinion, the fault of this book is its joylessness. In a similar and somewhat broader experience of the same nudist centres my strongest single impression was the joy of going naked oneself and the pleasure (not unmixed with humour) of watching other people with their clothes off.

Certain centres, such as Adolf Koch's School, offered spectacles of great beauty. To watch or to

take part in one of his classes of twenty or thirty young men and women, beautiful in the best tradition of youth and physical perfection, was one of the most purely aesthetic experiences I have ever known. On the other hand, to associate with a group of ex-generals, middle-aged school teachers, matrons and sausage-loving burghers was one of the most amusing.

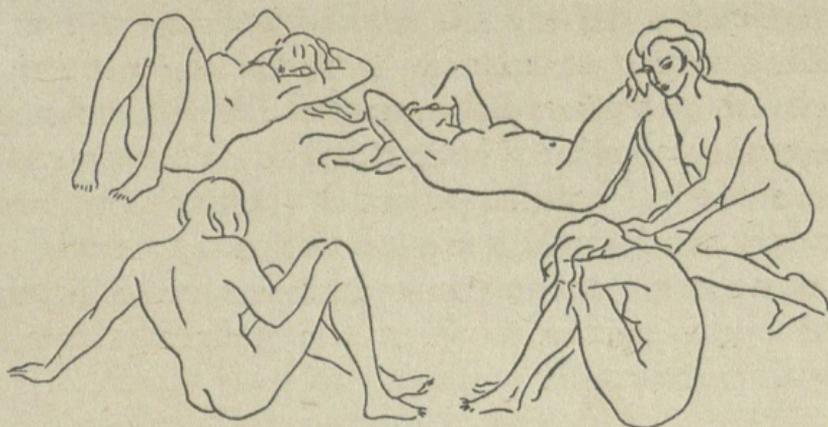
* * *

Klingberg was only an hour's walk from the sea. When we tired of naked people, as one does tire of any society so single-purposed, we walked through a deep forest of beech trees, past farms where haying was in progress to Scharbeutz, a small Baltic watering-place, where we sat in canopied basket chairs within festooned circles of sand and watched the slow tide and the distant sailing-boats.

Since there were facilities at Klingberg for bathing naked in fresh water as many times a day as one chose, it seemed rather unnecessary to impose nakedness upon this beach, patronised as it was by conservative middle-class German families, so when I bathed in the sea I wore a suit. One day, however, our excursion to Scharbeutz was joined by an American lately arrived in Germany. His passion for discarding clothes not yet appeased, he desired to swim here as well without a bathing suit, so we went to the less populated end of the beach, left our clothes and waded out through the long expanse of shallow water until we reached a depth adequate for swimming. In completely intolerant societies I am frequently antagonised to

the point of defying the established convention of clothes, but in so tolerant a region as the north of Germany, where nudist parks are allowed to flourish freely and where naked bathers are unnoticed and unmolested in isolated places, it seemed an unnecessary affront to bathe naked on this public beach.

As we came out of the water and were obliged to pass several parties of bathers to regain our clothes, I was uncomfortably conscious of their courteous but rather pointed looking the other way to avoid seeing something which they considered bad-mannered. I felt like an awkward dinner guest at the table of a polite hostess.



CHAPTER THREE

BERLIN

A STRANGER in Berlin desiring to visit a nudist group has an embarrassment only of choice. By purchasing the current numbers of the nudist periodicals—*Lichtland*, *Lachendes Leben*, *Das Freibad*, etc.—he is provided with a list of at least forty secretaries of nudist clubs and at least half as many addresses of meeting-places of nudists within the city.

My observation included eight or ten meetings in Berlin gymnasiums, in the big municipal Stadtbad, and in parks adjacent to Berlin. I visited at least one group belonging to each of the four big national nudist organisations: *Reichsverband für Freikörperkultur e.V.*, *Reichsbund für Freikörperkultur e.V.*, *Liga für freie Lebensgestaltung e.V.*, and *Reichsverband der deutschen Jugendgelände e.V.*

Most interesting to me, however, was the *Körper-*

kulturschule Adolf Koch, affiliated with the *Freie menschen, bund für sozialistische lebensgestaltung und Freikörperkultur im verband volksgesundheit e.V.* If this record seems overweighted with Koch, it is because his is the most colourful personality among the nudist leaders and his pupils the group that seems to derive both more benefit and more pleasure from nakedness and consequently to form the most nearly ideal nudist society.

* * *

Adolf Koch is a big jelly of a man who in repose has almost no personality. He comes to life only when he is with people who have some need of him. He is petty and childish and flies into violent tempers over trifling disappointments, but I think he is the greatest among the leaders of this movement in Europe.

When he has two or two thousand men and women and children waiting for his directions, Koch becomes an absolutely different person. His animation and his ability to animate his students are tremendous. His flabby body becomes mobile with zest and enthusiasm. He is the dynamo that propels all this latent human energy into movement, into rhythm, into force.

Koch can take a group of tired workmen who have spent all day in menial and exhausting drudgery and turn them at will into warriors or fauns or harmonious parts of a rhythmic pattern.

He sits down at a piano and plays simple folk-songs and children's singing games. With one foot he marks the time. His playing is fragmentary. He taps

out the tune with one finger and accompanies it with the simplest chords. His huge body turned away from the piano, he watches his class and directs it, humming, shouting directions as he plays.

“Um-ti, um-ti, chase the little rabbit that is running through the wood. Um-ti, um-ti, raise your arms high, now, high above your head. Leap—leap, higher—higher—over the bush—higher—chase the little rabbit that is running through the wood.”

Divorced from the personality of Koch and from the group of students waiting on his every word, this sounds like the uttermost drivel, but, given Koch in a gymnasium at the piano directing his class or in the woods with a tom-tom instructing his dance group, this curious combination—a fat man with a soft white body leading a group of men and women whose brown bodies move subtly and rhythmically—becomes a spectacle of beauty.

Koch's history, briefly, is this. After the war he was a gymnasium teacher in a modern school. With the consent of their parents, he instituted exercises without clothes for the working-class children who were his pupils. This innovation aroused the criticism and enmity of some of the other teachers who were not sympathetic to modern method, so Koch was expelled from the school. Through his association with the Socialist Party he carried the question of his expulsion through the higher courts and the matter was eventually brought up in the Reichstag, where Koch's action was finally justified and the school ordered to reinstate him as a teacher.

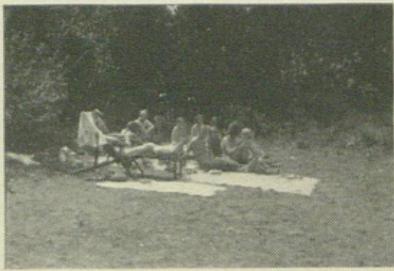
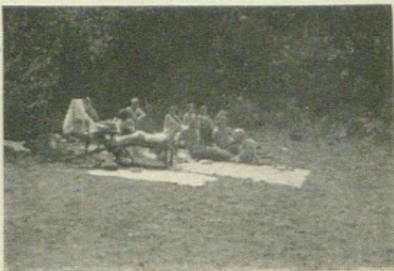
In the meantime a number of working-class families

whose children he had first taught to exercise naked proved their loyalty to him by attending night classes where he taught not only children but their fathers and mothers as well the first principles of hygiene and exercise and nakedness. By the time the school offered to reinstate him his classes of working people had grown to such an extent and proved to be such an interesting project that he organised them into the Körperkulturschule.

There has never been tuition as such in the Koch School, but each man gives a small percentage of his income. With so simple an organisation as this—the provision of a recreational and health centre for workmen in return for which the workman pays according to his income—the Koch schools have grown to an organisation that numbers several thousand students.

Just now the problem of financing the schools becomes a serious one because more than half of the people who have attended them are out of work. Their inability to help support the school does not deprive them of its privileges, and the members who are still working valiantly carry on for the benefit of the *Arbeitslosen*.

Arbeitslos is a gloomy and provocative word in Germany just now. It seems to be the cause and the effect of all Germany's ills. I know no solution to unemployment so sane as that which these German workmen are trying, namely, having no occupation and no income, they reduce their needs to the minimum and fill their empty days. This keeps their bodies in good health and their minds from too great



DAY IN A NUDIST PARK

preoccupation with the problem they cannot solve. These young men who have either absolutely no money or a small dole of a few shillings a week go out to the nudist parks, sleep in tents or in small cabins which they build, prepare their food of vegetables and milk and bread, spend their days healthfully out of doors in some exercise as practical as chopping wood, digging ditches, building fences, etc. Their bodies become firm, brown, strong. They read a good deal of economics and political propaganda. Having no opportunity to better their personal fortunes, they are concerned with group and world problems.

At least they are less forlorn than the unemployed man in England and America who lives in a sordid dwelling and walks the streets of the city, growing paler and more disgruntled day by day. Realising the tremendous barrier of prejudice and public opinion that will have to be removed before such institutions are possible here, and doubting the ready adaptation of the American point of view to public nakedness, I am not an indiscriminate champion of nudist parks for America. I do believe, however, that it would in a measure ameliorate the present problem of unemployment if unemployed men turned to nudist parks instead of to the Bowery as a haven of refuge until better times shall come.

* * *

One Friday evening I visited the Stadtbad when it was set aside for the sole use of the Adolf Koch School. Two hundred people were waiting in line

half an hour before the doors opened to admit them to their weekly evening at the Stadtbad. With the privileges accorded a visiting journalist (Koch is one of the few nudist leaders who are publicity-conscious) I entered ahead of the long line and made an inspection of this huge public gymnasium and bath-house before the pupils of the Koch School were admitted. The swimming pool is the largest indoor one I have ever seen, roughly half a block by a quarter of a block in proportion.

When at last 8 o'clock sounded, the eager crowd of working people surged through the doors and rushed for lockers to undress immediately and waste no precious moment of these two hours in the spacious Stadtbad. The first half-hour's activity was not organised, so everyone did what he chose. Dozens of the people ran hungrily to the shower-baths, where they scrubbed and rinsed and revelled in this plentitude of hot and cold water. For many of them this was the sole weekly opportunity to bathe, and they made the most of it—men, women and children mingling indiscriminately in the shower room, gaily bartering soap in exchange for a back wash and towels for a good rub down. When it is remembered that many of them live in greatly overcrowded quarters with almost no toilet facilities and with no room to "spread themselves," the eagerness of their participation in these Friday evenings is more readily understandable.

The ardent gymnasts hurried after a hastier shower to the gymnasiums, where they wrestled or held contests of leaping and weight-lifting. Some of them

played games. Some danced to folk tunes that they hummed as they went through the figures.

At half-past eight the two formal exercise classes began. The pupils were free to choose which one they would join. There was no obligation to attend either, but both gymnasiums where the classes were held were almost uncomfortably crowded.

“Shall we go to Adolf or to Ilka?” a boy and girl asked each other as they came arm in arm from the informal games. “Adolf has the music,” argued one. “Yes, but Ilka makes you work harder. Adolf jokes too much,” answered the other. So they separated, each going to the teacher he liked better.

In these classes in the Stadtbad the curriculum is much the same as in the Koch School, save that here there is space for groups of two hundred or three hundred to work together at a time, while the school is limited to much smaller groups.

I went first to Adolf’s class. He sat at the piano strumming, arguing, cajoling his students. This large roomful of people, every shape, every size, went through their exercises with the utmost earnestness—flexing tired muscles, stretching cramped limbs, expanding in good humour and contentment as they worked, almost forgetting the long day’s drudgery from which most of them had come.

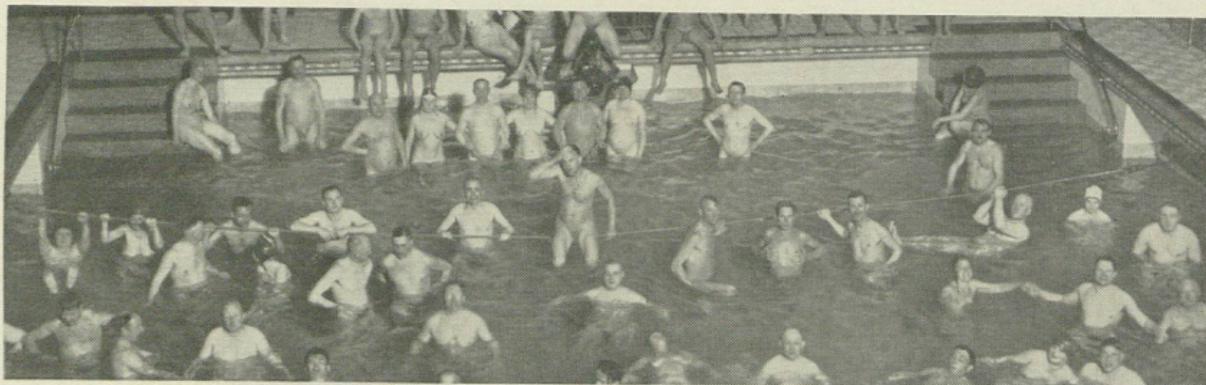
When I left Adolf’s class to look in at Ilka’s before the hour closed, the procedure was much the same, save that Ilka beat upon a tom-tom instead of playing the piano. The boy had spoken truly. Ilka did make them work harder, not stopping often to joke as Adolf did.

The gymnasium classes over, the real fun of the evening began as the crowd tumbled down the stairs to get into the swimming pool. There were two hundred or more people in the pool at once. They behaved as do most groups of bathers—the good divers making resplendent arcs and angles of their glistening bodies as they leapt from a series of diving-boards, and at the shallow end much dawdling and foolery. Again there was no slightest evidence of immorality or clandestine love-making among this group of people bathing naked, and much less of lying about in suggestive postures than at most such gatherings. I swam the length of the pool a couple of times, avoiding the plunging athletes at the deep end and being jostled amiably by fat mothers and their babies who splashed in the shallow end.

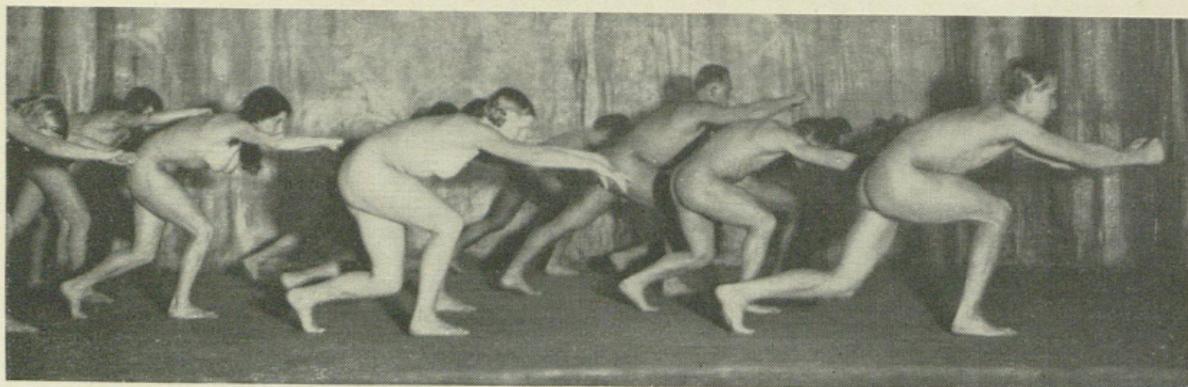
The municipality has not always looked kindly upon Koch, but fortunately it does permit his school, as well as certain other of the nudist organisations, to take advantage of the facilities of this big city bath and adapt it to their purposes.

* * *

One of the most spectacular evidences of German tolerance toward the nudist movement was given when Koch was permitted to present in the Grosses Schauspielhaus an exhibition performance by his pupils. Fifty naked men and women, comprising old and young, beautiful and ugly, assembled on the huge platform of this theatre and gave a demon-



NUDIST EVENING AT MUNICIPAL SWIMMING POOL



DANCING CLASS, ADOLF KOCH SCHOOL

stration of the rhythmic exercises which comprise the curriculum in the school at 218 Friedrichstrasse.

There were more than two thousand spectators—government officials, doctors, lawyers, teachers and bourgeois citizens, invited to witness this proletarian demonstration of nakedness.

There was no ribaldry, not even lightness or laughter, in the reaction of the assembly to this performance. It was received gravely and thoughtfully. The comments upon it, although sceptical that *Nacktkultur* was quite all its adherents claimed for it, were still favourable to the project of health and the establishment of social equality which Koch's School and the other proletarian nudist organisations advocate.

This performance of naked dancing and rhythmic exercises was sanctioned by the municipal officials and protected by the police. All Germany may not be ready to take its clothes off, but it has an enlightened attitude toward the desire of a large number of its citizens to do so.

* * *

I made no effort to visit each of the forty or fifty nudist camps adjacent to Berlin because when one has seen half a dozen of them one has a fair idea of the others. Occasionally, by way of contrast, I permitted myself the diversion of spending a week-end with clothed people, that is to say, people who wore at least the minimum which differentiates the garmented from the naked sportsmen.

One Saturday I spent the day in Potsdam with a

young man steeped in the tradition of the place, treading the stairs that Queen Louise descends on so many parlour walls and eyeing enviously through the glass panes the books that Voltaire and Frederick read in the circular library. From Potsdam we went by the tiny river steamer to the Pfaueninsel, where we drank from tall Potsdamer-stangen on the terrace of the chalet that crowns the peak of the island. We sat over our steins watching the evening descend upon this pleasant countryside of lake and river and woodland until a sailing-boat signalled us from the little harbour.

Karl and I walked down the hill to join Eric and Gunther on the boat. We had supper aboard—bread and wurst and salad and cheese and fruit wine, for my hosts were temperate and drank no alcohol—as we sailed slowly across the lake. We sailed all the evening, through the dusk and the dark and the late moonlight. Once we anchored while Gunther and I swam. Gunther retained the brief bathing trunks he wore under his sailor trousers. I wore a bathing suit because they offered me the cabin in which to undress and seemed to expect me to emerge with something on. These were conservative young men, rigorously correct to a visiting foreigner. After the swim we dressed, for the night was cool, and sailed back to the dock of the hotel where I was to spend the night. It was an eerie and rather romantic moment when we sailed in slowly through the mist to the landing-stage gay with coloured lanterns and I disembarked to watch the boat drift slowly away like a dream-ship into the night.

The boys slept on the boat, but next morning while I was breakfasting on my balcony overlooking the lake they came for me again. Breakfasting in the sun is an admirable habit of the Germans which is practised no more commonly in holiday hotels than in the homes of the poor. A striking example of this I noticed in the almshouses at Lübeck, where old couples living on charity drank their coffee out of doors in an environment comparable to that of an expensive terrace flat in New York.

We sailed all day, sunning ourselves on deck and swimming frequently. Costume for the boys was an enviably simple matter. Each of them had two or three cambric triangles which they wore in rotation, when they got out of the water hanging the wet ones to dry on the mast, where they fluttered like gay pennons in the wind. I had only one woollen bathing suit which I was either obliged to wear until it dried on me, a chilly process, or exchange for clothes. This constant dressing and undressing made me envious of the simpler procedure which the boys followed.

The lake was fairly crowded with sailing-boats. At the end of the afternoon when we made our way back up the Havel to the yacht club in the outskirts of Berlin we formed part of a long procession in which it took a good deal of skill to manipulate the sailing-boats, which tacked back and forth across the river, not keeping to a straight line as the motor-boats did. Reaching the yacht basin at last with rather more petrol fumes in our noses than was pleasant at the end of a day's sailing, we docked the boat and made our way back to the city. It was really quite a refresh-

ing week-end, this one spent with people who wore a modicum of clothes.

* * *

On my last Sunday in Berlin I wanted to see one more of the nudist colonies in the vicinity. There were several that I had not visited. In particular there was the group of seven or eight adjacent colonies on the Motzener See. I had no desire to go out to these, however, because they are the nudist Coney Island of Berlin, with a bus running from Unter den Linden to the very gates of the parks and consequently hordes of people trampling the grass until the places are not only greatly overcrowded but have lost much of the beauty common to the German countryside.

On Saturday evening I went to visit the leader of an obscure group, a fanatical man, a doctor who sat in a gloomy, high-ceilinged room and talked at great length about the spiritual implications of nakedness, the mystical human body, the elevation of the society of naked people—in short, one of those persons who do a great deal to prejudice rational-minded men and women against any “cause.” This man was a bitter enemy of Koch and spoke with much acerbity of the wage percentage which Koch required of each of his students, whereas he, Doctor M., took only a mark a month from the members of his group. In the course of the interview, through the gift of a few marks to support his project, I found myself a member of the *Berliner Bund für Freikörperkultur e.V.*, although I had not joined several other more sympathetic groups that I visited.

Within these organisations, as in any other society, there is, of course, much petty politics and wrangling. They do, however, stand solidly together in defence of their principal idea, which is the right of every man to go without his clothes in a given environment where he is not making himself a public nuisance. In direct opposition to this is the attitude of the Catholics and other conservative elements of the German population, who hold that the mingling of naked men and women in any environment, for whatever purpose, is immoral. So to combat these people who would force all nudists to forsake their gatherings and practices, men of such opposed attitudes as Dr. M. and Adolf Koch bury their differences and unite, to all appearances amicably, in the defence of *Nacktkultur*.

More sympathetic to Koch's ideas and manner of working them out than to the other nudist groups I had visited in and near Berlin, I decided to spend my last Sunday in Germany at his new recreation ground out beyond the Tempelhof flying field.

I suppose that if I had visited a hundred nudist parks in Germany instead of only a dozen I should still have had difficulty in locating them. There is no rule for finding them except to follow the most obscure path at every crossroad or crosspath, and that, unless you have missed an even fainter trail, is the one that will lead you to the nudist recreation ground.

Koch's first Gelände was among those on the Motzener See. His school outgrew that reservation and he had, a few weeks before my visit, acquired

this new undeveloped tract of forest which was now being adapted to the purposes of a week-end camp. Perhaps that is one reason why my impression of this place was pleasanter than that of certain others I visited. Here the men were laying out roads, building huts, improving the beach of their lake. There was less of that strenuous exercising and conscious sun-basking which grows just a little tiresome when one has watched too many people spend days of earnest nakedness which has no point other than simply being naked.

Here there was meaning in the activity, zest in the labour and utter relaxation in the rest they took after they had heaved a heavy beam into place or cut the brush in a heavy thicket. There were sports here too, but they were incidental. The unique experience of this day was watching a group of naked men adapt a virgin woodland for their habitation.

Since this was one of the branches of the *freimenschen* (the Socialist organisation), a greater communalism existed than elsewhere. For example, the midday meal for everybody was prepared by half a dozen women and cooked in a *gulasch kanone*.

These were commonly used in the army and consequently are well known in post-war Germany. It is too bad that more of these field kitchens have not been salvaged and put to similar use, because they are eminently preferable to lots of little smoking oil-stoves for outdoor cookery such as prevail in other camps.

This meal consisted of a *mélange* of vegetables: potatoes, cauliflower, onions, and I forget what else.

It was not the most palatable vegetarian meal that I have eaten, but it was certainly filling and one could have all one wanted of it for sixpence (threepence to the unemployed and nothing if one had no money).

Dinner was announced by a gong which recalled the people from their tasks or games. Each man brought with him his own receptacle and filed past the *gulasch kanone* for his portion of food. There was great variety in this dinner service. I saw people eating from plates and bowls and tin buckets, a dustpan, a gourd, a receptacle contrived from tree-bark. Many of these people were extremely poor. Some of them had walked the fifteen miles from Berlin in order to have this day in the country, but they were clean and happy and hungry and crowded around the cooker with zest for their midday meal.

The following notes, although more staccato than much of this narrative, were made that day and are more in the mood of the place than a wordier report :

Koch, patriarchal, ladling out portions of food to his hungry pupils. (Soft, white, unathletic, melodramatic, able to sway a crowd ; a certain contempt underlying his fellowship.)

Four boys building a shack, their brown bodies blending with the grey pine trunks and the white birch poles of their hut. One boy poised, beautiful, nailing the centre beam in place.

Three children, brown and jolly, in a series of games, the little girl showing, even at five or six, the tendency to broad hips, in contrast to the slender shapelessness of the boys. A nice woman, secretary or assistant to Koch, who fulfilled with quiet and

amiable versatility the various duties of office-manager, store-keeper and second-cook.

The people filing past to get their food with less gluttony than I have seen elsewhere in Germany. Young men scrubbing their bodies with sand and rinsing off under the shower. Two girls who lay in absorbed conversation on their blanket and scampered away, clasped tightly under it, when a sudden rainstorm came.

Friendly curiosity concerning me as I lay on my stomach, writing. Two boys hurling the javelin. The boy who scolded me at the pump for saying "Sie" instead of "du." The curly, golden-haired boy who threw an arm about my shoulder as we pumped for showers. The lovely colour of most of the people—dark brown, or golden brown, or cream-colour, in contrast to their pale-white hair.

Medicine ball. Handball. A stiff old man exercising his legs. The daily care of tents and yards. A man shaving with a great deal of gusto and soap. Chiefly the nice spirit of the place—people working naked, eating naked, playing naked, arguing naked, being friendly naked. No houses, no rules, no clothes, no pocket-books, no coquetry.

The people here on the whole younger and rather lovelier than those in other groups—save for one woman with awful, hanging folds of stomach from childbearing, and another with Polynesian breasts and hips. Several extraordinarily attractive girls, short hair, slender, brown bodies.



GERMAN GIRLS

Tempted by an aeroplane view of a nudist park on a narrow neck of land between two lakes, I went one week-end to the Freijugendland Uedersee.

First an hour's train journey from Berlin, then supposedly a connecting bus to a village near the camp—but the bus did not meet the train, so rather than wait an hour and a half on a beautiful summer morning to ride four or five miles, I started out on foot. Someone told me of a short-cut, but I took a wrong turning and it was almost noon before I reached the village.

There I met a young Dutchman who had come by bus and set out to walk the rest of the way, carrying a huge heavy suitcase. It seemed only friendly to offer to help him. He had come to stay a month and I to stay a day. I watched with chagrin the sun dropping lower and lower as we pursued what I felt sure was another wrong road. Finally, when the young man would not turn back, I left him and his suitcase and went on alone. I retraced part of the way, followed a canal, found a place where I could have finished the day pleasantly alone, but still disliked giving up my search for the Freijugendland. At last I reached the lake, but I was on the wrong shore of it.

There at last across the lake from me was the camp I had been seeking all day. But here was I on this shore half a mile away with a bundle of clothes that I should need in two or three hours to wear back to the city. By this time, however, I was so tired and hot and cross that I did not care whether I ever saw the clothes again so I piled them on the root of a towering oak tree, and entering the water,

I washed away my tiredness and ill-humour as I swam toward the nudists on the opposite shore. Half-way across the lake I met a canvas boat in which two boys were rowing. Their torsos were bare but the lower parts of their bodies were hidden by the structure of the canoe, so that I could not be certain whether or not they were members of the community toward which I was making my way. I hailed them and asked them if they would be good enough to bring over the bundle of clothes which they would find at the foot of the oak tree. They agreed willingly and went after my duffle.

I swam on toward the nudist camp and shortly mingled with the bathers at the dock there. No one challenged me or noticed that I had, so to speak, sneaked in through the back door of their camp.

My credentials were with my clothes which had not yet arrived, so I sunned myself on the sand until the boys in the canoe returned with my possessions. I discovered then that they were not members of the nudist colony but camping in a community of clothed persons further around the lake. They were friendly and apparently quite accustomed to the society of naked persons, so that they had not hesitated to show some courtesy to a naked stranger who had arrived on the wrong side of the lake in search of the nudist colony.

This Freijugendland which I had now reached after considerable roundabout journeying was not the headquarters of any one group but, like Klingberg, a popular nudist resort to which members of all the nudist organisations could come. Its physical

situation justified the aeroplane view of it which had attracted me there. After presenting my visitor's card to the proprietor of the camp and having coffee and rolls in the canteen, I spent a pleasant late afternoon bathing and resting. Hay had been newly cut in an adjacent field and I thought of spending the night there and sleeping in a haycock as was customary among many of the young people, but I had not brought a blanket and this was a simple camp where visitors had to bring their own commodities. Doubting whether my skin, although it had grown reasonably brown in frequent visits to nudist centres, was sufficiently hardened to enable me to pass a comfortable night lying naked in a haymow, I forbore this pleasure and went back to the city in the evening.

There were two or three Americans present here— young men who were rather rude and silly and inclined to make “smart cracks” about the appearance of the women. The guests here were largely family groups with a preponderance of mature women, many of whom bore the traces of frequent childbearing.

Several of the Germans present understood English and realised the impoliteness of their American visitors, but they did not betray their awareness of the discourtesy of these foreign guests. Most of the Germans believe so ardently in the merit of *Nacktkultur* that they desire to proselytise and spread the gospel to all barbarian countries. Hence they bore with the rudeness of these Americans much in the spirit of martyrs enduring for a just cause.

The organised nudists are not the only people in Germany who go naked. There are several large groups of young people who occasionally practise nakedness without taking it as their chief doctrine or standard. Important among these are the various branches of the Youth Movement. There are two youth movements in Germany, one among the proletariat and one among the bourgeoisie. The well-known organisation of the latter group is the Wander-vögel, which began as a rather romantic club of young people of good family who liked to wander in the woods and sing.

The larger and more active Youth Movement is among the proletariat. The activities of this group are more definitely political. These young people of the working classes are serious and thoughtful. The future does not hold great promise for them in the present economic instability of Germany. So, inasmuch as they cannot look forward to bright individual prospects for the future, they become group-minded, nationally conscious, and some of them even acquire an international outlook.

This great army of young people that before the war would have been engaged in military service or serving apprenticeship to whatever trade or profession they had chosen is in present-day Germany without occupation. They find an outlet for their energies in organisations that are partly social, partly political, in nature. Through the combination of needing to take inexpensive holidays and the instinctive love of being in the country, hiking and tramping and camping become the most popular of their sports.

With a kind of bravado that wants to throw off all the old shackles these young proletarians frequently discard clothes along with a lot of other outgrown commodities and usages. Therefore in their frequent summer excursions to the country large numbers of these German young people bathe and exercise naked in the woods without the self-consciousness of many of the clubs that are organised on a basis of more or less compulsory nakedness.

Numbers of these young people in the Youth Movement, having no work and nothing to tie them to one place, take long hikes all over Germany and Central Europe. Some of them have walked as far east as Constantinople, as far south as Seville. These are extremes, however, and it does not take such exaggerated examples to typify this splendid release of energies which thousands of young German men and women are finding by taking long journeys on foot in their own country and countries adjacent to it.

Their procedure is simple. They wear comfortable hiking clothes, which for the young men consist of heavy shoes, woollen socks, short trousers, jacket and shirt. Their arms are bare, their legs are bare from the ankle to above the knee, their shirts are open at the throat, and they wear no hats. Their luggage consists of a knapsack of food and toilet articles. They rarely carry a change of clothes, washing out their socks and shirts at night.

They are to be met in every city and on almost every highway in Germany and Scandinavia. Throughout Germany hostels are provided for such of them as are affiliated individually or in groups with

the Jugendherberge society. These Jugendherberge, or youth hostels, provide sleeping accommodation, facilities for bathing and for preparing food at a rate of 6d. to 1s. 6d. a night.

These buildings vary from abandoned army barracks to châteaux taken over by the government from aristocrats of the monarchical régime. There is one at approximately every ten miles throughout the country, so the young hikers need never be without shelter at night if they choose. Some of them prefer to sleep out of doors, but this involves carrying a blanket—an item which assumes considerable proportions on a hike of several hundred miles.

Since they carry no other clothes, naturally the young wanderers do not bother to take bathing suits, and even more naturally they do not pass the numerous lakes and rivers on their route with only a wish and a sigh, but peel off the few clothes they are wearing and take a rollicking, glorious swim which is doubly refreshing after long miles on a hot and dusty road. So, walking through almost any German forest, when one hears lively shouts and splashing he can be fairly certain that around the next bend of the path he will come upon a group of young men (or more occasionally young women) washing away the stains of travel and having a fine swim—naked, it goes without saying.

This procedure has become so common in Germany within the last few years that the citizens pay no attention whatever to it and the visitor to Germany shortly becomes accustomed to it. The Germans are glad to have their young men take these long

wandering holidays. It keeps them out of doors and in good health. It assures a new generation of German citizenry that will, by these summer vacations, compensate in a measure for the long winters during which they must often endure crowded living quarters and inadequate food.

Occasionally these German boys run foul of foreign authorities by following in other countries the procedure which is their custom in their own land. This occurred in France last summer when a party of wandering young Germans coming to a river took off shirts and shorts and went swimming. The French gendarme, called in by the scandalised people who discovered the boys, promptly marched them off to jail. There they were fed with an excellent onion soup—a pleasant contrast to their hiker's diet of bread and cheese. The explanation which the leader of the band subsequently gave to the French magistrate was plausible and they were released after an experience which resulted in local Franco-German amity and understanding.

Hordes of these boys clamber up the tower of Notre Dame in Paris, visit the tombs of ancient Nordic kings at Upsala, and generally learn at first hand the history, the traditions and architecture, the character of the people and of the land, in their own and neighbouring countries.

If I were to do active propaganda for any cause or group it would, I think, be for the Youth Movement rather than for the nudists as such. These young people are gaining an international outlook. They

have a rational attitude toward simple living, travel and nakedness—a happy combination.

Many people who frequent nudist colonies have the idea that taking off one's clothes is the means and the end, that it is of itself something to make a cause of, whereas the essence of happy nakedness is its spontaneity, its naturalness. When these are obscured by forethought and a kind of grim determination, the charm and rightness of nakedness are in large measure destroyed.

The tolerance that one group of Germans has for another is nowhere more strongly evidenced than in the Black Forest. Here are hunters, hikers, campers, mountain climbers, revivalists, pedants, revolutionists. Here, also, are nudists.

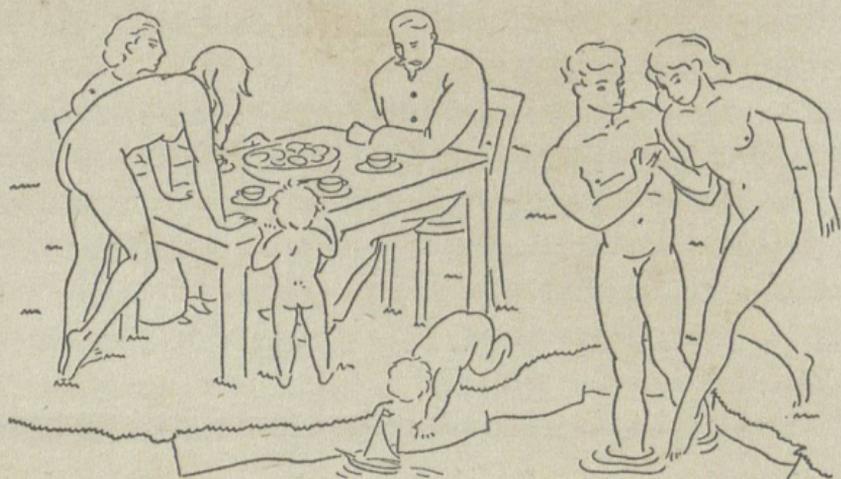
When a party of hunters, composed of conventional burghers and public officials, passes with guns and game-bags through the encampment of a society of non-meat-eating, Society-for-the-Prevention-of-Cruelty-to-Animals nudists, there might easily be an unpleasant demonstration, due to the difference in the opinions that these two groups hold. The burghers could readily object to the lack of convention observed by the nudists; the vegetarians to the cruelty to animals practised by the hunters. But deeper-lying and more fundamental than these acquired opinions is the German attribute of liking the country, of spending leisure in the woods, in whatever pursuit. So the hunters pass on amicably through the camp of the nudists, wishing them only Good Day and much joy in the sunshine; while the nature worshippers wish their visitors good journey,



SWEDISH CHILDREN AT THE SEASIDE

regardless of the fact that the purpose of it is one unsympathetic to them.

Such tolerance is too infrequently found elsewhere. In America and in France the larger idea of healthy exercise out of doors is eclipsed by group prejudices as to the way this exercise may be taken. The Germans are stolid, frequently without humour or subtlety, but they have the remarkable faculty of recognising the worth in what their fellows do, even though the means of accomplishing it be not to their liking.



CHAPTER FOUR

SCANDINAVIA

FROM Stockholm we took a little boat that made its leisurely way past wooded islands, thick at first with pleasure resorts, but thinning gradually so that the further we got out into the skerries the less inhabited the islands became. The houses built upon them, if there were any, remained hidden behind thick screens of trees and shrubbery. Such an island was our destination.

Our hosts lived in a house whose kind I had known before only in Swedish story-books. It was built of wood, soft grey wood similar to olive but presumably of some other in that northern climate. It was supported outside by roughly carved columns like totem poles painted in soft blues and greys and greens in conventional pattern. The portico and most of

the inner walls were painted. The ceilings of the downstairs rooms were high, the furniture simple. There was an air of cleanliness and charm about it that I have discovered nowhere else. Spanish houses leave an impression of bright yellow and red, of dirt and richness and beautiful old wood. Swedish houses make one remember a soft blue-grey cleanness, not vivid or startling, but infinitely charming and comfortable.

In the corner stood the tall tiled stove, telling in its gaily painted bricks some story of Swedish warriors and their legendary prowess on land and sea. The stove served little purpose other than decoration in this June weather. We ate at a long, bare wooden table delicious meals of Swedish hors d'œuvres, simple meats and vegetables. This board had great dignity. The table stood at one end of the long, high-ceilinged room. It was presided over by our host and hostess, a man and woman of distinctive appearance, both tall, with silver hair, and the air of being in exactly the right environment at the head of this table where sat their children, their grandchildren, their guests and their retainers. I felt like a visitor to another age. This place, its atmosphere, the people in it, the life they led, resembled the old feudal estates where the lord and lady lived in the small society of their own families and servants in a community entirely apart and sufficient unto itself.

It was in this family of eminently respectable and conservative Swedish people that I encountered one of the happiest manifestations of nakedness in a varied observation. Swimming played a large part

in the summer life of this island. There were two bath-houses—one for the members of the family, one for their guests. As the most natural thing in the world when we went down to bathe early in the morning, before luncheon, and again in the late afternoon, we simply undressed in the bath-house and entered the water to swim naked. There was no question, no discussion or apology or explanation; it was simply the way to go swimming.

While other countries have been developing nineteenth-century standards of modesty and spending the twentieth century trying to change them, the Scandinavians have gone serenely and sanely about their normal habits of wearing clothes in such societies and environments as demand them, and with equal serenity and lack of consternation discarding them on such occasions as it seems convenient and proper to do so. Usually this is in a family circle or among groups of congenial people on holiday in the summer. The sea-coast of Sweden, with its hundreds of bays and inlets, cliffs and accessible islands, lends itself readily to excursions and outings. It is so common as to cause no remark whatever for family parties to go out for a day's picnic, bathe naked and lie naked in the sun together. So the Swedes scoff, as do their fellow Scandinavians, and not without justice, at all this to-do about naked cults and movements in the less civilised countries of Europe and in America.

“Why don't you simply go to isolated places in the country, take off your clothes when you feel like it, get your sun bath, have your swim, and not make so

much fuss about it?" they inquire. "We have always done it in our country. Did it never occur to your fathers and grandfathers that it is good to bathe without clothes? Is it only this generation of your people that has discovered the value of sun and air and light to the human body?"

Under these circumstances it is so utterly unintelligible to the average Scandinavian that Germany has only just learned to take its clothes off and America is barely mastering the a b c's of this fundamental lesson in hygiene that when a visitor to his country engages him in conversation about the practice of going without clothes he makes one feel that a subject as commonplace as the value of brushing one's teeth daily has been brought up for discussion.

Contact with any civilised people always makes me feel a little ashamed of certain uncivilised practices we so commonly follow in the United States. Once in Mexico I went bathing with some Huichawe Indians. These are a people of high native intelligence. They weave beautiful blankets, continue to sing and recite a folk music and literature of great charm, govern themselves justly, walk erectly and live simply and chastely.

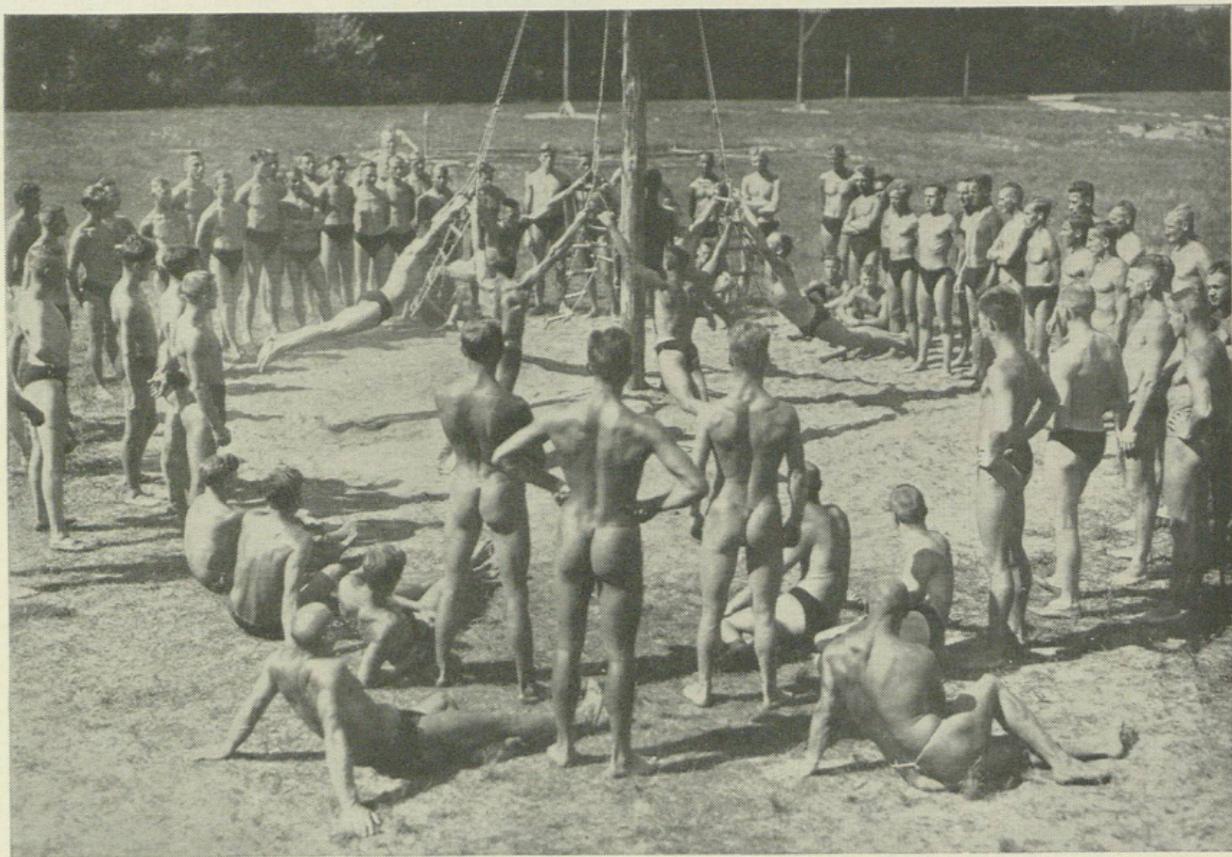
Desiring to swim in the river bordering this Indian village on the morning of my arrival there, I asked whether I might bathe with some of the young men. I knew the river to be full of swift and unfamiliar currents. The women were busy with their household tasks and did not bathe until afternoon. Hot and dusty from travel, I did not want

to wait for them, but went with the young men instead. I put on a bathing suit, hesitating to offend a community with whose ethics I was unfamiliar. One of the young Indians translated into Spanish for me the comments of the others, made in the native dialect which I did not understand. They said, "Why does this white woman bathe in her clothing? How can she become clean when she bathes garmented?" I hesitated to explain that it was from a fear of offending certain standards of modesty that I had put on a bathing suit. Such an explanation would have seemed to them without reason and quite obscene.

I felt the same way in Sweden when I spoke to the people I met there about bathing naked as opposed to bathing in knitted suits. They had the same certainty of the absolute rightness of entering water unclothed as had these Mexican Indians, and even in mentioning any other procedure I was made to feel the same barbarian that the Mexican Indians had thought me.

Going to the south-western coast of Sweden, we had another happy experience of nakedness when we stayed with the weaving woman. She lived in a village near Mölle. Her cottage was at the end of a long white beach which stretched as far as one could see along the Baltic. She had been recommended by a German friend who in earlier years spent delightful holidays as her guest.

Chairs and benches, beds and tables hand-carved by her ancestors were the furnishings of her cottage. This wood had the mellow quality of having been



VIOLENT SPORTS DEMAND SLIGHT PROTECTION, EVEN FOR NUDISTS

worked over and lived with lovingly. The heavy, ponderous pieces crowded the little cottage, but they seemed inseparable from it, as though they had always been there and were as much a part of it as the heavy beams across the ceiling. One room of the cottage contained the great loom where she wove. Here always was a fabric of bright blues and yellows which I watched with the greatest fascination as it neared completion and was replaced by a skeleton of threads upon which would grow another fabric as gay and soft and everlasting as all those that had come before from her deft wrinkled hands.

The second room was the kitchen, bare and clean. At one end was the stove and a painted cupboard, at the other the table and stools where we took our meals. There were two bedrooms, one hers and one ours, both furnished with fat feather beds hidden under coverlets rare and old and beautiful, woven by the great-grandmother of the present weaving woman one hundred and fifty years ago.

We spent only stormy days and evenings in the house of the weaving woman, going the rest of the time to lie on the beach and swim in the surf or scramble over the steep cliffs that rose above the narrow beach. We clambered for days over these cliffs without meeting another person to witness our nakedness. When one day we were discovered by a man and a woman who passed on their way to the village, they were as naked as we, clothed only in shoes, carrying over their arms the garments which they would put on when they entered the village.

This was before the tourist season properly began,

and Mölle may be slightly better known than other small ports to visitors from Central Europe, but certainly it is not far from being a typical village of the Swedish coast, where it is in the natural order of things for a family or a party of friends to undress and enjoy the sun, the salt air and the water in the logical way.

It is the common practice in Sweden for young men, exercising singly or in groups, to discard all of their clothes when occasion permits. The following stories are not in my experience but in that of a friend, Hans, who spent his student days in Sweden. Parties of students comprising both boys and girls went on ski-ing excursions together. When they reached a high, windless valley, they frequently undressed for a sun bath, a rest and a rub down with snow. They separated for this purpose, however, the boys going over a ridge or to some distance from the girls. For their undressing and sun bathing they were segregated, but when the rubbing-down time came handfuls of snow began to fly from one camp to the other. Sometimes this ended by becoming a battle where the participants were in full view of, if not in actual contact with, one another.

Hans adds that it was his custom to make long ski journeys across a two-hundred-mile stretch of barren land in the north of Norway and Sweden. The cold at night and early morning was extreme, necessitating heavy woollen clothes. By ten o'clock in the morning, however, the heat of the sun would permit him to take off one garment and then another

until by high noon he was clothed only in his ski boots, belt and hunting knife, his other garments being strapped to the knapsack on his back. The knife was for defence against the other occasional travellers he encountered—bears or fierce eagles who attacked him if in his climbing he inadvertently approached their nests.

The same man, on coming to America, spent several seasons as a guide in Glacier Park. In order to gratify his own desire for a sun bath in the altitudes rich in ultra-violet rays, he instituted them for the members of his climbing parties. The climbers were roped together. Their safety depended upon the guide, and they followed his directions implicitly. When they reached a plateau where the sun shone brightly and the wind was still the guide said to them provocatively, "How would you like to have the sun on your back for a little and then rub down with snow?" There was usually someone with enough imagination to respond, or the climbers were all too much under the influence of the guide to dare refuse to follow his suggestion. Hans would make a snow-ball and, giving it to one of his companions, say, "Now let this roll down my back very slowly." At his evident enjoyment others joined in, and in the stimulation of the play and the unreal surroundings they forgot to be surprised at their own nakedness. Whether they wanted to or not these young Americans had a violet-ray treatment that benefited them for the next six months, and a semi-public practice of group sun-bathing was instituted. So, to critics who say that nakedness may be all very

well for the Germans but could never be applicable to mixed groups of Americans, this is one reply.

* * *

In Copenhagen we stayed at the Hôtel d'Angleterre, one of the pleasant social centres of that cosmopolitan city. Sitting down in the bar one night, we were invited by some congenial if casual acquaintances to go with them into the country the next day and have coffee with friends of theirs who owned an estate not far from the historic castle Elsinor. We accepted and thought no more about it that evening, simply enjoying the company of these two young men and of the wife of one of them—all three widely travelled, well-educated young people, thoroughly cosmopolitan in tastes and manners.

Next day we drove out through the lovely Danish country north of Copenhagen which is so reminiscent of rural England. The architecture and the storks' nests built on wagon wheels atop every barn are the only reminders that this is not England. After due inspection of the castle, a marvellous lunch at a country inn and a further drive in the afternoon we came to a charming country house where we were received with friendliness and shown the estate with its good horses and blood livestock before we went to have coffee in the garden.

It had grown suddenly very hot. There was a lake at the bottom of the garden. "Let's have a swim," one of our escorts, and a familiar of this house, suggested. "Of course," answered our hostess, and immediately pulled off the bolero of the well-cut

French dress she was wearing. Within a couple of minutes the garden chairs and benches where we had been sitting were occupied only by trousers and shoes and chemises, and the hardy members of the party were plunging into the lake, with those who couldn't at once brave its low temperature dabbling their toes in the edge of the water.

While we were bathing a middle-aged woman servant came out to bring the coffee. Her mistress ran half-way up the garden toward her, dripping as she went, and called out directions to delay the service for a few minutes. The maid brought out towels and we all dried amicably together, without embarrassment. We retired to dressing-rooms in adjacent summer houses to dress. It was apparently a common procedure, this extempore swim before or in the course of afternoon coffee. When we sat down to coffee our hostess introduced her mother-in-law, who had come into the garden with the two children of the household, aged four and six. The children were loud in lamenting that they had not been permitted to bathe. Their father and mother explained that if we had known we were going to swim they might have gone too, but that it was just a last-minute decision and so they weren't invited. They were promised that if they didn't eat too many cakes they might go into the water before the sun went down. Then we turned our attention to the consumption of remarkably good coffee with thick yellow cream, and the originals of those pastries called Danish in America, which are only remote

and poor relations of the ones to be found in the land of their origin.

This may seem an extreme informality to observe with unfamiliar foreign guests, but at the time it did not seem abrupt or untoward in any degree. It was certainly a delightful prelude to a garden party. The place was the home of well-bred and highly respectable Danish citizens. The hostess was a noblewoman and her husband a military officer and landed proprietor. The mother of this man, strict in her observance of domestic as well as social tradition, took no exception to the fact that half a dozen young men and women, including her married son and his wife, had bathed together without clothes. To be sure, the party was one of intimate friends save for the two American visitors, but earlier conversation had indicated our readiness to fall in with so pleasant a custom.

Beril Becker's recent biography of Gauguin includes this anecdote: Between his trips to the South Seas Gauguin went to visit his wife and children in Copenhagen. He was extremely unhappy in the bourgeois household of his wife's family, where he heard nothing but carping and criticism of his lack of material success.

One day when he was walking out beyond the Lange-Linje Pavilion he passed the enclosure for women's bathing, and happened to catch a glimpse of some naked bathers. He looked closer and stood for a long time revelling in the beauty of these bodies which reminded him of his beloved natives in Tahiti. The women, catching sight of him, took his interest



FRENCH NUDISTS ON THE ALGERIAN COAST



GERMAN NUDISTS DO NOT ABANDON THEIR NATIONAL PASSION FOR
MUSIC AND SONG

for other than an artistic one, and he was hounded off the beach as a lecherous Frenchman who was not content to ruin the life of one Danish woman but desirous of corrupting others as well.

Except in instances where they feel that their privacy is being challenged by curious strangers, the Danes are largely indifferent to the proximity of other people, clothed or naked, when they bathe. One of my Danish friends, Elsa, a woman of thirty, tells me that when she was a little girl in Denmark she bathed in the sea in the women's enclosure which was only a few yards distant from the men's bathing place; that although if one looked closely one could see all that occurred on the next beach, one group paid very little attention to the other and her childish morals were in no way corrupted by the occasional sight of her boy playmates swimming naked.

* * *

Alice, my manicurist in New York, is Finnish. Sometimes as we sit in obligatory intimacy across the narrow table she tells me of her childhood in Finland. She was the daughter of a well-to-do farmer. Although her father was not poor she worked in the fields, as did all the daughters of peasants. At the end of a long day in the fields the whole family and the hired men bathed in a lake on the farm. Once each week, even during the hot weather, they had a steam bath. During the winter the steam bath occurred two or three times a week.

In Alice's home, as is common in Finland, the

bath-house was a small building separated from the house. The furnishings of this bath-house consisted chiefly of a fireplace where a hot fire was made to heat the stones. When these were white-hot buckets of water were poured on the stones, causing great clouds of steam to rise in the small building.

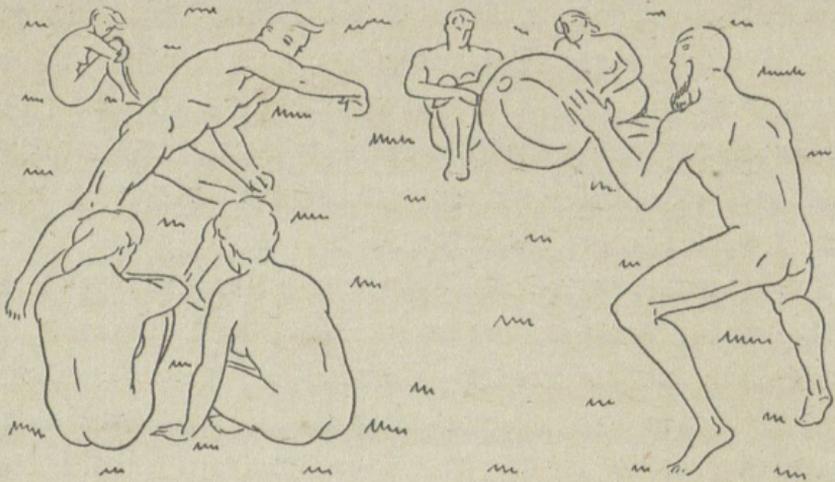
There was a balcony built in this bath-house and to this balcony retired in common and without clothes all the members of the family and intimates of the household such as hired men or visiting relatives. They sat on the balcony with the steam coming up to them opening their pores and causing them to perspire freely. They beat each other's bodies with fans of birch leaves, which left a pleasant odour and a tingling feeling on their flesh. When the steaming process was over they bathed in the cold water of the lake in the summer-time. In autumn and spring when the lake was too cold for swimming they doused each other with buckets of cold water, and in the winter when there was snow on the ground they ran from the steaming bath-house into the yard and rubbed each other down with snow.

As Alice told me this, sitting there in her white dress in the beauty parlour with all its shiny gadgets, she looked around her a little wistfully. To be sure, she enjoyed the elegance of her silk dresses and the glamour of movie palaces, but white-tiled baths have not yet replaced the farm bath-house in her affection and she tells with what pleasure she revisited the old country last summer and again entered into the simple family life of the farm.

She says that the men and women and children

always bathed together with no thought of segregation if they were well known to one another. Only at such times as there were strangers in the house her mother took care of the men first, and after the visitors had finished their baths the young children and the girls took their turn.

The same system in slightly elaborated form prevails in the public baths of the large Finnish and other North European cities. Rooms are supplied with facilities for several persons to take their baths together at the same time. In one such Dutch bath there is a placard urging men and women to make only lawful use of this family bathroom.



CHAPTER FIVE

FRANCE

THE Paris office of the Amis de Vivre in the rue de Logelbach is known to anyone who may be interested to inquire as the headquarters of the French nudist movement. Here are centred the activities of the national organisation, which include the publication of the fortnightly review *Vivre Intégralement* and such books as *La Nudité et la Physiologie Sexuelle*, by Dr. Pierre Vachet; *Nudisme, Pourquoi, Comment?* by Charles-Auguste Bontemps; *Nudisme et la Lumière*, by Dr. Fougerat de Lastours; *Le Naturisme et la Guerre*, by Dr. Marcel Viard, and the sale of pertinent books of other publishers such as Roger Salardenne's *Le nu intégral*, *Un Mois chez les Nudistes*, *Le Culte de la Nudité*, and Louis-Charles Royer's *Au Pays des Hommes Nus*.

Adjacent to this office is a health institute controlled by the brother of the leader of the French nudists. In this gymnasium there are facilities for the urban practice of nakedness not many streets away from the theatres where the naked spectacles of the Folies Bergère attract a very different clientèle.

An incident that attracted a good deal of attention in the French Press a couple of years ago concerned the presence in the Bois de Boulogne of a naked man who accosted women. When he was finally apprehended and brought to trial it was discovered that he was one of the forest guards indulging a penchant for rape. His plea was that he was a nudist who hoped to convert passers-by to the cause of nakedness. This man did what the general public accuses all nudists of doing. His action brought much unfavourable publicity to the more serious French partisans of nakedness.

* * *

On Saturday afternoon it rained—one of those cold, searching Paris rains that bring out all the bad humour in the old stone houses, so that they give out all the germs of all the colds that all their inhabitants have ever had. I sat in the window looking out on the cold grey Seine greedily swallowing the drops that fell upon its surface. It rained as though it would never stop. The damp of the old house, and of the rain, was in my bones. I thought with very little pleasure of my rendezvous next day at the distant colony of the Amis de Vivre.

The telephone rang. It was an invitation to meet

at tea on Sunday afternoon a French writer I had long wanted to know. I hesitated. My last Sunday in France—the only opportunity to see a typical group of Parisian devotees at their week-end gathering—a rare invitation to a witty salon. It rained harder. The wind blew colder. I visualised the long dreary rail and bus journey, the standing about shivering in the rain in a pretence of interest in whatever gymnastics the habitués employed to keep warm. I wavered, but resisted and kept to my original plan of going to Gaillon.

Before one's last Sunday in Paris there is one's last Saturday night, and since I am not one of those complete enthusiasts for physical culture who develop their body at the expense of their sense of humour, I spent the evening diverting myself reasonably with good food and drink and a little dancing.

On Sunday morning, with a sense of duty to be done, I awoke early enough to take the train from St.-Lazare. To my surprise, the rain that had dogged Paris for ten days had ceased. A pale sun was reflected on the houses across the square. It promised to be a passable day. After coffee and croissants on a terrace in the sun my enthusiasm for Gaillon revived a little. On the train, which keeps by that route friendly company with the river, I saw, with something akin to pleasure, the suburbs being left behind and the Norman villages taking their place. The farms and fields were beautiful, newly washed in the morning sun.

Gaillon, eventually, and a primitive auto-bus that

conveyed us part of the way. Then a taxi (I had learned in Germany to walk *back* from nudist parks, not *to* them) of the generation that transported war-time troops, which groaned with earnest purpose as it bounded over the country road.

We drew up, finally, before a double line of red-brick buildings. Dividing the two rows of houses was an avenue of trees. At the far end was a small church. I tried to make it look like the château where I had known the Amis de Vivre to be the year before, but there was a curious, brooding, unhappy look about the place which I could not at first understand.

As I entered the nearest house, the heavy atmosphere was completely dispelled by murals in the manner of *La Vie Parisienne*—a type of decoration that could not conceivably appear in a German nudist headquarters because the Germans are so deadly earnest and rarely laugh at themselves. Here, however, in a series of witty caricatures, Raymond Pallier had set down the popular French conception of a nudist movement—the *Chambre de Députés* in session without clothes; a bride adorned only with a wreath and veil; a gentleman who undressed but retained his top-hat; a little timid man who went without clothes but carried an umbrella; athletic ladies; slightly prudish ones; ladies who retained only their long black stockings.

The paintings continued into the dining-room, where their purpose was, apparently, to make one relax comfortably and pleasantly when he began to eat. The other engaging feature of the dining-room was that luncheon was on the table. Admirable

French! Admirable cooking! They are the only Occidentals who can make a vegetarian diet palatable over an indefinite period. In Germany one is either plied with tasteless vegetables running to starch or loaded to sink with pork sausages. In England the most perfect vegetables are rendered unpalatable by overcooking. In Spain they are drowned in oils; in Scandinavia they are soured in vinegar; in the Near East camouflaged with seasoning. In France they are prepared delicately with herbs or sauces. The excellence of a French vegetarian diet is largely a matter of skilful preparation, because French vegetables are not as good as English or American. The ideal combination would be English vegetables prepared by a French cook. English asparagus and mushrooms and green peas in the hands of a French cook would, I think, convert any non-vegetarian to the true faith. As Roger Salardenne says,¹ "the meals of M. Donzey [at the time of his visit the Sparta Club chef] would convert to vegetarianism the members of *l'Académie des Gastronomes*."

The psychological merit of this French vegetarian dinner was that it not only provided excellent vegetables but imposed no prohibition on meat. I am of that school that never drank in America before prohibition; that falls with glee upon vegetables everywhere except where meat is not available. Sitting at a meal of indifferently cooked vegetables, I long for all the meat that I consistently refuse elsewhere.

¹ Page 39, *Le nu intégral* (Éditions Prima, Paris).

At this particular luncheon there was an ample five-course dinner of vegetables, fruit, cheese. But there was also available a hot roast of meat and a cold one. Of thirty people present, only one party of four or five ate meat. They wanted meat and they ate it. The vegetarians ate vegetables by choice and not of necessity. There was content all round.

On the tables were bottles which in any other French eating-place one would have assumed to contain white wine. It proved to be fruit-juice distilled to the point where it had character but no alcoholic content. It was greatly refreshing.

The first course was an immense salad, seasoned as only French salads seem to be seasoned. Following that came a deep casserole of cauliflower au gratin. Next a ragout of vegetables, tomatoes, something green, something else—I forget what, but it tasted good. Then one of those satisfying plates of cheese, Gruyère, Camembert, Savoie, Brie, from which one was served generously; then grapes. This was in early September, in the season when white grapes are at their best. After that, coffee was optional. Smoking was not forbidden except in the games enclosure. The French nudists had got off to an excellent start, in my opinion.

After luncheon M. Mongeot, whom I had met earlier in the Paris office of the Amis de Vivre, introduced me to several of the members of the Sparta Club and took me to visit the grounds. He explained that these were only temporary quarters. They had been obliged to give up the château which they had had for several years and the new property they

had acquired would not be ready for occupancy until the summer of 1932. Meantime they were utilising this abandoned boys' reformatory. At last I understood the air of gloom which pervaded the place.

We left the building made habitable by murals and friendly human occupancy and walked down the long deserted street, turning in at the door of the big barracks. We followed a long cold stone passage through barred doors that now stood open and emerged finally into a courtyard enclosed by a fifteen-foot wall. This yard, which had served as the exercise ground for the penalised boys, now provided the French nudists with a protected space for their exercises.

There were trees in the yard and simple gymnastic apparatus. A big push-ball and handballs were there, giving evidence of the late use of these grounds for sport, but over the place brooded an atmosphere of frustration and isolation and joylessness which not even the high spirits and enthusiasm of the French nudists could entirely dissipate.

The dressing-rooms were in a large hall of these barracks which had served as the recreation centre and theatre of the reformatory. Above this room were the iron-barred cells where the most criminal of the boys had been kept. After having been taken on a tour of this building I hurriedly undressed and, leaving my clothes on what had been the reformatory stage, I gladly emerged from the cold stone building into the sunlight of the recreation ground.

The long period of rainy weather had discouraged a large number of the members of the Sparta Club



HAYMAKING IN A NUDIST PARK

who had come here throughout the summer in groups of a hundred or two hundred at a time. The gathering on the day of my visit numbered perhaps forty. As a group it did not differ greatly from similar German clubs that I had visited. By profession there were clerks and students, doctors and lawyers and stenographers, two or three working men with their families, and one party of older wealthy people on their first visit to the nudist park (this was the party which had taken meat at luncheon).

The general aspect of this assembly was of whiter, less well-developed bodies than in a similar German gathering. However, this Sunday was, M. Mongeot assured me, not typical of the usual summer weekends. An outstanding figure here was a young German woman, short and round and chubby, burned dark brown by the sun. She was such an enthusiast for "the movement" that she had stayed out here all the summer helping in the kitchen in exchange for her living, preferring the freedom and outdoor life of the nudist park to a remunerative position in Paris to which she was reluctantly returning for the winter.

There was a man with a pointed beard and waxed moustaches picking his way gingerly over the cinders. There was a typical Parisienne who did not entirely discard her make-up with her chic clothes and her extremely high-heeled pumps. There were some lovely children for whom nakedness was not a great departure from the sensibly brief clothes which French children customarily wear. There was a

soldier mutilated in the war who performed extraordinary feats of daring with his remaining arm, swinging himself and his young daughter to what seemed dangerous heights with his precarious hold. But he, as well as a man with only one leg, whom I had known at Freijugendland, and a paralytic at Klingberg, seemed to find much happiness and compensation for the handicap of their physical disabilities in going naked and participating in such sports as they could.

My companion on this outing in Normandy was a woman who had reached France only the day before, after a stormy voyage from America. Nudist practice was new to her and, although she had no objection to association with naked people, she did not want to take off her own clothes on this first day both from the novelty of the procedure and because she had caught cold on board ship. An hour or so after luncheon, however, when I joined in a game of medicine ball with a number of the French people, she decided to play too. As she warmed up in the game she discarded first her jacket, then her sweater, and only the lengthening afternoon shadows and the oncoming coolness prevented her participation in the entire nakedness of the assembly.

Desiring to walk through this pleasant Norman countryside, of which I had caught only a hurried glimpse in our jostling taxi ride, I bade good-bye to the friendly members of the Sparta Club and left this ancient reformatory which now housed a so much more wholesome reform, to walk back to Gaillon.

It was a walk of several kilometres through pleasant rolling country of wooded hills and carefully tended farmlands. The Norman farms, with house and out-buildings in walled enclosures, seem like tiny feudal cities barring intruders. Although the Amis de Vivre are not ostentatious and proceed with a good deal of discretion, it is improbable that the present use to which the old reformatory is being put is unknown to the residents of that section and, while the activities of the Sparta Club may not be wholly approved, at least they meet with no open antagonism.

* * *

My other excursion from Paris pertinent to this inquiry was to the island at Villennes, where the Doctors Durville have established a health centre not only for exercise and sun bathing but for the encouragement of simple living and vegetarian diet. From the standpoint of nakedness this centre would satisfy all those critics who say, "I don't see why a pair of trunks, with a brassiere for women, won't give you just as much benefit of the sun and at the same time keep you from making quite such a spectacle of yourself." For the inhabitants of this island do not go entirely naked.

The men wear trunks. The women wear shorts and a brassiere or a fancy chemise or cretonne rompers or an old evening dress cut short or assorted undergarments or pyjamas or bathing suits or any costume whatever that expresses their individual taste in sun-bathing attire and keeps within the limits of

coverage imposed by the rules of the island. This variety in costume presents to the casual visitor, particularly the visitor accustomed to groups of naked persons, a ridiculous and unsympathetic spectacle. Without being too harsh one can call this island a pseudo-naked French Coney Island. While I am wholly in sympathy with the fundamental idea of a *Naturisme*—with exercise and sun bathing and simple living—the project as it is being worked out at Villennes is an extremely vulgarised adaptation of the ideal.

On the holiday afternoon of my visit to Villennes there was present a great crowd of half-dressed people picnicking and jostling one another quite in the manner of midsummer Sunday afternoons at a crowded New York beach. There were the same vulgarity and bad manners and surreptitious flirting, and the unattractive spectacle of half-clad people lolling around on the ground—ininitely more nauseating and sexually suggestive than anything I saw in large gatherings of entirely naked people, no matter how unattractive physically some of the participants were. I suppose that if people can best learn to take off their clothes by spending an apprenticeship in this half-dressed stage they must do it. It is a great deal better than not taking off any clothes at all; particularly for men who need wear only a pair of shorts (although this is their privilege at most of the French bathing beaches) Villennes with its sports and bathing offers a pleasant Sunday holiday, but the women in their various stages of undress and sun-bathing *déshabille* that is

more often than not accompanied by cosmetics, leave much to be desired.

* * *

Elsewhere in France the nudist movement has spread to a considerable extent. The *Naturistes de Provence*, a branch of the national organisation of the *Amis de Vivre*, have at Marseilles a group which is sanctioned by the City Council to the extent that it provides them with an island for their recreation ground. This island is an old quarantine station near the Château d'If, sacred to the Count of Monte Cristo. Access to it is by boat from the Vieux Port. Each week-end finds a large group of French people from various walks of life gathered here for sun bathing and games on their isolated rocky island and for swimming in the adjacent inlet of the sea. I have not visited this island and my information comes through M. Mongeot and *Vivre*, but a couple of years ago when I spent several weeks at Cassis sur Mer, a village twenty kilometres to the east of Marseilles, I had experience of swimming in the *calanques*—deep crevices in the coastal cliffs where an arm of the sea reaches in like the fjords of Norway. Whereas our bathing naked there had the spice of apprehension lest we be discovered, the *Naturistes de Provence* may in comparative safety enjoy their own private *calanque*.

Also at Nice and at Toulon there are formal organisations of nudists associated with the national French movement, but all along the Riviera the private practice of nakedness is extremely common

and so readily possible that clubs are not as necessary as elsewhere to obtain the privilege of nakedness, although they serve no doubt an admirable social purpose. Other centres within France are at Lyons, at Bordeaux and in Alsace.

M. Roger Salardenne, to whose *Le nu intégral* I owe this information, reports that the nudist organisation in Bordeaux is a particularly pleasant one, made up for the most part of intellectuals as opposed to the large working-men's groups in Germany; that it contains a nude nursery for young children; that bachelors are refused admittance to this organisation; and particularly that the spontaneous gaiety of the Midi is not lost when its citizens become nudists—that there is much more fun and conscious laughter there than in the north of France or in Germany.

Other centres affiliated with the national French organisation are at Algiers and Casablanca, the north of Africa seeming to be a particularly happy climate for the practice of nakedness. There are growing centres at Rochefort, Royan, Dijon, Montelimar, Toulouse, Nantes, Saint-Etienne, Beauvais, Belfort, Deauville, Lille, Villiers-sur-Marne, Nîmes, [Nancy, Dunkerque, Colmar, Rouen, Perpignan.

In Belgium there are nudist centres at Brussels, Liège, Ostende, Heyst, Courtrai, Deynze, Termonde, Alost, Lierre. The international affiliations of the French federation extend to Greece, to Saigon in Indo-China, to Guadeloupe, and to Holland. A stolid young man whom I accompanied on a tire-



ON THE BEACH

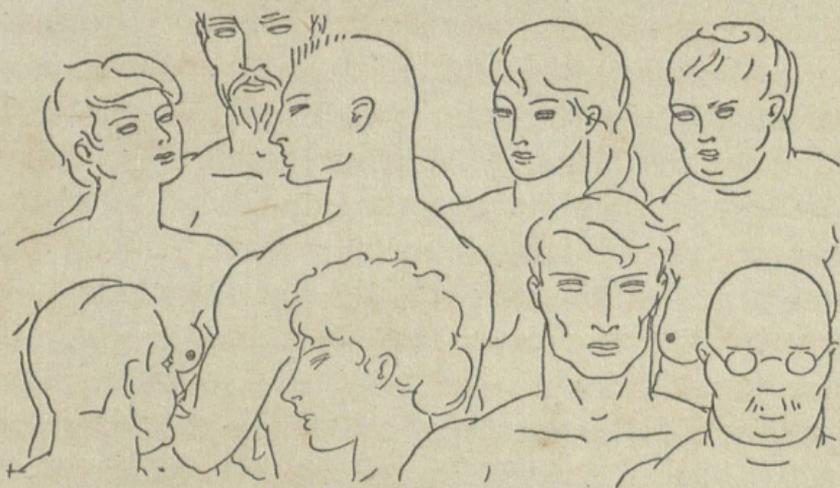
some search for one of the German camps was a member of the society in Amsterdam.

While the movement in France does not compare in number of adherents to that in Germany, it has gained the participation of several hundred people and the moral support of several thousand. Nakedness is not as alien to the Latin temperament as the Nordics or the Latins themselves suppose. Both the journalists M. Louis-Charles Royer and M. Roger Salardenne report that on their first visits to nudist colonies they expected to feel, and experienced to a slight degree, the feelings which the Folies Bergère and similar spectacles of undress are commonly supposed to induce in men, but that after a brief association with a society of naked people they were able to be quite casual toward the nude women whom they saw. M. Salardenne writes that he was somewhat disturbed at the sight of women undressing but that his excitement subsided when the women were totally naked. He advocates, therefore, separate dressing-rooms for men and women as in France rather than the communal dressing-rooms which are found in most German nudist camps. I wholly agree with him in this suggestion, although I should carry it if possible to the further extent of providing completely separate dressing-rooms if possible, because the aspect of most men and women in semi-undress is rarely an enticing one.

There has been some attempt to repress the French movement. The periodical *Vivre Intégralement* is not permitted to be publicly displayed on the news stalls (a government concession) although it may

be sold there and in privately owned bookshops both displayed and sold. Endorsement of the nudist movement has come from such diverse quarters as M. Edouard Herriot, Mayor of Lyons, outstanding physicians, scientists and clergymen. Many of them take an attitude similar to that of Dr. Robert Sorel, who urges adherents not to exaggerate the values of nakedness or to complicate its practice with vegetarianism, strict anti-tobacco and anti-alcoholism, or other fads. He says in effect, that it is an admirable and salutary practice of itself and advises against making the task of converting people to nakedness more difficult by combining it in the first instance with comparatively unrelated ideas. Several endorsements come from representatives of the clergy, such as M. Henri Huchet, who cites biblical justification for nakedness and calls the Song of Songs a hymn to the glory of nakedness and love.

One definitely superior attitude on the part of French nudists, to my way of thinking, is their unhindered joy and gaiety when they are naked. I noted this even in the austere surroundings of the Sparta Club composed of Northern Frenchmen, and I greatly regret that I did not visit the South, where the compatriots of Tartarin de Tarascon seem to uphold his tradition even in their nudist centres.



CHAPTER SIX

OTHER COUNTRIES

THE status of nakedness varies as much from one country to another as from one period to another, depending in large measure upon the political, religious and aesthetic standards of the moment.

The international practice of nakedness in the twentieth century is, generally speaking, as follows :

Various savage tribes in Africa, Australia and other outlying sections who have lived without clothes as long as their history records are, through the misfortune of their contact with white men, acquiring the habit of clothes when opportunity permits. There is, particularly among the more primitive, no definite standard of just what constitutes clothes. Almost anything that a white man has discarded serves to dress a man, whether it be a top-hat, a pair

of trousers, ladies' underwear, or only a monocle. The native feels that he is "dressed" as long as he has on any one of those objects or garments with which the white man adorns his person.

Generally speaking, as the black man learns to wear clothes the white men of a few of the civilised countries are learning to discard them on given occasions and in certain circumstances.

In Soviet Russia nakedness is permissible much as are promiscuous sexual relations, the state concerning itself less with the private lives of its citizens than with their political beliefs. If a woman is a good worker and an ardent supporter of the government she is permitted by law to go and expose her body to the public as she bathes in the Moscow River and to take as many lovers as she likes, although there is no necessary relationship between the two.

The commentary on the prevalence of naked bathing in Russia which probably reached the largest American public was Will Rogers's article in *The Saturday Evening Post* entitled "There's not a Bathing Suit in Russia." This as well as a dozen other stories written by various visitors recounted the common practice of bathing, exercising and picnicking without clothes on the banks of the Moscow River. While the sun-bathing enclosures of the workers' rest-houses are strictly segregated, here in the open the groups overlap to a certain extent. Girls watch the young men compete in athletics. Men pass the women's enclosure, which is separated from their own only by a low board fence. In

the family enclosure both sexes of all ages mingle quite freely.

Here again the practice of nakedness is encouraged as much from the desire to equalise socially all the citizens of the Soviet Republic as from any motive of health or recreation. In its beginnings the nudist group made large public demonstrations in the business section of Moscow such as the French are always anticipating in Paris, but a little judicious argument persuaded the nudists that a more suitable environment for their activity lay in the suburbs, and they have, since their first propagandist impulse, abandoned their naked parades through the central streets of the city.

In Russia nakedness is not a conscious group movement. Here it is only one phase of a tremendous all-embracing economic, political and social programme. There are no nudist organisations or clubs or periodicals, as such. One of the provisions of the working-men's rest-camps is for segregated sun-bathing enclosures for men and women. One of the precepts of the national nursery schools is the value of nakedness to the health of children. Furthermore, the Russians have always liked to take advantage of seasonable weather to bathe without clothes. The resorts on the Black Sea, where once the aristocracy disported themselves, now cater for the working men, who no more than their titled predecessors wear clothes for swimming.

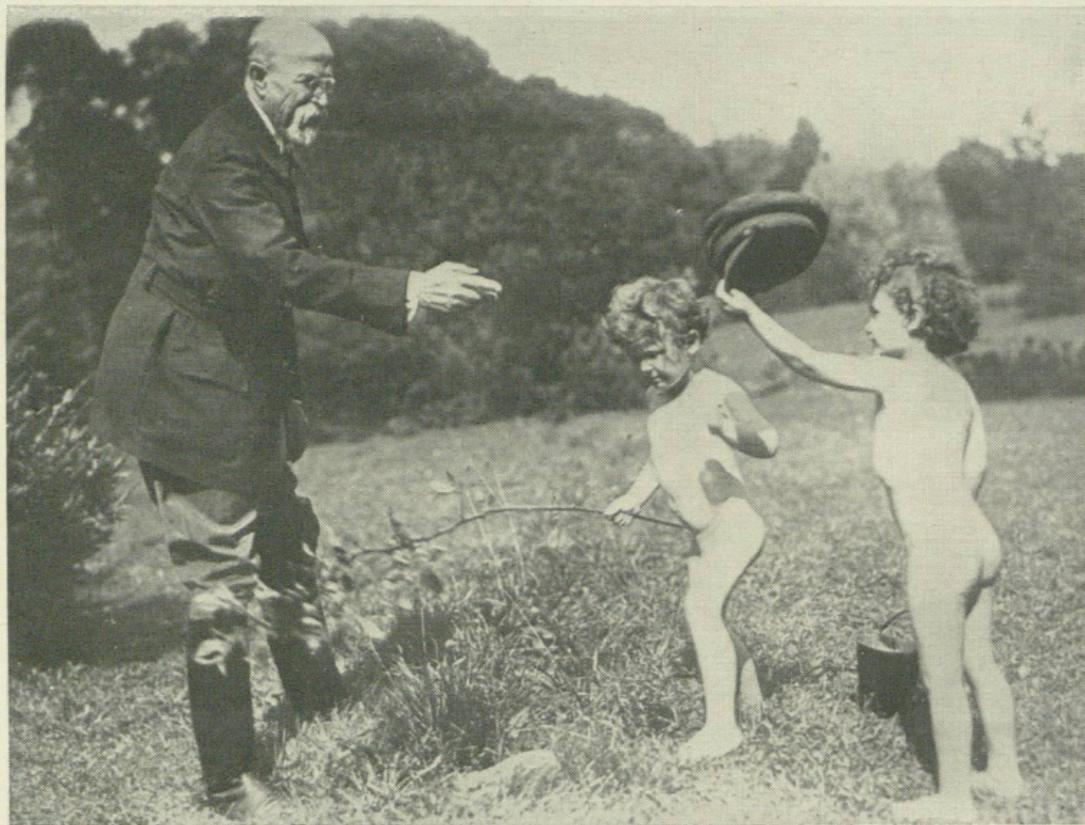
The organised nudist movement has spread beyond Germany into Czechoslovakia, Austria, Holland, Belgium, Greece, Spain, England, and

Switzerland. The number of adherents in these countries is comparatively limited. The activities of these nudist groups are much the same as those of the German ones already described; that is to say, they have city headquarters where they meet and do gymnastic exercises during the week, and a country park or camping ground where they go at the weekend and where they centre their summer activities.

Organised nudism is not, however, the most typical form of nakedness elsewhere than in Germany. In most of Central Europe there exists the liberty to bathe without clothing, and that practice is commonly followed. Particularly is there a widespread belief in the value of sun bathing for children. No more noteworthy example of this attitude can be cited than that of President Masaryk of Czechoslovakia, who not only believes in the value of sunlight and nakedness for the young members of his family but does so to such an extent that he permits the circulation of the photograph of himself and his two grandchildren which appears in this volume. Certainly no one can accuse President Masaryk of being a faddist, a nudist fanatic, an exhibitionist or any other of the opprobrious names which are commonly applied to nudists. On the contrary, he exemplifies the happiest sort of protagonist for nakedness, in that the casual undressing of the children of his family is a normal occurrence in a busy and many-sided life.

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Of Spain I have been able to learn only that there



PRESIDENT MASARYK OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA WITH HIS TWO GRANDCHILDREN

exists in Barcelona an active nudist club. Inasmuch as Barcelona is the headquarters of the proletarian political group, it seems logical that this nudist organisation should function in much the same spirit as the German proletarian clubs—that here one of the chief motives of nakedness should be the abolition of social classes. Many fine manifestations of this proletarian activity in Barcelona exist and are given far too little Press notice in comparison to publicity attendant upon the fracas and bloodshed which occasionally occur in the Catalonian-Castilian argument. One of them is the revival of folk music and the formation of large orchestras and choruses headed by Pablo Casals, the well-known 'cellist.

In the widespread reform of social customs following upon the establishment of the Republic in Spain, dress reform may have an important place. Too long have the women gone veiled. Too long have the prejudices of Catholicism dominated the country. While it is improbable that the nudist movement as such will gain much headway in Spain, tolerance of nakedness and simplified dress may well be a concomitant of the current political and social reformation within the country.

Casual nakedness also has its place in the Spanish scene. Most of the bathing resorts require only trunks for men, and it is not an uncommon sight to see parties of naked bathers in the remoter parts of even such popular beaches as Santander, Malaga and the coast towns of the Balearic Islands.

As in Spain, so in Greece the listed nudist club is in the city most dominated by proletarian thought and activity. Piraeus, now a thriving port connected by underground railway with Athens, is in almost every respect a modern commercial city. Much precedent attaches to nakedness in Greece—that nakedness which was not barbaric, not spontaneous or elemental in its beginnings, but the result of long consideration and weighty decision on the part of the Greek philosophers. Certainly if any nation might practise nakedness with impunity it is the Greek, and one waits with interest to see whether this is purely a sporadic growth or the birth of a new Greek civilisation.

Greece has always been the setting to which searchers for a political and an aesthetic Utopia have turned, rarely with results which justified the high hopes of the idealists. Here came Isadora Duncan to re-create the dance upon a lofty barren hilltop. Here within late years have been celebrated some of the ancient Greek pageants with accompanying simplicity of dress. It is unlikely that the Greek nation, as such, will turn to complete nakedness—but any reform that can reinstate the Acropolis as something approaching the cultural centre it once was instead of the tourist resort it now is, where photographers in badly cut pinchbeck suits cajole ladies from Dubuque into having snapshots of themselves made in front of the Porch of the Maidens, will be a commendable one.

The spread of the nudist movement in England has been gradual and more generally tolerated than in America. The reaction of the average English man or woman to *Nacktkultur* is prompted half by his instinctive conservatism and half by his flair for sport.

Scandal current in the circles of British high society occasionally has to do with the fact that a party of naked men and women were known to dance on So-and-So's lawn or to bathe in his garden pool. "Rags" at the universities frequently take the form of nocturnal forays in which the participants wear no clothes.

So to the educated citizen of the British Isles going without one's clothes is a joke rather than a serious misdemeanour. To the British workman, however, it is far more of an offence. In one of his novels Rhys Davies tells the notable story of the miner who went to deliver a message at the house of the foreman and, to his great astonishment, was greeted at the door by the foreman's wife completely naked. Her embarrassment was less great than that of her husband's employee. When she had received the message she said, with perfect aplomb, "I hope you will excuse me. I thought it was my husband."

When the miner went home he told his wife of the condition in which he had been received by the wife of the foreman. They were both shocked at first, but the longer the miner thought about it the nicer he thought it would be to have his own wife waiting for him without clothes. Timidly he suggested it to her. This lower-class woman was horrified by the

suggestion and considered it completely immoral. However, she greatly desired a new player-piano which her husband had considered an extravagance and refused to purchase for her. They finally compromised by his agreement to purchase the piano if occasionally she would follow the example of his superior's wife and undress so that he might admire her shapely body.

The nudist movement in England, then, has had no spread among lower-class people at all comparable to its popularity with working men in Germany. In Great Britain it is still more or less a fad, a movement like occultism, which attracts only idealists and a limited number of athletes.

The climate of the island may have a good deal to do with the fact that sun bathing, as such, has not got on to a great extent there. At least, that is the experience recounted by visitors to the single nudist resort that existed in England in 1931. Members of this colony sat in vain through all June and most of July waiting for the sun to shine. They were rewarded with heavy mists, damp fogs and torrents of rain which made only the briefest exercise possible for the people who were not hardened by previous practice elsewhere.

Visitors from England come in greater numbers to the nudist parks in Germany than people from any other country of Europe. Many of these are students who add the nudist centres to the other points of a summer's pilgrimage and spend their days bathing in the sun and their nights listening to German music. Another prominent class is the British

spinster, aged anywhere from twenty-five to fifty. This is the type of woman one meets in all the cheap pensions and hotels on the Riviera. She has usually a small private income, no definite profession and a great need to interest herself in something.

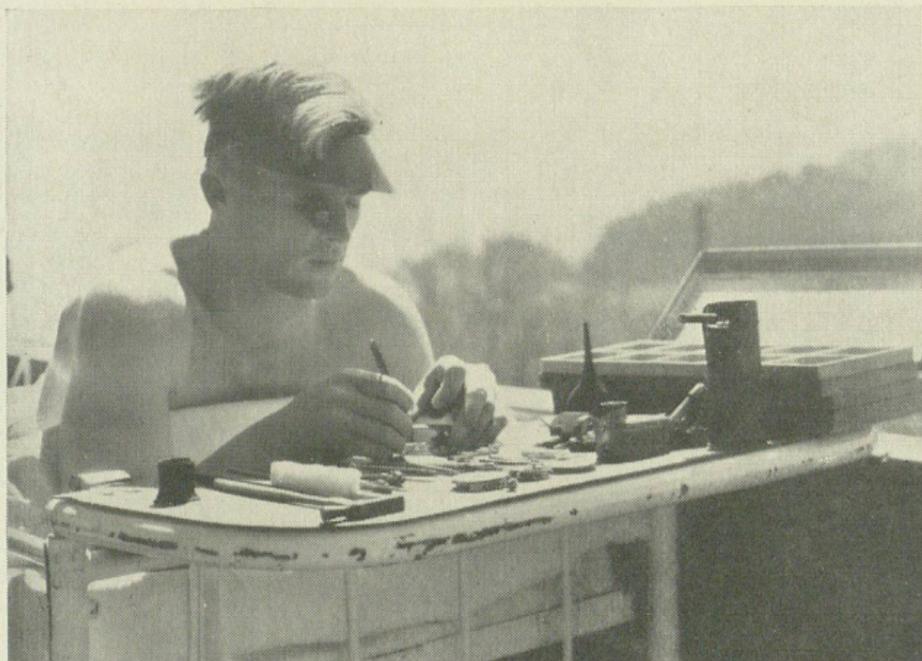
One such woman was among the guests at Klingberg last summer. Miss G. was a little unattractive woman with a face that was perpetually shiny. The only place in which she looked well was in the rain, when beads of moisture clinging to her tweeds matched the drops of dampness that were always rolling down her face. This woman had an indefatigable desire to make herself liked, and to this end she insisted upon participating in every sport, in all of which she was monotonously unskilled. She joined in every conversation and in her limited German always agreed with the last speaker, no matter how opposed his opinions were to the man who had spoken before.

When she was asked how she had happened to embrace the cult of nakedness, which she said she practised in her own backyard or on the island of Corsica or wherever she happened to be spending her holidays, she said: "For several years my chief interest was gardening. Then I grew tired of that and became a spiritualist. When I had interviewed all the spirits I could think of I needed something else to interest me. Someone introduced me at the — Club, outside London, where enlightened men and women go for sun bathing and exercise without clothes. It appealed to me very much. I always support ardently anything in which I believe. I had

the best delphiniums in the county when I was interested in gardening. I made contact with more spirits than anyone else in our occult society when I was a spiritualist. Now I have visited more nudist centres in Germany than any of my countrywomen. I believe in doing thoroughly anything that I do." And with this, Miss G. would take her flaccid body off to another group and repeat her declaration of fervour for the cause.

The introduction of nakedness into the social life of any country is difficult and sure to be accompanied by considerable adverse criticism. A woman from London went with her husband to occupy a Gloucestershire cottage in the summer of 1929. The backyard of the cottage was comparatively private. Only by straining on their toes could her neighbours on either side see over the garden wall. However, rumours soon became rife thereabouts that the woman from London carefully oiled her body every sunny morning and lay in the hammock or upon the ground to acquire a coat of tan.

When the following summer I occupied the same cottage with another American woman our English neighbours said, "I suppose there is more sun bathing going on in the backyard of Bearley Cottage." Because we had not wished to arouse such adverse criticism, we did not take our sun baths in the backyard but on the crests of neighbouring Cotswold hills, and surprisingly enough we were never discovered. It happened one day, however, that we had gone from our village to Broadway on foot and had been caught on the way home in the pouring rain.



A PATIENT AT THE INTERNATIONAL FACTORY CLINIC OF DR. ROLLIER'S INSTITUTE, LEYSIN, SWITZERLAND, AT HIS TRADE



TWO WOMEN

By the time we reached the cottage we were thoroughly wet. The rain was coming down in torrents. No one was to be seen in the streets of the village or in the adjacent houses. We took a chance and ran out naked into the backyard to enjoy the pelting rain on our bare bodies. Since no report of the escapade came back by way of our servant or acquaintances, apparently we were not discovered.

The attitude of the citizens of this English village toward the woman from London who took her sun bath in the yard of her cottage was summed up by the village bee-keeper and philosopher, who said conclusively, "Oh, her's a bit simple."

It has been noted that one of the finest manifestations of the value and utility of the nudist practice in Germany is in the great group of unemployed men who, instead of haunting the streets of the great cities, go in clement weather to these parks where they live in tents or huts and spend their days in outdoor work and exercise and reading, reducing their needs to the simple requisite of one meal a day and thus enduring, even if they are not permanently bettering, the situation in which the unemployment crises have put them.

In London there is no such practical solution being made for the equally widespread poverty and lack of employment for working men. The London slums are crowded with colourless men in drab clothes, slinking from pub to dismal flat and back again to the pub as often as their dole permits. The English dole to the unemployed working man is sufficient only for the barest existence in the city slum or

suburb, but it would maintain a man and his family in simple comfort in either a rural cottage or such a hut or tent as the unemployed German worker seems content to occupy. There may be excellent reasons (prominent among them the climate) why the unemployed English working man does not seek this solution which the German in similar circumstances has found to be a fairly good one. However, the slums of Limehouse and Chelsea and Camden Town, where the lower-middle class workmen have their dwelling, indicate that a return of these citizens to the country for even part of the time, whether clothed or unclothed, would do something for their unhealthy pallor, their grey, drab, sordid, empty lives.

Clothing in England is in no wise so simplified as it is on the Continent. This is true not only of sports clothes for women but for men as well. At Oxford, for example, one may not go boating on the Cher clad only in a bathing suit. It is an unwritten rule, but one to which the occupants of every passing punt call one's attention. Two American visitors who were canoeing in this traditional Paradise one Sunday afternoon, learned before they had gone round more than a bend or two of the stream that they were unconsciously defying a deep-rooted tradition.

Even the day nurseries for small children in England are coming only reluctantly to the practice which is common in similar centres for the care of children on the Continent and in America, namely, to treat infirm children and encourage the growth

of healthy ones by exposing their bodies to sun and air. Doubtless for too many generations little Londoners have had to have mufflers wrapped round their throats to keep out the nasty fog, to permit the nurses in charge of this generation to run the risk of exposing them to the rare sunlight that does penetrate the city. To be sure, English medical science has not been backward in its findings of the value of sun, but change comes only slowly in England and the cult of the sun is embraced no more rapidly than any other innovation.

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In Italy the Fascist programme does not include or encourage the practice of nakedness, although nakedness is widely practised by Italians and foreigners resident in Italy.

* * *

In the Orient the nude body is not a matter of aesthetic or artistic concern. In the highest periods of Oriental art it has been considered inartistic and for that reason rarely appears in paintings, prints or sculpture. Human figures as a rule are shown in highly decorative costumes. In China during the bound-foot period the acme of intimacy was reached not when a bridegroom saw his wife unclothed but when he was permitted to see and to caress her tiny foot.

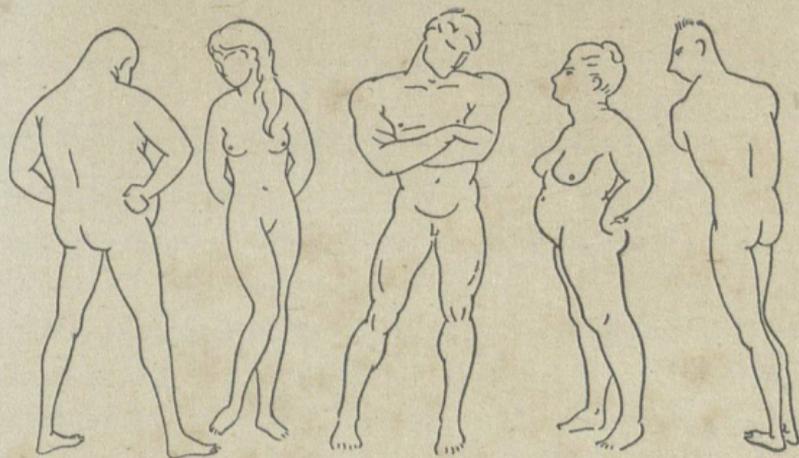
In contrast to this, the practice of the poor people in both China and Japan has been to bathe naked together in the rivers and in the sea. This custom is

less widespread now than it once was. In Japan there is segregated naked bathing in the public bath-houses and to a lesser extent common family nakedness at baths in the home. Since a large tub of hot water is achieved in Japan only after a considerable investment in time, charcoal and man-power, there is no such luxury as a separate tubful of water for each member of the family even in fairly well-to-do households. The custom is for each person to soap and scrub himself thoroughly at a basin. When he is quite clean he enters the tub of water and in it takes a very hot rinsing bath. It is a disgrace to enter the tub with any particle of dirt or soapsuds clinging to one, and when he gets out of the water the well-bred Japanese leaves it theoretically as clean as it was when he entered it.

In the public baths men and women are segregated but large numbers of each sex bathe together. Here the procedure is similar. There is a large tank or pool of very hot water. Before a patron enters the pool he or she scrubs thoroughly in order not to taint the water. When he is clean he bathes amicably with his fellows. Sometimes in the summer a family too poor to have a bathroom in the house heats the water and sets up a tub in the backyard. Here their bath has no great privacy, but is strictly a turn-taking procedure and not a communal bath like, for example, the Finnish family bath.



WOMEN'S SUN-BATHING ENCLOSURE, MOSCOW PARK OF CULTURE AND REST



CHAPTER SEVEN

PERSONALITIES OF NUDISTS

A PENCHANT for nakedness is frequently found in the most unlikely places. Nudist adherents are limited to no class, colour, creed or profession. Five years ago Dr. Parmelee listed the following professions among nudists of his acquaintance :

Actor	Barber	Commercial Traveller
Architect	Bookseller	Electrician
Army officer	Chemist	Engineer
Author	Clergyman	Factory worker
Banker	Clerk	Furrier

Anyone acquainted with nudists or a nudist organisation will be able to equal if not amplify this list of the varying walks of life from which nudists are recruited. Outstanding among the nudists whom I

have met are a charwoman, an ex-general, some girls from a shoe factory and a lawyer's clerk, whose stories follow.

* * *

Mathilde was between forty and fifty, a scrawny woman with sagging breasts and a distorted abdomen. Certainly she was not beautiful, nor could any amount of sun tan on her body lend to her the quality of youth that she had lost in a hard and difficult life. So Mathilde could not be accused of coming to the nudist park, taking off her clothes and appearing naked before men for any reasons of coquetry.

Why did she come? What could this ugly, tired, faded woman get out of spending the day undressed in the country with a hundred other naked men and women little more beautiful than she?

"Why do I come here?" said Mathilde. "I'll tell you why. All the week I wear those drab old clothes. Ten hours every night, from eight to six, I scrub out an office building in the business district of Hamburg. Then I go home and sleep for four or five hours; then I get up and cook for my old man and keep my house in order. What do I get out of life all the week? All night I scrub, in the morning I sleep, in the afternoon I cook and clean my house. My old man goes to the beer-garden in the evening and sees his cronies there, but do I have time for friendship and paying visits and talking to people all the week? No, I haven't time for anything like that. But I come out here on Sunday. I take off my clothes. I

lift up my arms and throw my head back. I feel the wind blow and I feel the sun beat down on me. Sure, I'm old and I'm ugly when I am naked, but I feel the sun just the same. I like the feeling of it. I wish I was young again and could learn how to swim and dance and play like these young girls do; but, since I'm not young, since I can't do that, I do what I can. I come and sit all day in the sun and I forget that I am Mathilde, who scrubs ten hours every night six nights in the week."

When Mathilde was asked how she happened to start coming to the nudist park on her Sundays in the summer and going to the nudist centre one evening a week in the winter she made this explanation. "One of the men whose offices I scrub out stayed late to work one night in the summer, and when I went in to wash the floors, what do you think I saw?—this man sitting there stark naked at his desk! And did he jump up and put on his clothes when he saw I had come in to scrub? No, he did not. He just sat there and went on with his work. So I tried not to pay any attention either. I scrubbed the floors, and just as I was going to leave he said to me, 'Why do you keep on those long trailing skirts while you are washing the floors? It would be much better if you just wore a short petticoat or even nothing at all. You would not get so wet and draggled when you are down on your knees.' I thought he was making a joke, so I went out and did not say anything; but I thought about it and the next time I had to wring out my long skirts that were all wet I thought, 'There is something in what he says. I think I will strip down

to my flannel petticoat to-morrow night when I do the scrubbing.' I did that and it was much easier to get my work done. About a month later I saw him in his office again at night. He noticed that I was in my petticoat and he said, 'Why, Mathilde! I see you followed my advice. I will give you some more. Join one of the *Körperkultur* groups and spend your Sundays out in the country without any clothes on. It will make you feel better.'

"That was how I began," said Mathilde, "and why I keep it up I have already told you. In the week I am only Mathilde the scrub-woman, but out here on Sunday, without any clothes on, I'm as good as anybody, and when strangers like you come I show them around the Gelände and tell them all I can about the Movement. It's helped me. I think it will help everybody."

* . * *

The General lives in the memory of the people who knew him at Klingberg as the man with the sun hat. This one article of apparel was extremely conspicuous in a colony where almost everyone wore nothing at all.

The General was a tall, erect man of sixty. His head was bald. He wore waxed military moustaches. He had preposterously square shoulders, thin arms and legs and a large belly. His was the typical figure that appears in German military caricatures, but robbed of the uniform and the row of medals on the breast the General's figure was even funnier. He was a man whose conversation was interesting,

however, and he was glad to read the English books we could lend him, so he became a more or less frequent visitor to our cabin in the woods.

When asked why he had embraced *Nacktkultur* after a long and full military career he said, "I am not happy unless I am ordering something, organising some group of people. It seems that there are only naked men left to organise in Germany. It is the only thing they will believe in. They are no longer interested in the defence of their country. Young men no longer want to train as soldiers. They want only to develop their bodies. That is why they come to these nudist camps. I am accustomed to being with young men. I like to watch them grow and develop. Since the young men prefer to do this without clothes in these days, then I must go where they go and I too must go without clothes. It is the same to me whether I have on a uniform or whether I have on nothing."

The General did not belie his statement by his behaviour. For example, one day he came to my cabin to return a book that he had borrowed. When I came to the door he swept off his sun hat, clicked his bare heels together and made a low and profound bow in the best military manner, in no wise conscious that this formal procedure was considerably out of place in an informal community, nor that the clicking of heels became military boots better than unshod feet on a floor of pine needles.

* * *

Susie had a mysterious secret. Every Wednesday

night she disappeared alone and did not walk home from the factory with the other girls who lived in her neighbourhood. "Susie," they teased her, "you have a lover and every Wednesday night you go to meet him." Susie would not say what she did every Wednesday night. She would have liked to make a confidante of one of her fellow workers, but she did not dare, so she went alone to join her brother Karl and go with him to the gymnasium where, with a group of three dozen young men and four or five other women, they held a gymnastic class and none of them wore any clothes.

Karl had asked his sister to join this class because he knew she liked athletics in almost any form. When he first told her, Susie had been reluctant, but when she went the first time and looked on, she said, "The next time I'll take off my clothes too. I think it's right that one should run and sweat without any clothes on."

Susie's mysterious disappearances every Wednesday evening puzzled all of her comrades. Finally, when she was tired of being teased about an admirer who did not exist, she told not one of her friends but all of them at once. "I go every Wednesday night and play handball and dance without any clothes on."

Her challenge was greeted with cries of "oh" and "ah" and "you don't mean it" and "I don't believe it" and "Susie, that is immoral. You wouldn't do a thing like that." Susie, however, insisted that that was what she did on Wednesday nights. She said, "If you don't believe it, come and see." So on the next Wednesday half a dozen of the more curious



SIGRUN

went along to see Susie at her immoral practices in the gymnasium.

The six girls sat in the balcony of the gymnasium and watched with a measure of horrified surprise Susie and the few other women running and jumping and playing ball and dancing with the young men. At first the girls were shocked, but before the evening was over three of them decided that it must be a great deal of fun and good for them, too, after long hours over the machines in the shoe factory.

So, from Susie's daring there grew a large class of forty girls from the factory. There were enough of them to have a class of their own apart from the young men. This arrangement was made not out of any moral scruple in bringing the young men and women together for a class, but because the young men preferred to play handball and basketball while the young women preferred the rhythmic exercises and the dancing class. They met in the swimming pool, however, after the gymnasium classes, and there was great splashing and prank-playing in the water as well as a good deal of competition to see who could learn to make the cleanest dives and swim the greatest distances.

Susie, as the pioneer and the champion of this group of her fellow workers at the factory, told me this about her loyalty to the cause of *Nacktkultur*. "Every night I just went home from the factory and ate my dinner and helped my mother wash up and sometimes walked up and down the streets of the suburb with some of the girls. When my brother Karl first told me about the gymnasium where you do not

wear any clothes I thought he was crazy, but I went once and saw two other women there and ever since then I have gone and taken off my clothes and liked it. When I told the other girls in the factory I did not know whether any of them would come or not, but I was tired of their teasing me. When they decided to come too, I was glad and now from the B—— shoe factory we have the best class in the whole gymnasium, forty girls. All of them can swim and do the exercises and they like it. Four of us have been promoted to be forewomen in the factory, and I think it's because we can work better when we know how to play.”

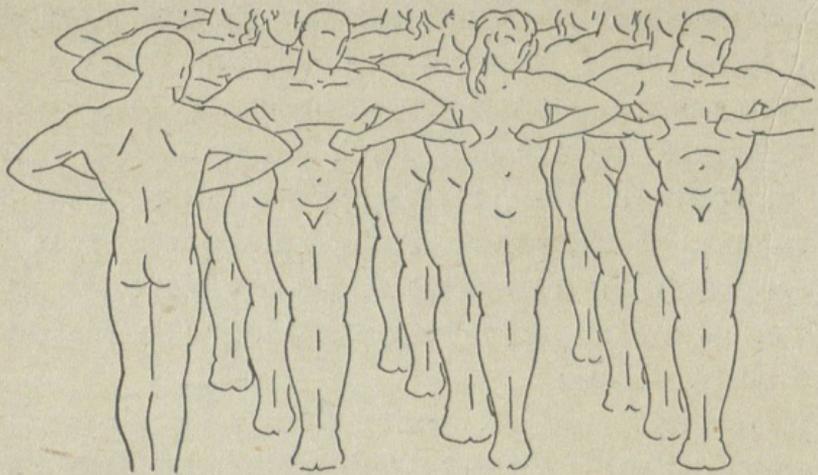
* * *

Simon was a typical young German professional man. All of the hopes of his father and mother had been centred upon the professional success of their elder son and at some sacrifice they had sent him to a law school. Now he was established as clerk to a lawyer in his native town not far from Berlin. He was dry and humourless and pedantic. He was considered a good catch in his town because he would eventually succeed to a partnership in the law firm. He was jealous of his reputation as an upstanding young man in his community.

How did Simon get into this colony of naked men and women? This is the explanation that he gave. “Although I was the best scholar in my class in the law school, I was never popular with the boys. My chest was narrow and my shoulders were hunched and I wasn't any good at the games because my

parents wanted so much for me to graduate with high honours. I kept at my studies until I was through school. Then I was apprenticed to a lawyer. All this time I hadn't had much fun and nobody liked me very much. One of my fellow students drew a caricature of me and all he put down was my tortoise-shell rimmed glasses and my big teeth. So I decided that I would be something else besides a good lawyer's clerk.

"In Berlin I once saw some of the magazines of the *freimenschen* and *Körperkulturbunde*. I bought them and read them secretly at home. Then I learned that not far from my town was a park for the nudists, so I went one Sunday hoping that no one from my town would be there to see me. I found there two young men who had been with me at school, but here they did not laugh at me. At school they had said, 'Old hump-shouldered Simon is never any good at sports,' but here they said, 'That's right, Simon. Throw your shoulders back and play the games and try to get a good coat of tan.' So I found that while they had despised me because I was not any good at sports with my clothes on, when they saw that I had a body that wasn't well-developed or healthy they tried to help me. As I grew strong and brown and able to play the games better, their cordiality increased, so that now these boys who used to torment me at school are my two best friends."



CHAPTER EIGHT

NUDIST ORGANISATIONS AND LITERATURE

PRECEDING the actual nudist movement, three other large group activities paved the way for it. These were the *Schönheitsbewegung*, the *Jugendbewegung* and the *Naturheilbewegung*; that is to say, the beauty movement, the youth and the natural-healing movement. *Freikörperkultur*, or *Nacktkultur*, growing out of these, has become more important than any of them except the youth movement, which still includes nakedness on given occasions as part of its varied activity.

The formation of these large societies practising nakedness, however, was definitely a result of the medical findings as to the value of sunlight. For more than a hundred years medical opinion has been

agreed that heliotherapy has great value in the treatment of disease.

In 1815 Cauvin, in France, advocated the sun cure for "all asthenic maladies." In 1835 Rosenbaum advised sun baths for rickets and scrofula. In 1855 Arnold Rikli opened a sanatorium for sun bathing at Vildes in the Oberkranz.

In 1876 the physicians Downes and Blunt demonstrated the effect of violet light upon bacteria. Finsen cured the tubercle bacilli in cases of lupus with violet light. In St. Moritz in 1902 Dr. O. Bernhard successfully used light in surgical diseases. Some of the most highly successful experiments in the treatment of surgical tuberculosis by Alpine sunlight have been those made by Dr. Rollier at Leysin, Switzerland. His practice is noteworthy in that he encourages his patients to carry on the normal activities of their lives while they are taking their sun treatments. Naked children go on with their studies in an outdoor school. Naked artisans carry on their trades as they lie in the sun.

In England Sir Henry Gauvain also treats surgical tuberculosis with violet light. In 1919 Huldshinsky demonstrated that rickets can be cured by sunlight and artificial ultra-violet rays.

These are only the outstanding examples of the use of sunlight in the treatment of disease. Innumerable instances might be quoted from all countries. It is sufficient here to say that the justification for nakedness from the standpoint of health was amply verified before social or group nakedness developed to the extent of the formation of the large nudist

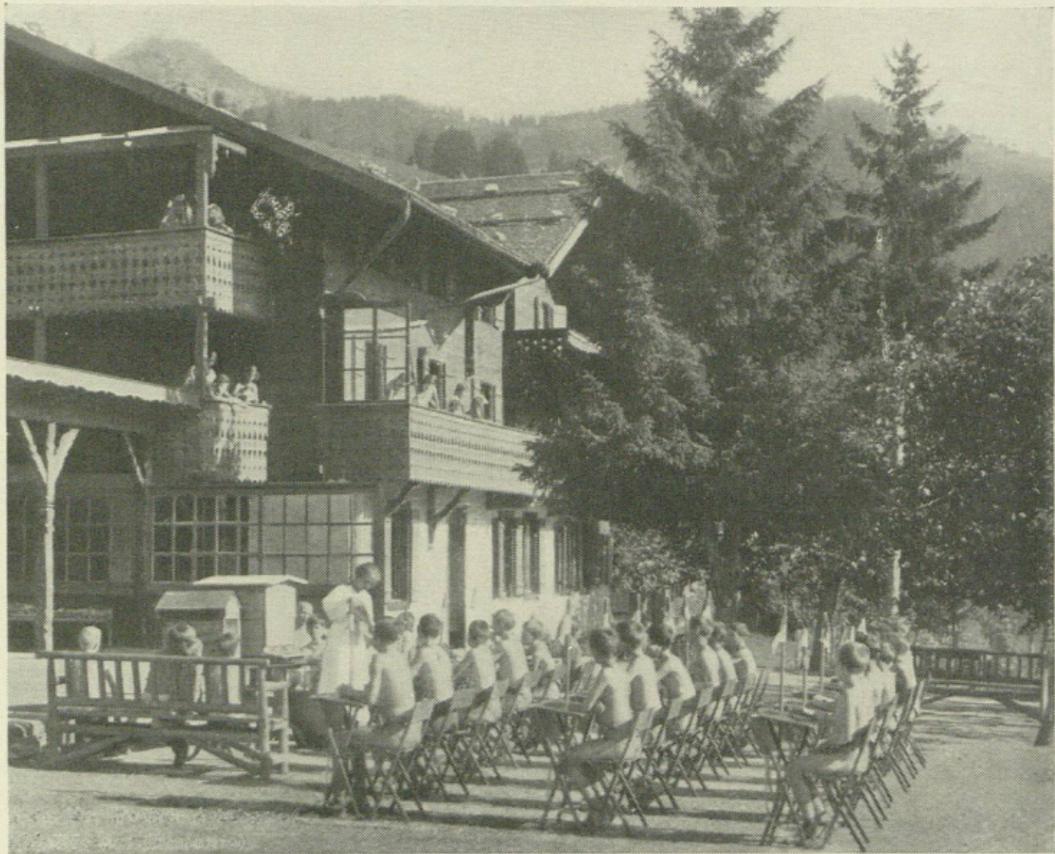
societies in Germany which now number more than a million people.

The German organisations are national in scope, with international subsidiaries. There is appended to this book a directory of the nudist clubs and headquarters throughout Germany and France and a few in other countries. There may be certain inaccuracies in this list, inasmuch as from one summer to the next groups expand and change addresses. However, it will serve as a guide to any visitor who desires to get into touch with nudist organisations abroad.

The visitor to Germany or France may supplement this list by the purchase of the current nudist periodicals; in France, *Vivre Intégralement*, and in Germany any one of a number. The outstanding German nudist periodicals are *Lichtland* and *Lachendes Leben*, published by Robert Laurer at Egestorf, near Hamburg; *Das Freibad*, which now includes *Lichtland*, from which the appended German directory is taken, published in Berlin; *Die Schönheit* and *Figaro*, magazines devoted more to the picturisation than the theory of nakedness; and a dozen or more magazines devoted to the special activities of one club, such as the publications of the *Adolf Koch Körperkulturschule*.

* * *

Nudist organisations in the United States are still embryonic. The New York League for Free Physical Culture, comprising a membership of 200, started by and still largely composed of German-Americans,



DR. ROLLIER'S SUN SCHOOL

is the chief one in that country. An equally large group exists in Chicago and there are throughout the country several smaller groups as reported by Mason and Frances Merrill in *Nudism Comes to America*. There are even two small magazines, *The Nudist* and *The Olympian*, which purport to be the spokesmen of nudism in America, but they are not officially acknowledged or approved by the nudist organisations.

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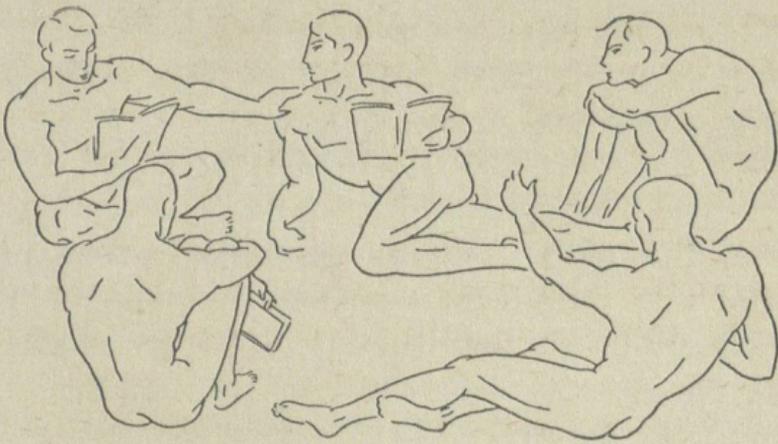
The literature of nakedness is vast; that of nudism is limited in English to Hans Suren's *Man and Sunlight*, a translation from a German disquisition by a prominent gymnastic instructor and published in England; Maurice Parmelee's *Nudism in Modern Life* (published earlier in England under a different title), a book of which the obvious merits are obscured beneath a wordy preoccupation with "osophies" and "isms"; Frances and Mason Merrill's *Among the Nudists*, which played the important rôle of being the pioneer book on this subject published in America¹; their later volume, *Nudism Comes to America*, which includes a consensus of American scientific opinion concerning nudism; and a short dramatic satire by Tom Cushing, *Barely Proper*, which for all its levity and brevity is the most cogent statement in English of the case for nudism versus clothes.

The French literature on the subject includes such exaggerated journalism as Louis-Charles Royer's

¹ Published in England by Noel Douglas.

Au pays des Hommes nus; the more authentic *Le Culte de la Nudité*, *Un mois chez les Nudistes*, and *Le nu intégral*; H. Nadel's *La Nudité et La Morale* and *La Nudité et la Santé*, publications of the French nudist organisation which argue that nakedness is conducive to both morals and health; Dr. E. R. Fougerat de David de Lastours's *L'Homme et la Lumière*, which emphasises the healthful aspect of nakedness, etc.

The German literature on nudism varies from thoroughly scientific to sentimental and propagandistic brochures on the value of nakedness.



CHAPTER NINE

IMPLICATIONS OF NAKEDNESS

To children. To adolescents. To people of twenty.
To people of thirty. To people of fifty.

In this epoch of preoccupation with grave political and economic problems of international consequence, certain critics will aver that there are far more important concerns for thinking people than a "fad" for going naked. However, in the simplification, the communalisation that will undoubtedly occur when the present social system makes way for a new, nakedness can, with its concomitants of health and well-being, play a significant part. The adjustment made by unemployed men in German nudist camps is worthy of wider imitation. Through going naked, living in tents or huts, eating simply, working or playing or resting out of doors all day, they are actually able to maintain their health and morale

while other unemployed men and their families are starving or living in the utmost poverty and hopelessness in crowded urban quarters.

* * *

One of the most frequent questions asked of a traveller returning from a visit to the nudist centres in Germany is whether there is not a great deal of sexual promiscuity between the men and women naked in the country. There was in my experience very little such promiscuity, since the elements of mystery and curiosity and longing are largely dispelled when a man and woman see each other constantly naked. There was one instance, which may well find place here, of a man who brought his mistress to a nudist park for a month's holiday.

The man was a dentist in a South German city. He was fairly prosperous for the difficult year of 1931 and drove north to Holstein in a high-powered touring car. He brought with him a young lady, nominally his assistant. They occupied separate cabins. His was in the forest and hers a quarter of a mile away beside the lake. He was a conservative man with a wife and two or three children in Bavaria, but momentarily enamoured of the voluptuous young woman who was his companion. Doubtless he was attracted to the nudist park by the belief that where there is nakedness there is license.

The girl was rather vain of her body. Although neither she nor her escort had visited a nudist park, they lost no time in becoming accredited members of the community. They had scarcely got out of the

automobile when they went for a swim in the lake and then set out on a tour of exploration through the forest.

No one tried to stop their rendezvous, although it was commonly known throughout the colony that the dentist visited his assistant every night in her cabin.

They had not been there many days before the atmosphere of the place penetrated to them and they spent less time alone together in the woods. The man joined the other men who spent two or three hours a day clearing brush from the forest. The girl entered on the activities of the women. Their excursions were less and less often alone and more frequently shared with the other guests in the park.

Had their early meetings not been conducted with considerable discretion they would have been requested to leave. When they realised that of half a hundred people resident in the Freilichtpark they were the only ones who were carrying on a conventional intrigue, they became a little ashamed and left off their sophisticated courtship for the more natural and harmonious life of the community in which they were staying.

So, as other instances have indicated that the association of men and women without clothes is not conducive to sexual abandon, this anecdote implies that nakedness not only keeps the chaste as virtuous as they otherwise would be but sometimes makes the unchaste more continent.

* * *

One of the most important uses that either family or group practice of nakedness can have is the education of children. When I was a little girl I was afraid to look at myself and I didn't know what anybody else looked like. For years I was curious and troubled about the simple aspect of human anatomy.

German children whom I met last summer and watched as they played together have no such perplexing curiosities. From their earliest babyhood they have been accustomed to their own nakedness, to that of their parents and brothers and sisters and to mingling from time to time with large groups of naked people ranging from children of their own age to people half a century older than they.

To these children human bodies are phenomena no more spectacular than trees. Some of them are young and lovely and strong and pliant. Some are gnarled and old and broken and bulging. However that may be, the child who is brought up to go naked with naked people is spared years of sexual uncertainty and physical curiosity.

From the standpoint of the child, then, not only his body gains a definite advantage of health but he is spared a number of mental and emotional adjustments which would otherwise use up a good deal of his adolescent energy. Also, the child derives a certain benefit from group nakedness which the adult may or may not secure. Whereas even in America enlightened adults are introducing nakedness into their family life and rearing their children in familiarity with the appearance of their parents, the prevalence of small families in this generation



LIGUE GYMNIQUE, NICE



NAKED CHILDREN

tends to limit the child's experience to one adult male, one adult female, and his own juvenile self. If the child has a single companion of his own age sexual curiosity is more likely to manifest itself, whereas if he has numerous companions play and the group spirit tend to make his personal relations and observations more casual. Hence the establishment in America of a few nursery schools and summer camps for children where nakedness is a definite part of the curriculum is a step toward the emancipation of the American child from prurient curiosities. The similar experiment in Germany at Glüsingen, where Dr. Fränzel has for several years maintained successfully a children's school of this nature, is one which will commend itself to educators who are interested in helping the child of this century to adjust himself to the peculiar problems which the century presents.

* * *

Granted, then, that a personal and a visual experience of nakedness is beneficial to young children, many people feel that as the boy or girl enters adolescence he will need the shield of clothes to cover the embarrassment and the new problems which puberty presents. For example, a young girl, extremely conscious of her first experience of menstruation, can hide this fact in a clothed society while in a nudist camp or even in a nude family group the necessity of wearing trunks for a few days at a time emphasises her condition. Or a young boy whose first evidences of sexual maturity are a con-

siderable phenomenon to him would in the opinion of many critics of nakedness be in a particularly embarrassing position if this occurred when he was a member of a naked society.

These taboos, these prejudices, are definitely those of a clothed society. All boys are, in these early years of adolescence, usually far more interested in the society of other boys and in sports than in mingling with women and girls. Out of a given twenty-four hours in a nudist camp a boy probably associates closely with women only at mealtime or in group athletic activities. The rest of the time he is much more likely to be found at a game of ball or Indians or the building of a hut with other boys than hanging around the girls, so that the likelihood of the occasional physical crises of a young boy occurring in the presence of women is not great.

The problem of the girl is not much more difficult. Particularly in climates other than the tropics there are usually some members of even a small group who take cold easily and need to wear for part of the day at least a bathing suit or other garment. Also there are women in the group who during their menstrual periods will have to wear trunks for a few days. So even a young and sensitive girl does not find her problem a unique or insuperable one.

Against these two handicaps of nakedness for the adolescent boy and girl are the tremendous factors in its favour: (1) un-selfconsciousness before the other sex; (2) knowledge which leads to casual indifference to the physical differences between male and female bodies; (3) social freedom which bridges naturally

the gap between being playmates and becoming sweethearts.

* * *

One of the arguments which earnest German nudists often repeat is that many happy marriages have resulted from acquaintanceships formed among their members. They say with pride, "Look at Hans and Elsa. Aren't they a fine young couple? For five years they have been members of our league. During those years Hans observed all the young women of our group. He considered them carefully, watched them work, watched them play. He decided upon Elsa. Elsa too had her choice of the young men. She liked Hans best. Each knew what the other looked like; each knew what the other could do; each knew the social and the physical qualifications which the other would bring to marriage. For a year they were engaged. Now they have been married for six months. Are they not a fine young couple? Soon we hope they will have a baby to bring up as a nudist, too. He should be a fine strong child, coming of such parents as Hans and Elsa."

On the other hand, Scandinavians with their casual nakedness introduce at this stage modesty and reluctance on the part of the maidens to be seen by their admirers and future husbands. Whereas Eric and Greta as children may have played together naked when their families went to the seaside, and as adolescents seen each other occasionally without clothes as Greta swam out from the women's bathing enclosure while Eric came out from the men's, when

they grow up to their college days and go on a ski-ing holiday together Greta carefully keeps with the other girls when she undresses for her sun bath in the snow, and Eric is glad she does because now that he is almost ready to marry her he does not want the other boys to see all the charms of his fiancée. In his own mind he thinks of the body of this girl he is going to marry in terms which greatly exaggerate the graces of that Greta with whom he built sand castles when they played together naked on the beach as children.

* * *

It does not do to confuse in the minds of people not yet entirely convinced of the value of common nakedness for men and women the ideas of visual and sexual experience of naked members of the opposite sex. As in the case of Hans and Elsa, their German fellow nudists believed that this marriage was a particularly fortunate one because Hans and Elsa had both seen many members of the other sex and had with this broad visual experience chosen one another.

In *Utopia* Thomas More recounted a similar custom. "In choosing their wives they use a method that would appear to us very absurd and ridiculous, but it is constantly observed among them, and is accounted perfectly consistent with wisdom. Before marriage some grave matron presents the bride naked, whether she is a virgin or a widow, to the bridegroom; and after that some grave man presents the bridegroom naked to the bride. We indeed both

laughed at this and condemned it as very indecent. But they, on the other hand, wondered at the folly of the men of all other nations, who, if they are to buy a horse of a small value, are so cautious that they will see every part of him."

The average South Sea Islander carries this experimentation beyond the visual to the actual stage of sexual contact with a number of members of the opposite sex before he chooses which one he will marry. In his comparative study of civilised and primitive marriage,¹ Robert Dean Frisbie writes:

"A Puka-Pukan seldom marries his first love—or his second, third, or twentieth, for that matter; but when he does marry it is almost invariably successful. Unfaithful husbands and wives are such a rarity here that one may as well say that they do not exist. The reason is evident: there is no grab-bag luck. Before marriage they know one another intimately, know dozens of others intimately; there is no mystery to be unveiled; they settle down in married life satisfied, through actual experience, that they have the mate who is best suited to them."

Although it is unlikely and not wholly desirable that premarital experience should reach this stage in civilised countries, certainly it would save a lot of the disillusion and disappointment of marriage. It would take away the premium on possession of any naked woman if a young man might, before he chose the woman to share his life, have a somewhat

¹ "The Sex Taboo at Puka-Puka," *Harper's Magazine*, December 1930.

broader experience of a number of naked women. When simple nakedness is not at such a premium the criteria of nakedness will be more explicit.

* * *

Even the sternest critics of nakedness will grant its benefits to children, at least to sick children, and progressively the more liberal-minded will grant its merits for adolescents and for people in their twenties.

The aesthetic question preoccupies a great many intelligent dissenters who argue, "Of course, let any beautiful man or woman or child go without his clothes, but don't offend my senses by the spectacle of an ugly old man or woman with a flabby, distorted body." There is no refuting the implication that the majority of adults are not physically beautiful. From the standpoint of the aesthete, however, it is possible to adapt one's eye to naked bodies without garniture of clothes which at best are only makeshift to hide unsightliness. To the experienced nudist or mingler with nudists even the most grotesque naked body improves with the stimulus to posture and the pigmentation which sun and wind and nakedness out of doors induce.

There is the further incitement to appear at one's best in a society whose respect one desires. Hence, as is argued in all nudist propaganda, the ugliest and oldest and most round-shouldered and pastiest of us straighten our shoulders and hold in our paunches and lose a degree or two of our pallor after a brief excursion into nakedness.

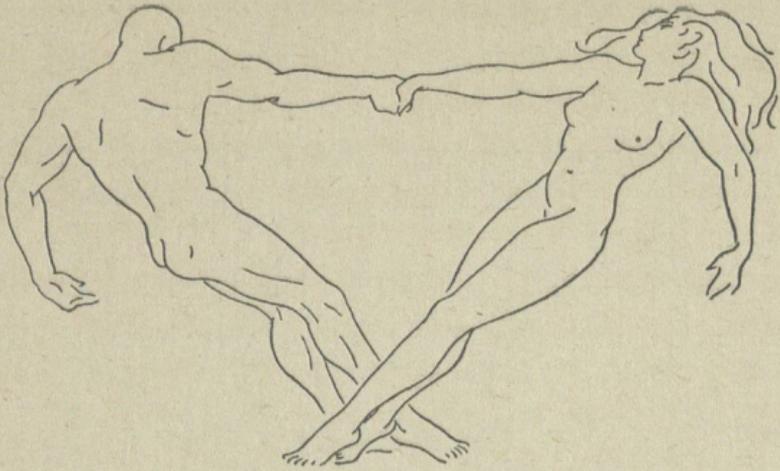
Just as the older man who has concentrated upon

business until he has amassed a fortune has, when he goes to spend it, difficulty in learning how to play, or the woman who has lived a life devoted to domestic detail cannot easily turn to other interests when her children grow up and no longer have need of her, so the man and woman, who in middle life appear in undress for the first time either from motives of health or emancipation from social taboos to which they have long adhered but in which they do not actually believe, frequently need a good deal of adjustment to the idea that it is good and pleasant to go naked.

Mr. and Mrs. North of Orange County, New York State, who have lived long, honourable and hard-working lives as farmers and the progenitors of a family which includes two prominent young professional people, now go to Florida every winter and to their secret pleasure take part in community dances. Their dancing would, if it were known, subject them to the ridicule of their children and the horrified disapproval of their neighbours in Orange County, but they take the greatest pleasure in their staid waltzes and slow one-steps in the Orlando Community House, and at 68 and 70 respectively are getting a great deal of fun out of a social activity in which they were too busy and too intimidated by public opinion to indulge while they were younger.

So it is with many people and nakedness. There are men who all their lives have passionately desired to take off stiff collars and wear sports shirts, but because of the exigencies of their professional life

have never dared to do so. Simple country life and its further expansion—life among practising nudists—permit these chafed necks the freedom for which they have been crying for many years. The lawyer's clerk, the charwoman, the ex-general, of my German friends; the ex-minister, the antique dealer, the caterer, among my American friends—these six who had the courage first to go naked, when they were not over 30, but over 50, are now enjoying in their holidays a freedom of which they were for half a century deprived. Among all the nudists whom I have met there are none more ardent, more desirous than they of making the most of the time that remains to them. They are loud in lamenting the years they spent in bustles and padded shoulders when they might have been, if not naked, at least less clothed.



CHAPTER TEN

FUTURE OF NAKEDNESS

It is difficult to prophesy the future of nakedness. In this era of swift change the whole world is likely to be so thoroughly naked ten years from now that a chronicle such as this indicating that there was once an odium attached to nakedness will reflect a state of public opinion as obsolete as that of the Inquisition.

However, if we cannot anticipate quite so drastic a reversal of current opinion and practice, we may at least look forward to a greater tolerance towards nakedness as well as a more widespread participation in it, particularly in the United States.

America is a country which has formed few of its own opinions, largely borrowing from the mother countries of Europe its standards, its laws, its

criteria. For a long time the United States was like a little girl dressed up in its mother's petticoats. They dragged and were too big and too long for her. Although they gave her a sense of being quite a grown-up lady, she was more ridiculous in them than she knew.

Puritanism with its false modesty and unwholesome shame of the body, legal statutes, particularly as they pertain to the exposure of the human body,¹

¹ The Common Law and typical State laws are as follows:

"At Common Law an indecent exposure of the person is an intentional (that is, not accidental) exhibition, to more than one person, of the naked human body, or of the parts thereof which are commonly considered private."

American and English Encyclopedia of Law.

New York: "A person who wilfully and lewdly exposes his person, or the private parts thereof, in any public place, or in any place where others are present, or procures another so to expose himself, is guilty of a misdemeanour."

Texas: "Whoever shall go into or near any public place or into or near any private house and shall . . . expose his person. . . ."

West Virginia: "If any person shall, in the presence of a constable and in his county . . . improperly or indecently expose his person . . . such constable may, without warrant or other process, or further proof, arrest such offending person and take him before some justice of the county, who, upon hearing the testimony of such constable and other witnesses, if any are there and then produced, if, in his opinion the offence charged be proved, shall require the offender to give bond or recognisance, with surety, to keep the peace and be of good behaviour for a term not exceeding one year."

Arkansas: "Every person who shall appear in public places naked, or partly so, with the intention of making a public exhibition of his nudity—"

California: "Every person who wilfully or lewdly either:

did not originate in America, but were borrowed from the sterner, older, more bitter experience of England.

America is a young, spontaneous, modern, healthy, experimental country. If any nation among those called civilised could inaugurate a national programme for the health and happiness and economic well-being of its citizens it should be the United States of America. Certainly any such plan for the betterment of the race or the nation made either by nudists whose one unshakable belief is that the world will be saved through nakedness, or by com-

(1) Exposes his person or the private parts thereof in any public place where there are present other persons to be offended or annoyed thereby; or (2) Procures, counsels, or assists any person so to expose himself or to take part in any model-artist exhibition, or to make any other indecent exposure of himself to public view or to the view of any number of persons such as is offensive to decency or is adapted to excite to vicious or lewd thoughts or acts; is guilty of a misdemeanour."

Canada: "Everyone is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to three years' imprisonment who, while nude, (a) is found in any public place whether alone or in company with one or more persons who are parading or have assembled with intent to parade or have paraded in such public place while nude, or (b) is found in any public place whether alone or in company with one or more other persons, or (c) is found without lawful excuse upon any private property not his own, whether alone or in company with other persons, or (d) appears upon his own property so as to be exposed to public view, whether alone or in company with other persons. For the purpose of this subsection anyone shall be deemed to be nude who is so scantily clad as to offend against public decency or order."

munists or socialists in whose programmes nakedness plays a secondary rôle (as in Soviet Russia and the *freimenschen* organisations in Germany), would accord greater freedom to the human body of contact with sun and air.

Whereas it is unlikely that the present congress will note the general freedom of every American citizen to go naked when and where he chooses, or that that national body will take any measures whatsoever on behalf of nakedness, it is possible that the State, or at least the municipal governing bodies, will be called upon to take some definite stand to ameliorate the present bad odour attaching to nakedness in this country.

A recent indication of this was given early in 1932 when Mayor Cermak of Chicago (a Czechoslovakian by birth, holding apparently the same wholesome attitude toward health and nakedness as his distinguished countryman President Masaryk) attempted to convert a small section of the long expanse of municipal beach in Chicago into segregated sun-bathing enclosures for men and women.

From their impregnable platform of upright morals and civic virtue the Board of Aldermen of Chicago rejected Mayor Cermak's proposal as an outrage to the reputation of their city. So Chicago nudists will not be able to bathe with their own sex this summer sanctioned by the city fathers, but must continue to hide away in the dunes, as has been their custom, both by families and by groups numbering two or three hundred, in other years.

A few municipalities in the United States have



MEN'S SUN-BATHING ENCLOSURE, ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA

established segregated sun-bathing areas. Among these is St. Petersburg, Florida. A photograph taken in the men's enclosure there appears in this book. It indicates that at least a start has been made in the right direction, for of two-score men present when the photograph was taken fully a dozen are naked. The others were more timorous, retaining some garment or other, and one man felt that he could best cope with the sun's rays clad in a suit of long underwear. However, America is learning to take off her clothes even though the process be gradual.

America is not without a large number of sanatoria where heliotherapy is practised in the cure of disease. In the Adirondacks, and particularly in the Rocky Mountains, the climate is favourable to sun cures comparable to those made in the better known Alpine institutions such as Dr. Rollier's sanatorium at Leysin, Switzerland.

Holiday hotels also in America are catering more and more for the "sun craze" of their clients and providing roofs or enclosures for segregated sun bathing. There are few provisions made for naked bathing in the water and practically none for mixed bathing either in the sun or water save those clandestinely made by nudists.

In appending to this book a directory of nudist addresses I should have liked to include several for America. The only one which I have permission to list is that of Camp Olympus, Highland, New York.

Informal or casual nakedness is, however, being more and more widely practised in America. For example, Jones Beach, the splendid new playground opened up to residents of New York, who no longer need, if they can bear the slightly greater cost of transportation, to huddle in crowds at Coney Island, is commonly frequented by people who like to bathe without clothes. Usually a party of three or more appoints one of its number to keep watch while the others lie on the sand or bathe in the sea and, if hostile strangers or the beach police approach, they all slip hurriedly into clothes. If, as is more likely, in the remoter stretches of the beach, the passers-by are another party of people come to the less accessible shore for the same purpose of bathing without clothes, the two groups greet each other in friendly fashion and go on about their several activities without molestation.

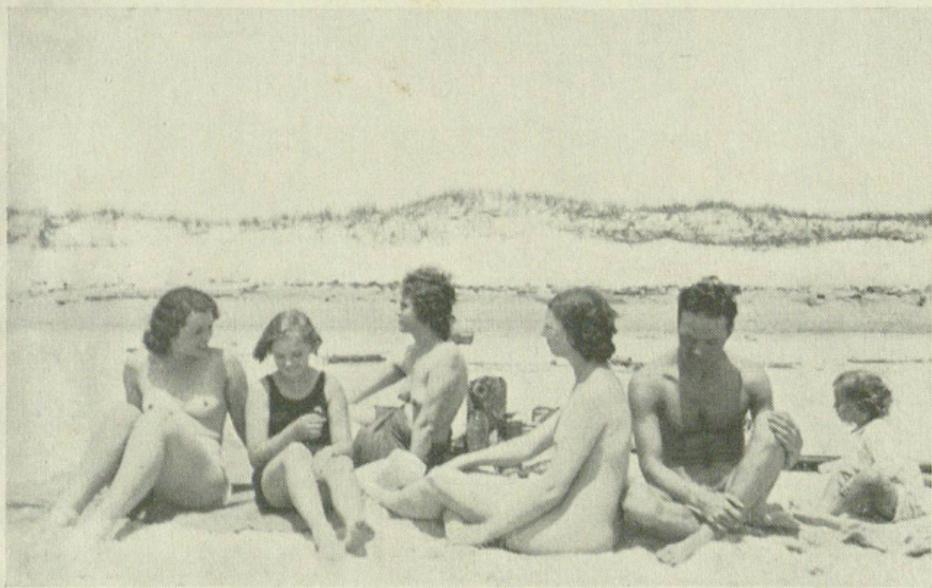
The same practice holds good among private bathing parties in California, all up and down the Western Coast, in the dunes of Indiana and on the shores of the Great Lakes. In fact almost everywhere in the United States where people bathe in summer there are a few individuals or small groups who, if there is any opportunity at all, bathe naked and more and more commonly prolong their naked swim by a sun bath.

* * *

Since the early chapters of this narrative concern my adventures in private and public nakedness, it may be well to add by way of conclusion that



JONES BEACH



JONES BEACH

following the summer of 1931 during which in France and Germany and Scandinavia I participated in nakedness as it is practised in those countries, I did not entirely relinquish my interest in nudist groups but occasionally attended the meetings of the local American League for Physical Culture. Besides the activities of this larger heterogeneous group which were carried on for a time in bathing suits (following the raid upon their meeting in December 1931) and later in an ill-ventilated basement gymnasium I enjoyed a weekly gathering of a small dancing class which had its origin in my studio.

Various friends who had been regaled with anecdotes of the German nudist centres desired to take part in some kind of nudist activity. Enlisting the aid of one young man who taught dancing and another who played the piano we held in the big studio of our apartment a naked dancing class. When we first started the dancing class only women were invited to participate; in the first place because they have fewer opportunities than men to exercise without clothes, in the second, because most of them were timid about being naked with a group of men until they grew accustomed to the idea; and in the third, because many more men wanted to come than I could readily accommodate.

Our plan was, if the group expanded, to hire a gymnasium where both men and women might go. The expansion took a slightly different form, however. One evening I invited a woman instructor of physical education to the dancing class. I had

anticipated her sympathy but not her co-operation to the extent of offering us the facilities of her private gymnasium. When she placed this at our disposal it seemed too good an opportunity to miss, so despite our reluctance to ban from our dancing class the two young men who had contributed so largely to its success we were obliged to do so.

The gymnasium in question (an old mews in Murray Hill) is frequented chiefly by conservative ladies of fashion who might just conceivably recover from the shock of sharing their place of exercise with naked women but who would withdraw in horror from a place where men and women exercised together without clothes.

At this gymnasium, then, throughout the winter we spent an evening each week exercising naked. Neither this instructress nor the teacher of dancing wore clothes. Inasmuch as the participants in the class are chiefly new to nakedness, we have spent more time in corrective exercises than in dancing, since it takes at least the groundwork of a passable physique upon which to build any skill in dancing. However, since we are a small group of congenial friends, we usually spend a hilarious as well as a physically stimulating evening.

There are numerous advantages in forming one's own nudist society. Although I am not one of those hyper-aesthetes who shrink from the sight of any but a beautiful body, I still enjoyed being able to choose the shape and size and type of person who participated in this class, and since I have a personal horror

of fat women my sternest requirement was that no woman as fat as I might dance there.

Since this semi-organised class was only a makeshift to tide us over the winter and give us at least a weekly opportunity to move rhythmically to music, naked, it was abandoned in early summer and my friends and I had recourse to our old habits of going naked when and where we might throughout the summer.

DIRECTORY OF NUDIST CLUBS

Compiled in Germany

DEUTSCHLAND

REICHSBUND FÜR FREIKÖRPERKULTUR E. V.

REICHSGESCHÄFTSSTELLE:

W 30, MASSENSTR. 14 II (am Nollendorfplatz), Berlin.
Fernspr. B 7 Pallas 3234. Sprechstunden täglich, ausser
Sonnabends, von 16—18 Uhr.

Eigene Gymnastikschule, Sportgruppe, Wasserballmannschaften, Trainingskurse für das Deutsche Turn- und Sportabzeichen, Schachgruppe, Wassersportabteilungen. Mehrere Gelände in der Stadt und an märkischen Seen. Sommer u. Winter grosse Badeveranstaltungen.

DIE BÜNDE DES REICHSVERBANDES RFK, SITZ BERLIN

INTERESSENTEN, deren Wohnort nicht verzeichnet ist, werden gebeten, sich zu wenden an den REICHSVERBAND FÜR FREIKÖRPERKULTUR, Berlin NW 7, Schiffbauerdamm 19, Auskunft vollkommen kostenlos. Rückporto erbeten.

AACHEN: Bund freier Menschen. Hans Bongard, Postfach 119.

AACHEN: Liga für freie Lebensgest. Hubert Krausen, Hindenburgstr. 59.

ARNSWALDE: Schwanheider Bund. Hans Böckler, Seeweg-Ost 24.

BAUTZEN: Bund der Sonnenfr. Kurt Hahn, Fichtestr. 4. I.

BERLIN: Reichsbund siehe oben.

BERLIN: Arbeitskreis Freiwerk. Bernhard Backhaus, Neukölln, Hohenzollernplatz 1.

- BERLIN: Bund f. Körperk. u. Natursch. e. V. Berlin W 9, Schliessfach 32.
- BERLIN: Dtsch. Luftbad. e. V. Paul Gabler, Mariendorf, Chausseestr. 284.
- BERLIN: Liga f. fr. Lebensgest. Berlin NW 7, Schiffbauerdamm 19.
- BERLIN: Licht-Bund Märchenwiese e. V. (LBM.). F. Erich Richter, Bln-Waidmannslust, Düsterhaupt Str. 5.
- BERLIN: Neusonnländb. NW 7, Postf. 24.
- BERLIN: Sparta, Sportl. Vereinig. e. V. C. Almenröder, Halensee, Karlsruher Str. 27.
- BEUTHEN: Sonnland Ob.-Schlesien. Heinr. Sachs, Biskupitz O./S., Mühlstr. 12.
- BIELEFELD: Geländegem. Frau E. Kranzmann, Postfach 750.
- BOCHUM: Liga f. fr. Lebensgest. Heinrich Göding, Oskar-Hoffmann-Str. 46.
- BONN: Bund der Lichtfr. e. V. Erich A. Vetter, Schumannstr. 3.
- BRANDENBURG: Bund d. Lichtfreunde e. V. Frank Vandr , Doberaner Str. 4.
- BRAUNSCHWEIG: Liga f. fr. Lebensgestalt. Fritz Berthold, Bebelstr. 9.
- BREMEN: Liga ffL. Carl Menne, Bonner Str. 3.
- BRESLAU: "Sonnenfreunde" f. Reichsbd. f. FKK. e. V. Erich Haschke, H fchenstr. 96.
- BRESLAU: Liga f. fr. Lebensgest. Sigfrid Fontane, V Tauenzienplatz 11.
- BRESLAU: RFK.-Ortsgr. Georg Sch nfelder, Siebenhufener Str. 34. II.
- BUNZLAU: Lichtbund Schlesien. Paul Golick, Altj schwitzer Str. 10.
- CHEMNITZ: Vereinigte Lichtfreunde e. V. Paul Epperlein, Casparistrasse 3.
- CHEMNITZ: Liga f r freie Lebensgestaltg. F. Br nnert, Riesa, Rittergutsstr. 19.
- COTTBUS: Schwanheider Bund. Herbert Kaethner, Eigene Scholle 10.
- DANZIG: Finus, Vereinigung f. FKK. Adolf Weide, Zoppot, Charlottenstr. 3.
- DARMSTADT: "Orplid," B. f. Geistes- u. K rperk. e. V. F. Karl Werner, Darmstadt, Freidr.-Ebert-Platz 14.

- DESSAU: Bund der Sonnenfreunde zu Dessau. Paul Belau, Trichstr. 51.
- DESSAU: Kreis f. fr. Lebensgest. Karl Bückmann, Pötnitz 33.
- DORTMUND: Reichsbund für FKK. K. Fischer, Landgrafenstr. 113.
- DORTMUND: Liga f. fr. Lebensgest. Arthur Meyer, Dortmund-Postfach.
- DORTMUND: RFK.-Ortsgruppe. Fritz Gerling, Matthias-Grünewald Str. 54.
- DRESDEN: Bund der Sonnenfr. e. V. Oskar Mikut, Dresden A 21. Gerader Steg. 6. II.
- DRESDEN: Liga für freie Lebensgestaltung. Willy Waldau, A 27, Alt-Plauen 6.
- DÜSSELDORF: RFK.-Ortsgruppe. Aug. Klein, Lorettostr. 28.
- DÜSSELDORF: Liga f. fr. Lebensgest. Jos. Christiani, Ellerstr. 166.
- DUISBURG: Bund f. Lebensreform. Franz Brozies, Kasslerfelderstr. 145.
- DUISBURG: Liga f. fr. Lebensgestaltg. Walter Ringleib, Siechenhausstr. 11.
- ERFURT: Liga f. fr. Lebensgest. Robert Bachmann, Schlachthofstr. 70 I.
- ERFURT: Schönburger Jugendgelände-Bund. Reformhaus Willi Kandt, Weitergasse 6/8.
- ESSEN: Liga für freie Lebensgestaltung. Erich Roth, Kopernikusstr. 10.
- ESSEN: Bund für Lebensreform. Carl Rogalla, Söllingstr. 80.
- FRANKFURT A. M.: Fraumülhase—V 21,—Amelbelfeld 268.
- BAD FREIENWALDE (ODER): Reichs-bd. f. FKK. e. V. Hans Seelow, Marktstr. 11.
- FÜRTH: Lichtgem. Franken für aufsteig. Lebensweise. Andreas Schellenberger, Bogenstrasse 19.
- GÖRLITZ: Lichtbund. Fritz Scheibe, An der weissen Mauer 4381.
- HALLE A. D. S.: Liga f. fr. Lebensgest. F. Schreiber, Jun. Elektro-Geschäft, Reilstr. 30.
- HALLE A. D. S.: Schönburger Jugendgelände-Bund. Gerhard Böge, Geiststr. 17.
- HALLE A. D. S.: Lichtbd. Sonnenland. Arthur Puschendorf, Torgauer Str. 23.

- HAMBURG: Freiluftbund Hamburg e. V. Hb. 24, Mühlendamm 24.
- HAMBURG: Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Freikörperkultur. Anschrift: Hamburg 8, Dovenfleeth 19/21.
- HAMBURG-ALTONA: Liga für freie Lebensgest., Lubeckerstr. 4.
- HANNOVER: "Freikörperkulturbund Sonnenland." A. Zierhut, Georgstr. 15.
- HANNOVER: Liga f. fr. Lebensgest. Gustav Salomo, Linden, Küchengartenstr. 7.
- HARLACHING: Bd. d. Lichtfr. A. List.
- HEIDELBERG: Sonnenfreunde, Bd. f. körp. u. geist. Volksges. Itzer Loos, Hauptstrasse 174 II, r.
- JENA: Reichsbund f. FKK. e. V. Erich Patzer, Markt 13.
- JENA: Schönburger Jugendgelände-Bund. Fritz Seeber, Am Burggarten 3.
- KASSEL: Lichtkreis. Wilhelm Rieck, K.-Bettenhausen, Ringhofstr. 30 II.
- KOBLENZ: "Orplid," Bd. f. Geist.- u. Körperk. e. V. Karl Lorentz, Pfaffendorf, Emser Str. 80.
- KOBLENZ: "Neues Leben," Friedrichstrasse 15.
- KÖLN: "Sonnborn," Ortsgr. d. Reichsb. f. Freikörperk. Hch. Knapp, Aquinostr. 13.
- KÖLN: "Lichtkreis," Hauptp. Schliessfach 407.
- KÖLN: "Neues Leben," Bd. f. körp. u. geist. Volksges. e. V. Hauptp. Schliessfach 434.
- KÖNIGSBERG I. PR.: Liga f. freie Lebensgest. Rich. Awizus, Luisenallee 71.
- KONSTANZ: B. d. Lichtfr. Postschliessfach 409.
- KÖSEN: Schönburger Jugendgelände-Bund. Albert Schirme, Sabinenstr. 2.
- KREFELD: Liga für freie Lebensgest. Wilh. Schütten, Hochstr. 28.
- LANDSBERG A. D. W.: Schwanheider Bd. Will Tschierschky, Steinstr. 12, III.
- LAUSITZ: Lichtb. Schlesien. Max Pelikowski, Siedl. Baldenshag, Läsgen (Forst).
- LEIPZIG: Liga für freie Lebensgest. Dr. O. Herbert Hanes, W 34, Pfeilstr. 2.
- LEIPZIG: Freikörperkulturbund e. V. Kurt Weise, Reiskestr. 9.

- LEIPZIG: Schönburger Jugendgelände-Bund. Max Hoene, C 1, Marschner Str. 4.
- LEIPZIG: Vereinig. f. neuzeitl. u. ges. Lebensgest. e. V. Dr. C. Fritzsche, S. 3, Südstr. 32.
- LEVERKUSEN-WIESDORF: "Neues Leben." Karl Klammer, Kölner Str. 277.
- LIEGNITZ: Lichtbund Schlesien. Eugen Ueberall, Frankfurter Str. 9.
- LIEGNITZ: Liga f. freie Lebensgest. Karl Amling, Ring 6 III.
- LIMBURG A. D. L.: Bund der Lichtfreunde e. V. Gustav Menges, Eschhöfer Weg 5.
- LÖBAU SA.: Liga f. fr. Lebensgest. Ernst Zieschank, Alt-Löbau 21.
- LÜBECK: Reichsbund für Freikörperkultur. Bruno Christiansen, Yorkstr. 10/12, oder Joh. Heinsohn, Nebenhofstr. 4/6.
- LÜDENSCHIED: Bund der Lichtfr. e. V. Grete Schulte, Werdohler Str. 84.
- LÜNEBURG: Liga f. freie Lebensgest. Wilh. Lüders, Köppelweg 6.
- MAGDEBURG: Lichtbund e. V. Fritz Henschel, Am Sudenburger Tor 5 I.
- MAGDEBURG: Liga f. fr. Lebensgest. Paul Fischer, Fermersleben, Adolfstr. 13 p.
- MAINZ: "Orplid," Bd. f. Geist- u. Körperk. e. V. Ernst Hecklau, Schafsgasse 1.
- MAINZ-WIESBADEN: Liga f. fr. Lebensgest. Carl Fr. Herrmann, Bebelring 69.
- MANNHEIM-LUDWIGSHAFEN: Liga f. fr. Lebensgest. F. Schwab, K.I. 5 b.
- MERSEBURG: Liga f. fr. Lebensgest. Albert Konwiarz, Wallendorf 24 I.
- MÜNCHEN: Reichsbund f. FKK. e. V. Nicolaus Stolz jun., 2. NW, Karlstr. 6 IV.
- MÜNCHEN: Sonnenbund Helios, im Reichsbund f. FKK. e. V. J. Rötzer, Sophienstrasse 5 b, Gartengeb.
- MÜNCHEN: Liga f. fr. Lebensgest. Martin Kürzinger Waldtrüdering.
- MÜNCHEN-GLADBACH: Bund der Lichtfr. e. V., Gr. Niederrh., siehe München.
- NAUMBURG: Schönburger Jug.-Gel.-Bund. Reformhaus Otto Kars.

- NÜRNBERG: Reichsbund f. FKK. e. V. Gg. Chr. Braunstein,
Heroldsberger Weg 69.
- NÜRNBERG: Bund der Lichtfr. e. V. Hans Popp, Amannstr.
8.
- NÜRNBERG: Lichtgem. Franken für aufsteig. Lebensgest.,
Vordere Sterng. 4/6 III.
- OBERHAUSEN: Bund f. Lebensreform. Fritz Gross, Konkordiastr.
28.
- OPPENHEIM: Bd. d. Lichtfr. Helmut Hube, Markt 10.
- PIESTERITZ (Bez. Halle): Reichsbund f. FKK. e. V. Fritz
Meyer, Strengstr. 26.
- PLAUEN I. VOGTL.: Liga für freie Lebensgestaltung, Antonstr.
17 I.
- RATZEBURG I. SA.: Bund d. Lichtfr. H. Diers.
- REGENSBURG: Bund der Lichtfreunde e. V. Georg Glas,
Drehergasse 21.
- ROSTOCK I. MECKL.: Liga für fr. Lebensgest. Ludwig Wiende,
Schröderstr. 37.
- SAARGEBIET: Liga f. fr. Lebensgest. Berlin NW 7, Schiff-
bauerdamm 19.
- STETTIN: Vereinigte Lichtfreunde. Stettin I. Postfach 74.
- STUTTGART: Fkkbund Sonnenland. Eugen Sannwald, Winnen-
den, Turmstr. 14.
- STUTTGART: Lichtbund, Erich B. Wagner, Freidrich-Ebert-
Str. 69.
- WALDENBURG: Lichtb. Schles. Peter Comes, Liebau i. Schl.,
Neue Bahnhofstr. 21.
- WEIMAR: Schönburger Jug.-Gel.-Bd. Dr. Bernh. Schulze in
Leipzig W 31, Könnertitzstr. 112 III.
- WEISSENFELS: Schönburger Jugend-Gelände-Bund. Reformhaus
Fritz Oehlmann, Nikolaistr.
- WIESBADEN: "Orplid," Bd. f. Geist und Körperk. e. V. Heinrich
Küster, Herrngartenstr. 7 III.
- WIESBADEN: Liga f. fr. Lebensgest. Gg. Keller, Steingasse
23.
- WUPPERTAL: Liga f. fr. Lebensgest. Max Krefting, Wiehlings-
hausen Tütersburger Strasse 25.
- WUPPERTAL: Lichtbund, Vereinig. f. Lebenserneuerung. e. V.
Friedrich Hasselbardt, Barmen, Sedan Str. 63.

- WÜRZBURG: Liga f. fr. Lebensgest. P. Schmitt, Frühlingstr. 25.
 ZWICKAU: Liga fr. Lebensgest., Herbert Tertscheck, Gabelsbergerstr. 11.

DEM RFK. NAHESTEHENDE BÜNDE

- BERLIN: Jugendgel. Birkenheide e. V. Herbert Weissflog. N. 20, Hochstr. 11.
 BERLIN: Verein sozial. Lebensreform. Hans Guttheil. SO 36, Görlitzer Str. 44.
 BRAUNSCHWEIG: Lichtfreunde. Helm. Heicke, Nussbergstr. 48.
 BREMEN: Soz. Fkk.-Bund. Hans Köhrmann, Am Fesenfeld 135 II.
 BREMEN: FKKGem. Steller Heide, Kurt Jahn, Delmenhorst, Schillerstr. 37.
 GÖTTINGEN: "Freisonnland," Ges. f. Luft- und Sonnenbaden. Hubert Kaufhold, Reinhäuser Landstr. 62.
 HANNOVER: Sonnenfreunde. A. H. Schilf, Flüggestr. 1 III.
 HANNOVER: Gel. Gem. Ed. Markmann, Engelbostler Damm 18a, I.
 MÜNCHEN: Frei-Sonn-Land, proletar. FKK-Bund. Josef Zeilhofer. Ringeisstr. 4 II.
 MÜNCHEN: FKK.-V. Dr. Otto Kraus, Brunnstr. 8.
 PIRMASENS: Frei-Sonn-Land, prolet. FKK-Bund. Karl Scharf, Schachenstr. 77.
 SYLT: Klappholtthal. Klappholtthaler Bund, Freideutsches Jugendlager.
 WUPPERTAL-ELBERFELD: Ver. für Volksges. und Fkk. Hugo Möll, Elberfeld, Holsteiner Str. 30.
 WÜRZBURG: FKK. Bd. Karl Frdr. Müller, Aurorastr. 8, III.
 ZITTAU: Gem. Oberl. Lichtfr. Horst Trommler, Zittau, Goethestr. 2.

AUSLAND

Jede gewünschte Auskunft über Fragen der Freikörperkultur im Ausland wird gern kostenlos erteilt von der Europ. Union für Freikörperkultur, Berlin NW, Schiffbauerdamm 19.

[All information wanted about matters of Freebody culture in Germany and abroad are given without charge by the Foreign

Department of the Freikörperkultur, Berlin NW, Schiffbauerdamm 19.]

BELGIEN

ANTWERPEN: Die Spar Cultureele Bond voor Vrije Lichaamsontwikkeling Ethiek, Schoonheidszin, Kampeersport & Natuurbescheerming, rue de la Constitution. 51.

ANTWERPEN: Bund naturist. Ver. Constitutiestraat 51.

BRÜSSEL: Bund der Lichtfreunde e. V. Albert Steylaers, rue des Coteaux 121.

BRÜSSEL: "Mieux Vivre," M. Charles, Br.-Uccle, 267 Chaussée de St. Job.

ENGLAND

LONDON: The National Sun and Air Association, 66, Thicket Road, Anerley, S.E.20.

LONDON: Gymnic Ass. of Great Britain. 79 St. Martin's Lane, W.C.2. (Affiliated to European Union for F.K.K.)

LONDON: The Sun-Bathing Soc. Mr. N. Barford, Sun Lodge, Upper Norwood, S.E.19.

ESTLAND

TALLINN-REVAL: Estl. Verein f. FKK. (Eesti Vabakehaku-
tuuri-Übing). Eric D. Differt, Oskarit 55/14.

FRANKREICH

ALGIER (Marokko): A. Rozée, 8 rue Empereur-Vespasien.

LOUMÈDE—RAMATUELLE: Club gymnique et naturiste. J. Haimovith.

MARSEILLE: Association Libre Culturiste de Provence.
Präsident: M. Vandes, 8 rue Paradis, Tél. Dragon 10—70.

NIZZA: Ligue gymnique de la Côte d'Azur, Galerie des
Annonces, 13 rue Alberti.

NIZZA: Groupe gymniste et naturiste, Nice, 40a rue
République.

PARIS: Les Amis de Vivre (Sparta Club). M. K. de Mongeot,
rue de Logelbach 2.

PARIS: Ligue naturiste (Physiopolis et Heliopolis). Dr. Durville,
rue Cimarosa.

PARIS: Club Gymnique de France, 6 rue Serpente 28.

PARIS: Foyer naturiste, 8 rue du Sentier.

GRIECHENLAND

ATHEN: Gymniki Physiologia, 4 rue Apalou.

HOLLAND

AMSTERDAM: Bond van Lichtvrienden. Wim. Duveen Okeghemstr. 32.

HAARLEM: Prolet. Vrije Lichaamscultuur, Oude Raamstr. 11.

LAREN: Vrije Lichaams Kulturbeweging "Swanheim." Fokko W. van Till, Goyersgracht Z 23.

ITALIEN

MAILAND: Unione naturista italiana. Via Procopio.

LETTLAND

RIGA: Gesundheitspflegeverein "Sauls." Oskar Köhler, Schkuhnu eela 17—3.

RIGA: Lettländischer FKK-Verein. Jakob Grünberg, Pasta kaste No. 982.

RIGA: FKK.-Verein "Saulstari." Alexander Jaunsem, Valnu eela 17—2.

OESTERREICH

GRAZ: Steiermärkischer Bund für Körper- u. Geisteskultur "Hochland." Werner Strake Graz, Zwerggasse 6.

GRAZ: Verein "Gesunde Menschen," Red. Scheucher, Atemsgasse 8.

WIEN: Bund österr. FKK.-Verein. W. I, Lothringer Str. 3 (Sportverlag).

WIEN: Liga für freie Lebensgestaltung. W. Schmidt, Wien XVIII, Währinger Gürtel 137.

WIEN: Bund freier Menschen, B. Slais II, Mohrengasse 22/13.

WIEN: Bund für Freilichtkultur, I, Kohlmarkt 10.

WIEN: Lichtbund "Kormoran," II, Taborstr. 1, IV.

PORTUGAL

LISSABON: Sociedade Naturista Portuguesa, Rua de Conde Redondo 2—A 1 (Bairro Camoes), Lisboa, Portugal.

SCHWEDEN

STOCKHOLM: Nackth. und Gesundh. Prof. Joh. Almkvist, Nybrogatan 7.

SCHWEIZ

BASEL: Bund für freie Lebensgestaltung, Georges Würtemberger, Basel, Spitalstr. 28.

BERN: Schweizer Licht-Bund. Zentralstelle: Bern, Laupengasse 3. Tel.: Bollwerk 1041.

STAMMORTSGRUPPE ZÜRICH: Z. 22 Postf. 132. Weitere Ortsgruppen in Basel, Baden, Lausanne, Schaffhausen, Winterthur, Wettingen.

ZÜRICH: "Neues Leben" Bd. f. FKK. Dav. Boxler, Postf. 43, Z. 11.

ZÜRICH: "Lichtwärts." René E. Kielinger, Z.-Fraumünster, Postf. 589.

TIROL

INNSBRUCK: Bund der Lichtfreunde e. V. Josef Pernthaler. Roseggerstr. 10.

INNSBRUCK: Internationaler Bd. Fellermaier. I.-Hötting, Probstenhofweg 3.

TSCHECHOSLOWAKEI C. S. R.

AUSSIG/ELBE: Reichsbund f. FKK. e. V. Karl Seifert, Kippelstr. 20/I. Weitere Ortsgruppen in Bodenbach, Tetschen, Teplitz, Lobositz-Leitmeritz, Böhmisches-Leipa, Warnsdorf-Rumburg, Karlsbad. Anfragen an Aussig.

GABLONZ (Neisse): Liga für Volksgesundheit und Lebenserneuerung Julius Schmidl, Brunnengasse 21.

PRAG: Liga für freie Lebensgestaltung. Anschrift: Heinz Kirning, Prag-Zizkov, Havlickova 33.

NEW YORK: The American League for Physical Culture.
Kurt Barthel, P.O. Box 368, City Hall Station.

NEW YORK: American Gymnosophical Association. Herm.
Sochinski, 1540 Research Ave., Bronx.

NEW YORK: The Olympian League, One Samsondale Av.,
West Haverstraw.

FREIE MENSCHEN

BUND FÜR SOZIALISTISCHE LEBENSGESTALTUNG UND FREIKÖRPER-
KULTUR IM VERBAND VOLKSGESUNDHEIT E. V.

VERBANDSGESCHÄFTSSTELLE: VERBAND VOLKSGESUNDHEIT,
DRESDEN- A 1, WILSDRUFFER STRASSE 31

ORTSGRUPPEN: BUNDESLEITUNG: ERICH KUNERT, DRESDEN- A 43,
KADEN STR. 22

ALTENBURG: richard grasemann, wenzelstr. 28.

AUGSBURG: willy karl, helmschmiedstr. 5/1.

BERLIN: bund der körperkulturschule, adolf koch, sw 48,
friedrichstr. 218.

BERLIN: fr. kkkreis kreuzberg. gustav thomke, tempelhof.
freid-wil-str. 33.

BOCHUM: ludwig hoffmann, hattinger strasse 150.

BREMEN: erich grottker, rathenaustrasse 58.

BRESLAU: leo salisch, 21, augustastrasse 12.

BUNZLAU: bund f.k.k. a. jaehne, schliessf. 170.

CHEMNITZ: lene geppert. burghstr. 45.

COSWIG: otto clausnitzer, (bez. dresden), schillerstr. 61.

DARMSTADT: karl hisgen, taunusstrasse 21.

DORTMUND: august sullus, holsteiner strasse 36.

DRESDEN: k. hummel, a 19, bergmannstr. 6.

DRESDEN-NEUSTADT: fkkabt. im verein volksgesundheit. walter
fleischer, rähnitz-hellerau, radeburger str. 8.

DÜSSELDORF: k. becker, d-derendorf, blücherstr. 11.

ELBERFELD: verein für volksgesundheit und freikörperkultur.
hugo möll, holsteiner str. 30.

- ELBERFELD : jugendgruppe freuding. willibert ritter, holzestr. 6.
GLEIWITZ : paul gaida, preiswitzer strasse 19.
GÖRLITZ : gerda siefert, bahnhofstr. 63.
HAMBURG : freiluftbund. 24, mühlendamm 24.
HANNOVER : sozialist. lichtkämpfer. w. wienken, aegidiendamm
1. III.
HEILBRONN : verband volksgesundheit, hermann haug, kaiser-
str. 18.
JENA : max edelmann, ed-rosenthalstrasse 34. I.
KARLSRUHE : alfred metzler, aug.-schwall-str. 8.
LEIPZIG : willi wolf, n 24, löbauer strasse 37. II.
LÖBAU-ZITTAU : werner pretzsch, herrnhut, postfach 11.
MANNHEIM : adolf brüstle, laurentiusstr. 15.
NÜRNBERG : hermann frank, nürnberg str. 49.
PIRMASENS : karl scharf, schachenstrasse 77.
STETTIN : fr. kkkreis. alfred schumacher, barnimstr. 52.
WIEN : sozialdemokratische gruppe für lebensreform und
nachtkultur. fritz stern, czerningasse 4/42.
WIEN : arbeiterkulturbund neues leben. hermann süss, drasche-
gasse 15.
WÜRZBURG : martin albert, hartmannstrasse 4.
ZEITZ : walter wetzel, altenburger strasse 10.
ZWICKAU-PLANITZ : johannes uhlig, planitz, äussere zwickauer
str. 34.