

# DID YOU HEAR THIS?

Extracts From Recent Talks

## "Go it, Britannia"

"WHAT'S in a name? A good deal sometimes.

That famous romance "Lorna Doone" caught on, partly because not long after it appeared the Queen's daughter married the Marquis of Lorne. Would Sherlock Holmes be quite such a household word if he were called Sherrinford Holmes, as Conan Doyle originally intended? "Sherlock" is much easier to remember than "Sherrinford." Apparently we owe Sherlock to the fact that Conan Doyle once made thirty runs against a bowler of that name. Ask any young man in love if he would change the name of his lady—even if it be . . . but I had better not particularise. If names don't make a material difference, they have a sentimental interest. Take Wellington, the subject of our talk to-day. It is a hundred years this month since the name was applied to Wellington. Before that, for a few months, the Port Nicholson Settlement was called Britannia. I don't think any Wellingtonian or any New Zealander regrets the change. Britannia is a curious word. The figure of Britannia appears on our coinage. The name of the lady is a feature of one of our national songs, which we so often sing incorrectly—*Britannia rules the waves*, instead of *Britannia rule the waves*. It has therefore most honourable associations, but there is something a little stilted and theatrical about it; something that doesn't seem to suit the wear and tear of daily use. If Port Nicholson had kept the name Britannia, we should hear the crowd at Athletic Park to-day shouting, "Go it, Britannia."—"What's in a Name?"—Wellington," 2YA, November 24.

## A Labour of Love

ST. PAUL'S Cathedral is unlike most other great churches; it is not the work of centuries, but of one man—Christopher Wren. The first stone was laid by Wren himself in 1675 when he was 43 years old; the last was laid by his son in 1710 when Sir Christopher was 78. For the next 13 years until his death, old Christopher Wren was carried once a year to St. Paul's, where he sat, gazed around him and thought of the time when he first set up a stone

to mark the centre of the new church. As the years went on Wren watched over the laying of every stone and cornice. As his glorious dome sprang higher into the orb of Heaven he himself was hoisted aloft in a basket to see that every detail was carried out according to plan. This basket, by the way, can still be seen in the cathedral. To Wren the building of St. Paul's was indeed a labour of love. His official wage for the work was £4 a week, and as the work seemed to be getting along slowly Parliament suspended Wren's wages until the cathedral was finished. This trick was intended to hurry him up. Wren had given a fourth of his miserable wage to the Cathedral Fund at the start of the building, and he continued to work for the next fourteen years for £1 a week! But in spite of this insulting meanness Wren went steadily on with his task.—("Ebor," "This and That: St. Paul's Cathedral," 2YA, Children's Hour, December 2.)

## Wellington, the Man

IT is worth noting that Lord Roberts, no mean judge, placed Wellington in the very front rank of soldiers, equal, if not superior, to Napoleon. But it is rather the whole character of Wellington that we should look to in this time of trial. As a man

## New Code Of Manners In Broadcasting?

I'm all disturbed and uncertain—thrown clean out of my stride. For one thing, after broadcasting for years by the light of nature—always, admittedly, an imperfect guide—I've taken to reading books and pamphlets on "How to Broadcast." That has shaken me up, I can tell you. For another thing, I've taken to listening—listening to other broadcasters, and especially to those from London. And I notice that most of them plunge right into the first sentence of their talks, without so much as a nod to you and me, who are sitting thousands of miles away with pipes in our mouths and our feet stretched out to the fire. Does this represent the new code of manners in broadcasting? Are we to be all abrupt and business-like, and to give up such conventional but not unfriendly openings as "Good evening, everybody" and "Good morning, ladies and gentlemen"? And does this mean that very soon, even at a political meeting, the speaker will ignore his chairman and begin barking at his audience with some such phrase as "Now, listen, you."

Of course, there's a simpler and less mortifying explanation of the new practice in Daventry talks. And it's this. Since the talks are directed on one wave-length at the United States, on another at South Africa, and on yet another at New Zealand, they're picked up by different listeners at different times of the day; it may be evening for the speaker and morning for the listener. You may prefer to accept that explanation rather than to believe that our English friends are going all blunt and off-hand. I leave it to you.—(Professor J. Y. T. Greig, "Airy Talking and Talking on the Air," 2YA, December 1.)

he was far superior to Napoleon. It is true that as a statesman and as a man he had serious faults. But in his qualities of self-control and devotion to duty he was a model to his countrymen. He disciplined himself rigidly throughout his life, and when he was the first man in his country he continued to live simply. He never allowed ambition to master him, as Napoleon did. While all the Allied world honoured and courted him, Wellington never lost a particle of the feeling that he was the servant of his country and that the execution of his duty was his only interest in life. Sorely tried as he was through the Peninsular campaign, he faced his difficulties with a coolness and serenity that never faltered. He was never jealous or petty. In short, Wellington had character. He was a rock on which the storms of life beat in vain. I think we are justified in placing a special value on all these qualities to-day. Wellington had a perfect disposition for a crisis. He was never ruffled in danger; his body and his brain worked admirably together. He never lost grip of a situation; never despaired. Napoleon said that the moral factor in war was greater than the material factor; he could have found an example of this in the man who beat him. The moral factor is so vital to-day that we should turn now and then and study Wellington's career—the man who served his country so unselfishly and was always master of himself. So, Wellington, capital of New Zealand, you have something to live up to!—"What's in a Name?"—Wellington," 2YA, November 24.

## Precautions at the Zoo

WHEN war broke out, one of the first things that was done in London, one of the first precautions taken, was immediately to destroy some of the most venomous and dangerous reptiles and animals in the London Zoo. The Zoo, as I have said before, is in part of Regent's Park, in the centre of London. Many people thought that one of the first actions of the Germans would be to bomb London, right from the start, but months went by before the first bomb fell on the city. However, they



couldn't take the risk of waiting to see when the attack would begin. A bomb dropped among wild animals and venomous snakes and spiders, might wreck the enclosures and release these maddened and terrified creatures. The first to go were the "black widow" spiders, as they are called. These, I believe, are the most deadly insects in the world. Then dangerous snakes and reptiles, and the more savage animals were painlessly put to sleep. Others were removed to the country. But in the happy old days before the war, the London Zoo was a grand place, and in summer it was crowded day after day. During the school holidays, excursion trains of youngsters were brought from the country, or in buses, to spend the day there. And a day at the Zoo was a popular birthday treat for children in town. But the Zoo wasn't only a paradise for the young, it attracted people of every age.—(Nelle Scanlan, "Shoes and Ships and Sealing Wax," 2YA.)

## Genius and Greatness

ALLENBY never quite made up his mind about Lawrence of Arabia but suspected a streak of charlatanism in him. Lawrence, who didn't easily give any man obedience or respect, steadily obeyed and respected Allenby. "His mind," he said once, "is like the prow of the Mauretania. There is so much weight behind it, it does not need to be sharp like a razor." And he spoke with humorous humility of the lion and mouse friendship between them. That was praise—the rare praise of genius for greatness.—(J. H. E. Schroder, reviewing General Sir Archibald Wavell's "Allenby: A Study in Greatness" (Harrap), 3YA, November 26.)

## "Be Safe, Salute Twice"

ABOUT 45 to 50 years ago it was the correct thing to salute officers stationed in the same garrison whether in uniform or in plain clothes. This, as can be imagined, gave a great deal of trouble to the soldier of the day. Some wag conceived the idea of issuing instructions and well-established rules for their guidance, such as the following:—



- (1) If you see a monocle or eyeglass in barracks, it usually has an officer behind it. Salute.
- (2) If an individual approaching you has an "I can do no wrong" air, that's either a junior officer or a sergeant-major. In both cases be on the safe side. Salute.
- (3) If you see anything dressed in very loud or extreme clothing, that's usually an officer. Salute.
- (4) Any elderly gentlemen who prefaces everything with "Eh, what?" is almost certain to be a senior officer. Salute.
- (5) If you discover an individual ramming his unpaid bills in the fire, that's sure to be an officer. Be on safe ground and salute twice.—Major F. H. Lampen, "Just Saluting," 4YA, November 29.)