

# DID YOU HEAR THIS?

Extracts From Recent Talks

## Radio in the Aeroplane

MOST people know that some aircraft are equipped with wireless but few realise the extent to which it is sometimes employed. You may be surprised to hear that in some instances 9 sets are installed though usually one or two will suffice. The principal set is for the transmission and reception of wireless messages by telegraphy or telephony, though because of the wide range to be covered the duties are sometimes spread over 2 or 3 different sets. In a few installations a set is provided for the facsimile reproduction of meteorological maps. All the remaining sets are for navigational aids. A common feature is a set connected to a loop aerial enclosed in a metal ring on the top of the fuselage. By rotating the loop the direction of any known radio station may be determined. By finding the directions of two or more stations a navigator is able to fix his position.—(*Winter Course Talk, "Electricity in the Aeroplane,"* by Cecil Dawson, 1YA, April 3.)

## Hiding Behind a Laugh

TO my way of thinking life can be dreary enough without people trying to add to its darkness. The people in England apparently appreciate that point of view, too, as every letter I get from the homeland refers to the way in which the people, rich and poor, old and young, refuse to be depressed and are determined to keep their spirits up. There is no room for a dispenser of gloom in an air raid shelter in England to-day. I can only speak from a very short experience in London during the last war. I was



home on leave for six days and the very first night I was in London the Germans decided to pay the city a visit also. The twopenny tube stations were the most popular shelters in those days. Not being able to find one of these, I took cover under some archways near Charing Cross. We were a very mixed crowd. Soldiers, sailors, tinkers, tailors, rich men, poor men, beggars, thieves. A large number of women folk as well. There was quite a large smattering of foreigners also, French, Belgians, Italians, Greeks, and many other mixed nationalities. One thing was very obvious. We were all afraid and of that there was no possible doubt, no possible, probable doubt whatever—but fear was exhibited in different ways. The foreigner showed his fear in the generally accepted way—by that I mean that he made no attempt to conceal his feelings. Our own people on the other hand hid their emotions behind a laugh or a song. This contrast is not one of courage versus fear, as both share the same fear, but between its revelation by acts and speech.—(*"Just Between Ourselves,"* by Major F. H. Lampen, 2YA, April 17.)

## Modified to Suit All Types

THE ideals of universal education were brought to realisation by the industrial revolution, and mass education was extended over a longer and longer period of the child's life. This would seem to mean the suppression of individuality. Far from it, however. The very fact that all children went to the schools, meant that children of all types—the average children and the dull children as well as the bright ones. Teaching methods had to be adapted to the varying capacities of these children. Furthermore, when the children from the elementary schools were admitted in large numbers to the secondary schools which had been the close preserves of the select few, the secondary schools had to modify their literary curriculum and indeed their whole conception of education, in order to provide educational material suited to the diverse types of children they were beginning to receive. And with the development of different courses in the secondary schools

has come the need for some means of helping children to discover their aptitudes and interest, in order that they may make a wise choice of their secondary school course. Thus we have the recent development of intermediate schools, whose specific purpose is to offer exploratory courses, which will make such a choice possible. The ideal of adapting education to the needs of the individual is being carried a stage further by the establishment of special schools and classes for children presenting particular difficulties.—(*"Modern Trends in Education,"* by G. W. Parkyn, M.A., Dip.Ed., University of Otago, 4YA, April 1.)

## First View of the Capitol

FROM Toronto I struck south to Washington, and I arrived there about nine o'clock on a crisp, clear, sunny, but very cold November morning. It was early winter; the trees—those lovely trees for which Washington is famous—were bare. Every leaf had vanished. As I walked outside the railway station, the first thing I saw was the great group of marble statuary, the Columbus group, forming an island, round which the traffic moved. And straight ahead of me, at the end of a wide avenue rose the great dome of the Capitol, the American House of Parliament. I was so entranced by the scene, on this bright winter morning, that I left my luggage at the station, and for an hour I walked around the Capitol. That morning impression is still as fresh as it was twenty years ago; it has survived my arrival in so many other great cities. Perhaps, because it was the first great city I had seen, the first great capital I had visited. But I think it was rather that the Americans had wisely planned this entrance into their capitol with a view to making just such an impression. I know, that during my years of wandering, when I have had no fixed plan, I have found myself at a station, looking out at its dingy environment, and decided that here was a place I didn't want to stop, and so have gone on.—(*"Shoes and Ships and Sealing-Wax,"* by Nelle Scanlan, 2YA, March 28.)



## Ancient Egypt's Children

WHEN the Ancient Egyptian children were older, they were looked after by "father nurses" who taught them lessons and all kinds of sport. They played marbles and lots of ball games. The boys liked to run about and to wrestle, and to play whatever was the ancient Egyptian equivalent of Cowboys and Indians. When they were old enough they would go hunting and fishing. They would shoot ducks and geese with their bows and arrows, or sometimes use a kind of boomerang. And on these hunting trips they often took, not dogs, but trained cats! Cats were greatly honoured in parts of Egypt and were considered sacred. So they were frequently kept as pets, as were tame birds; and the boys liked to keep beetles and grasshoppers, too!—(*"Children Through the Ages,"* 2YA, March 26.)



## Tribute to a Forgotten Man

NO poem of the very first rank is better known or more commonly quoted than *Lycidas*, and fresh beauties are revealed even after many readings. Also it provides what is perhaps the commonest of misquotations, "fresh fields and pastures new," instead of "fresh woods and pastures new." The occasion of *Lycidas* was this. Edward King, Fellow and Tutor of Christ's College, Cambridge, aged twenty-five, a young man of golden opinions, was drowned in a

shipwreck in the Irish Sea in 1637. It was a cutting off of a life of promise, such as is all too common in all ages. King's friends in Cambridge resolved to issue a volume of memorial verse, just as friends might do to-day, and among the some thirty contributors to the volume was Milton, who had been an undergraduate with King. One of the many treasures in our Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington, is a copy of that little volume—the original edition of *Lycidas*. The book is worth, on the market, many times its weight in gold. I'm afraid we don't worry much about Edward King when we read

## England, 1840 to 1940

"*ENGLISH SAGA,*" by Arthur Bryant, is an exhaustive and at times fascinating account of the last one hundred years of English history. It is a book with a purpose which is not only social but topical. "What," asks the author of his preface, "is going to happen after the war?" And he reminds his readers of a radio talk given by J. B. Priestley, in which Mr. Priestley said that even had he a magician's power he would not bring back the England of the past in place of the grisly present, for by so doing he would forgo the fight to make a better future. Mr. Bryant insists that slums and under-nourished men and women, verminous children and despairing dole queues are as much the concern of the patriot as the battlefield and that a philosophy which sets profits and comforts above needs and security must be rejected. In order to stress these main points, Mr. Bryant has written a detailed account of the story of England between 1840 and 1940. His book is crowded with events and personalities, with descriptions of customs and costumes, conditions and comments. No one interested in the mansions and slums of England, the countryside and industrial towns, the class struggle and foreign wars, the politicians and workers' representatives, the domestic scene and the public scene, can fail to be interested by the immense amount of detail which Mr. Bryant has managed to include.—(Book Review by Winston Rhodes, 3YA Christchurch, March 18.)

*Lycidas*. Indeed it may not strike us forcibly that the poem is a lament. We are captured by the universality of the poem, and especially by its truly magnificent literary art.—(*"Poetry Hour,"* 2YA, April 4.)

## Dorothy Sayers Knows Everything

DOROTHY SAYERS reveals a mind stocked like an encyclopaedia. Almost everyone of her books shows an exact knowledge of something beyond the scope of ordinary detection. Take, for example, my favourite among her books—*The Nine Tailors*. No gents' suiting is made up in this book—the Nine Tailors refer to a peal of bells of which she appears to have expert knowledge. *Have his Carcase* shows a knowledge of haemophilia, that curious disease transmitted by the female line but attacking the male, which afflicted various members of inter-related royal houses of Europe. Or there are the wines for which both Lord Peter and Harriet show such a cultivated palate. When they discuss the characteristics of a claret of a particular vintage they leave me standing—I have to take for granted that the author's statements are authoritative. One of Dorothy Sayers' books has an Oxford setting, and those who know Somerville College recognise the buildings and the neighbourhood. The book is called *Gaudy Night*. Dorothy Sayers was for two or three years chairman of the Association of Senior Members of Somerville College, and also a Member of the Council, so that she must have known well all the inner workings of a "Gaudy." Another setting that she got from real life is that of *Murder Must Advertise*, in which Lord Peter, for the purpose of a little private detection, takes an assumed name and a position in an advertising agency. It was in such an agency that Dorothy Sayers worked for about eight years as a copy-writer.—(*"A Few Minutes with Women Novelists: Dorothy Sayers,"* by Margaret Johnston, 2YA, March 29.)