

# DID YOU HEAR THIS?

## Extracts From Recent Talks

### The Murderer Looked On

THE evidence called at the trial didn't amount to much, practically nothing except the motive and the threats. Nevertheless after a retirement of two and a-half hours, the jury returned with a verdict of "Guilty" against one of the accused, with a strong recommendation to mercy. He was thereupon sentenced to death. The good citizens of Manchester, however, were very firmly of the opinion that the evidence against the prisoner had been too weak to warrant a conviction, and, as a result of their endeavours, the prisoner ultimately was reprieved and the sentence commuted to one of imprisonment for life. You will notice the curious attitude of the official mind, in this, and in many other cases, I've told you about. It's this. They seem to say "We think there is too much risk about hanging the prisoner, but he can stay in gaol for the rest of his life, Micawber fashion, to see if anything turns up." Fortunately for this boy, after a weary incarceration of two years, something did turn up. Apart from the fact that the conviction constituted an appalling miscarriage of justice, the trial stands out as a notable one in the annals of British justice, by reason of the strange circumstance that the actual murderer wasn't in the dock at all but was an interested spectator throughout, seated among other curious individuals in the public gallery. This man was Charles Peace. The very next day following his witnessing of this innocent man's condemnation, Charles Peace committed a second murder. — ("Famous Cases," by a Dunedin Barrister, 4YA, June 23.)



### Exploring Australia

A: Of course, there's some pretty wild country still left in Australia. Don't make any mistake about it. But the details of it are filled in on the map, that's the point. You recall how easy it was—and is—to get lost while flying over Australia. Remember the adventures of Kingsford-Smith and those other famous Australian aviators?

B: Oh, yes. Aviation has doubtless added much to the geography of the country, too. It has to practically every country. It may even have been responsible for re-casting the map of Australia in places so far as details are concerned, but aviators haven't found any new features, rivers, mountains, etc.

A: Oh, I didn't mean to imply that. You see it was as far back as 1871 that Darwin was linked with southern Australia by an overland telegraph, so it couldn't have been terra incognita along that route, could it? — ("Lifting the Veil: Australia," prepared by L. R. Palmer, 2YA, June 2.)

### From A.V. to Basic

A VERY old and very great book first claims our attention—an ancient and revered book in a new version. The New Testament has been printed in many forms, for the fineness of its imagery, the magnificence of its simple speech has, no less than its unparalleled statement of Christian ethics, gripped the minds of men. Not seeking to glorify themselves, but to lay the word open to all, many have spent years of scholarship in re-translating the New Testament, or portions of it, sometimes adding to illumination of passages here and there; sometimes, less successfully, seeking to challenge the whole interpretation of this Book or that; and all, I think I may say, failing to detract one iota from the inspiring rhythmic glory of the great authorised version

of 1611. That noble work will remain, I think, the ultimate triumph of religious scholarship while English continues to be spoken. English may pass as the universal language, but we must remember that it is beyond the comprehension still of more of the earth's inhabitants than it reaches. All of which is

### The New Order is Very Old

THE dictatorships which claim to be establishing their "new orders" in Europe and Asia are really nothing new at all. Tyranny is unfortunately as old as humanity itself. It is the crudest and the most commonplace of governmental systems. Democracy, on the other hand, is not an easy form of government to operate, and for that reason it has been somewhat rare in history. It requires such advanced qualities in a people that it has been an unusual occurrence. It is not the rule but the exception. Because we are fortunate to live under a democratic system, we sometimes tend to regard it as normal. But that is not the case. There have been in the past many more dictatorships than democracies; only a relatively few nations have managed to establish a democracy and maintain it—(Winter Course Series: "Democracy Thought the Ages," by Professor Leslie Lipson, V.U.C., 2YA, June 30.)

preparatory to saying that I welcome, as I think all will do, a new version of the New Testament which comes from the Cambridge Press—*The New Testament in Basic English*. "Basic," is, as you most probably know, a simplified form of English of which it is claimed that it can, by means of a vocabulary of 850 words, express the sense of anything that can be said in the English language — 850 words, and Shakespeare, whose range of words might be challenged by the veriest schoolboy to-day, had a vocabulary of 15,000! It makes the claim for Basic English seem, shall we say, excessive; this publication of the most famous of all our books in Basic offers the best test of that claim. I am leaving the question for you to judge.—(Book Review by John Moffett, 4YA, June 25.)

### They Lived on the North Pole

IN May, 1937, 35 Russians were flown in five aeroplanes from Moscow to the Pole, via Franz Josef Land, with some 10½ tons of supplies. The whole party remained there for some days. Then the 'planes all flew back to Moscow—but four men and a dog remained on the ice, living in tents. They were on

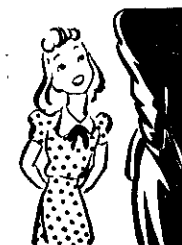


an ice-flow measuring about a mile and a-half by one mile—and it was drifting at about four miles a day in the direction of Greenland. The four men were kept busily at work taking observations of all kinds. In fact, they were so busy that they could only allow themselves five hours sleep a day. So day after day, week after week, they drifted southward. Then in the darkness, with 35 degrees of frost, a terrific blizzard broke on them, and with a roar like thunder the floe cracked and split. Their floating home was for a time cut down to an island barely 200 yards square. At last they sighted Greenland. And on February 16 an aeroplane from an ice-breaker located the little camp. On the 19th the ice-breakers themselves forced their

way to the floe—now only 50 yards by 30, and all were soon safe on board. In nine months they had drifted 1500 miles.—(Winter Course Talk: "Lifting the Veil: Wings Over the Pole," by L. B. Quartermain, 2YA, June 23.)

### The Rights of Children

SOMETIMES we trespass on the rights of children by taking them too much for granted. It's true that they are small and ignorant and young and therefore can be expected to respect the grown-ups who have so much more knowledge and experience. But what right have we to expect service from



them just to suit our convenience? Readiness to help—yes—but automatic service! Well—why? In that case, we have to be as courteous as we would be to an adult and quite as appreciative of their effort in fetching a handkerchief or anything else that we've forgotten. It seems as if intangible rewards come into the picture again. Another essential for full development is the companionship of other children. After the early squabbles and rivalries have been settled, this companionship helps to build the feeling of security and solidarity. Great care is needed in the early days to see that children are more or less evenly matched, and that their naturally friendly impulses find more expression than their naturally aggressive impulses. After that, they should need only occasional help in learning good social adjustment.—("Conversations by the Fireside: The Rights of Children," by Miss D. E. Dolton, 3YA, June 30.)

### A New Angle on Scrap

AS time goes along, scrap iron and scrap lead, for instance, become distributed amongst nations differently from how iron or lead ores are distributed. Let me give you an example. New Zealand has practically no silver ores—but there's lots of silver in New Zealand after a few decades of imports—after silver teapots, coinage, cutlery and so on have been imported. And there's probably more iron in Japan than there ever was iron ore. Simply because Japan has imported ironware, and steel goods and scrap too. In other words, there is growing up a more equal distribution of industrial opportunity amongst nations. As long as the steel industry was wholly dependent on iron ores the accidents of mineral geography definitely determined the location of the steel industry. But now that is no longer the whole matter, the accidents of mineral geography aren't any longer of such significance as they used to be. All nations have scrap heaps if they haven't mines. And so man (with his capital and techniques) plays a greater part now in determining industrial location than nature.—("The Changing Bases of Society" Discussion between K. B. Cumberland and H. N. Parton, 3YA, June 25.)

### Synthetic Rubber

WHAT about the synthetic rubbers that are being used to-day? They aim at imitating the properties of natural rubber rather than its exact chemical composition. Russia has developed a synthetic rubber from a substance which can be obtained from alcohol. The quality is inferior to natural rubber. The German Buna is better, while the American Duprene, called Neoprene in England, has remarkable resistance to oils, which spoil natural rubber, but Duprene is very expensive. And natural rubber is keeping ahead of the synthetic product. As a result of biological research, the yield per acre has been about trebled, and despite the effect of factors such as the age of a tree, the season of the year, rainfall and soil, a product is obtained nearly as constant in composition as if made in a chemical works. I think the vastly increased life of motor car tyres shows the improvements in natural rubber processing which have been made.—("The Changing Bases of Society" Discussion between K. B. Cumberland and H. N. Parton, 3YA, June 25.)