

DID YOU HEAR THIS?

Extracts From Recent Talks

The Shepherd and His Dog

YOU can picture how very close is the bond between shepherd and dogs. They are his one essential—just as necessary to him as his instruments to the surgeon or his clues to a detective—at any rate a detective in novels. They are the standing topic in the cookhouse — shepherds talk far more about them than they do about girls, whatever people may say.



For girls come and go—but dogs live and die with the same master. They cause a good deal of trouble, too. Many a bet has been lost and many a fight started by these amiable animals. And—if the station owner happens to be mean about dog-tucker—well, he pays in the end. The meat safe has been known

to open mysteriously in the night and, when the cook comes to get the chops for breakfast, there is much cursing in the cookhouse—but you'll notice that the dogs wear a smug look this morning and there are a lot of chop bones round the kennels. The shepherd must have his wages and the dog his meat — for those are his only pay. And he earns it. Dawn has not broken very often when the shepherd yawns his way out to the kennels. The dogs are all on the watch. Which will he take to-day? Two or three are chosen; the rest subside sadly in their kennels watching the lucky ones go leaping after the master. They lie there sulking and planning the unpleasant things they will do to those favoured dogs when they come home to-night — for work is the sheep-dog's whole life. It may be a hard one, but he enjoys it and at least he knows that he is an essential worker — and never more so than to-day.—(*"Our Animal Friends—The Shepherd's Dog."* Mrs. Mary Scott, 2YA, October 18.)

A Scientist's Religion

PERHAPS I might try to explain the religion of a scientist not in my own words but in those of Dr. Gottlieb in the novel *Martin Arrowsmith*, by Sinclair Lewis. You may not agree with portions of it but here it is. "To be a scientist—it is not just a different job, so that a man should choose between being a scientist and being an explorer or a bond-salesman or a physician or a farmer. It is a tangle of very obscure emotions, like mysticism or wanting to write poetry, it makes its victim all different from the good normal man. The normal man, he does not care much what he does except that he should eat and sleep and make love. But the scientist is intensely religious—he is so religious that he will not accept quarter truths, because they are an insult to his faith. He wants that everything should be subject to inexorable laws. He is equally opposed to the capitalists who think their money grabbing is a system and to liberals who think man is not a fighting animal. He is not too kindly to the anthropologists and historians who can only make guesses and yet they have the nerve to call themselves scientists. Yes, he is a man that all nice good-natured people should naturally hate. He speaks no meaner of the ridiculous faith healers than he does of some doctors that want to snatch our science before it is tested and rush around hoping they heal people and spoiling all their clues with their footsteps. He must be heartless but really in private he is not cold or heart-

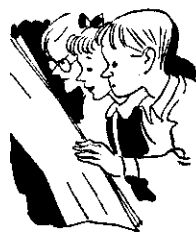
Children Need Sleep

ONE of the greatest handicaps that child-life can suffer is lack of proper rest. Plenty is heard about the need for adequate food and exercise, but we don't hear enough about the need for plenty of sleep. It is this aspect that I want to stress now. Every child must have plenty of sleep. The Auckland headmasters go so far as to suggest that a curfew regulation should be introduced for primary school children so as to keep them off the streets after a certain hour each evening, except, of course, in special circumstances. They also suggest that school teachers should emphasise the value of the golden rule "early to bed and early to rise." Let me add that doctors have laid down the following schedule of hours of sleep for children: Under 5 years, 12 hours' sleep; 6 to 11 years, 11 hours; 12 to 14 years, 10 hours; and up to 17 years, 9½ or 10 hours. Regular hours should be kept, even in summer, and a quiet period of about half an hour before going to bed is desirable. Once a routine is established it is not hard to keep it up. Always remember that insufficient sleep produces an irritable child who cries easily, has no appetite, and loses weight. I leave it to the parents.—(*"Sleep and the Child,"* by Doctor H. B. Turbott, 1YA, October 14.)

less—so much less cold than the professional optimists. The world has always been ruled by the philanthropists—by the soldiers that want something to defend their country against, by the kind manufacturers that love their workers, by eloquent statesmen and soft-hearted authors—and see what a fine mess they have made of the world. Maybe now it is time for the scientist who works and searches and never goes around howling how he loves everybody. To be a scientist is like being a Goethe—it is born in you. If it is born in you then there are three things to do; work twice as hard as you can, keep people from using you and protect yourself from success." —(*"Science as a Profession."* L. H. Briggs, 1YA, October 9.)

History Up-to-Date

A: DO you remember last week we were talking of the man who hates Shakespeare because he had to read him in school. Teachers are coming more and more to realise that the best way to teach the history of literature is to teach it backwards. And the same thing is true of the teaching of a great deal of history. When I was at school we began each year with Julius Caesar in 55 B.C. and by the end of the session had got up to Barbarossa and the Medicis. Next year back we went to Julius Caesar again. It wasn't till my last year at school that a fortunate accident put me under a master who actually had the effrontery to begin at the beginning of the nineteenth century and by the end of the year he was encouraging us to bring the morning paper into the history class. We suddenly realised that Julius Caesar and the morning paper were both history, and strange though



it may seem our reading of the morning paper brought Julius Caesar closer to us. The same thing is true of the appreciation of literature.

B: To which I say fervently, Hear! Hear! No one even thought of bringing a morning paper into class when I was at school. Incidentally, we used to start books and never finish them. I don't think we finished one of the French set books, which made the lessons very dull. I may say the books were generally pretty dull to begin with.—(*"Can Literary Appreciation Be Taught?"* A discussion with Professor Gordon, 2YA, October 20.)

Humour Amid Pathos

TYPICAL of the sights we saw daily was a wizened old farmer who came to rest on my door step the first morning I was home. I watched him struggle up the street in his homely light blue cotton coat and trousers carefully patched in many faded shades of blue. His face was streaming with the heat under his conical straw hat, and on his shoulder he carried a long bamboo pole on both ends of which hung baskets. These were packed full of his most precious possessions, bundles of clothing, cooking pots, food, and, in one basket sat a tiny two-year-old baby, dressed in brilliant scarlet with his funny little head shaved bald excepting for a tiny pigtail which stuck up vertically from the top of his head. In the other basket, sharing equal honours with the baby, and packed so tightly that he could not escape, was a little fat pink pig! The old man had obviously walked a very long way and was very tired, and, as he settled on my door step to rest, I sent my Chinese servant out to speak to him and offer him a cup of tea and a bowl of rice to help him on his way.—(*"What It's Like to Be a Refugee—An Observer in the Far East."* Barbara J. Collins, 2YA, October 15.)

Book Cemetery

IF you can pass a second-hand bookshop without the sensation of an invisible hand clutching you by the coat collar and pulling you inside, you miss one of the joys of life. Of course you must have an objective; there is nothing more depressing than to browse aimlessly among rows and rows of books without the slightest idea of what you are looking for. You get that feeling described so vividly by Lord Rosebery when he opened the Mitchell Library of Glasgow, with its aggregation of a quarter of a million volumes on its shelves. "The last of the great orators" (as he has been termed) must have shocked that gathering of 5,000 people when he said: "I feel an intense depression at this enormous aggregation of books, this cemetery of books, because after all, most of them are dead. The percentage of living books is exceedingly small. Some of these folios are so absolutely dead that no human being out of a madhouse would ask for them. In the coming years they will shrug their barren backs at you, appealing as it were for someone to come and take them down, and rescue them from the collection of dust, and from the neglect into which they have deservedly fallen. Think how many baffled ambitions, disappointed hopes and crushed aspirations are represented on these shelves! I have seen books to-day so large that the present generation cannot handle them, bales of sermons which have given satisfaction to no one but their authors, innumerable volumes of forgotten science, superseded history, and biographies of people whom no one cares about."—(*"The Lone Shieling of the Misty Island."* A. J. Sinclair, 12M, October 19.)