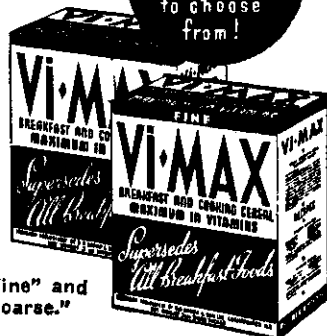




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DID YOU HEAR THIS?

Extracts From Recent Talks

One Person Per Acre

A DUTCH proverb says, God made the sea, but the Dutchman made the land. That proverb expresses the history of Holland, or more correctly the Netherlands. Holland is the name of the most important part of the country only, but is widely used to indicate the whole of the country. It is a little wedge of country, with a lot of water in it, facing the great rollers of the North Sea. Except in the centre and in the South East near the German border, the country is quite flat. Two large rivers, the Rhine and the Meuse, run through it, and there are 4700 miles of canals and navigable rivers. The country is only 12,700 miles in area, that is, considerably less than one-third the size of the North Island of New Zealand. Forty per cent. of it is below flood level, and 25 per cent. below sea level. This doesn't leave a great deal of land for cultivation, and so, when you realise that there are over eight million people in it—one person to every acre—you can understand that life, for the people of the Netherlands, has been a pretty desperate struggle. — ("Our Allies the Dutch." National Service Talk, 2YA, March 8.)



and impaired on them were square pieces of tripe. It looked such cold, anaemic, and uninteresting stuff that I got somebody else to deal with the tripe merchant. While the bargaining was going on I looked out of the window and found a cat disporting itself on the hand cart, helping itself to a free meal of tripe. That settled it! I instinctively took a dislike to what I believe is a most palatable food. Many a time I have been coaxed to sample it, but no—I shall go tripeless to my grave, and doubtless having missed one of the good things of life.—("Just Growing Older." Major F. H. Lampen, 2YA, March 12.)

Trees as Playmates

RABINDRANATH TAGORE in his prose poem *Life and Mind*, gives expression to his admiration for a tree: "So long as I was a wanderer I had not time to glance at the wayside tree; to-day I have left the beaten path and can chat with it." And he gives us the benefit of the chat. Addressing the tree: "I am your playmate. For millions of years in this earthen playhouse I have drunk deep draughts of sunlight with you, and with you have I shared the milky sap from the breasts of the earth." Later in the poem he speaks of the tree as a source of inspiration: "In me the life-spark has grown dim under the fumes of thought. So, to see its undarkened flash, I have to turn to the grass, to the tree. I see how this life-spark revels in itself; how it dresses itself in millions of patterns of leaves and flowers and fruits, full of sap, full of scent, full of colour." — ("Bush-Trekking." Rcw Glenn, 2YA, March 10.)



Poetry And Painting

BROWNING is even more illuminating about painting than he is about music. He is the painter's poet. The reason is that he loved painting and sculpture with something of William Morris's passion—loved it as a live thing, studied its technique, and practised it himself. Chesterton says of Browning's poems about art that they smell of paint. Browning could not merely talk art with artists—he could talk shop with them. One of Browning's poems is called "Pacchiarotho and How He Worked in Distemper." Chesterton cites the case of a woman who thought Pacchiarotho was the name of a dog, and distemper his disease. Distemper here is, of course, a method of painting.—("More Than One String to their Bows." 2YA, March 8.)

No Tripe!

IN those early days there was nothing I liked better than to answer the doorbell when I heard it ringing. The fisherman, the coalman, the milkman, the gasman, even the onion man, were all friends of mine. The onion man, by the way, was only a bird of passage as he used to come over from France and sell strings of Spanish onions from door to door during the season. We got on fairly well together, as by this time I could speak three or four short sentences in very poor French. Then one day, a new man came to the door and wanted to know if we wanted any tripe. He was carrying a few long wooden skewers in his hand

"Tell me, doctor

... Here's the antiseptic you told me to get. Surely it's the same as they used when I was in hospital—when baby was born! Tell me, would it be?"



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