

sheltering behind the Navy while they get properly ready at home.

As Stephen King-Hall is saying as loud and as often as he can, the first three weeks will be vital. However, as I say, that has not penetrated yet, and in the meantime the three months since the crisis have been practically wasted. In Liverpool, for instance, no one is any wiser as to what they would have to do in a war than they were at the end of September.

Bomb-proof shelters? A figment of the imagination, my dear sir!



HENCE you will be able to see that, because my work brings me into daily discussions on political this and that, I am in an almost 99 per cent. state of gloomy foreboding. But whenever possible, I adopt the "let's make - merry - while - we're still - time" attitude. So I look with pleasurable anticipation on three weeks in London over Christmas and New Year. The last time I was there was during the height of the crisis (the September one, that is—in case there's another by the time you get this). But there's no need for me to tell you what it was like with the sacred squares being dug day and night for trenches; with an "Evening Standard" bill-board one night saying "BE CALM AND DIG"; with pitifully few anti-aircraft guns poking their snouts to the sky; with the ner-

"apart" from them—life pretty well as interesting as usual. I've given so many talks on New Zealand in the past few months that I'm becoming thoroughly tired of the place!

And sometimes I feel that I would like to return for a few days just to see if it really is as I think and say it is. I've more than a vague suspicion that "absence, etc." MIGHT do what it is said to do! Perhaps you'll enlighten me as to your reactions now that you've apparently settled in again.



SINCE you left I've been moving about this "green and pleasant land" (i.e., the part between those conglomerations of smoke and slums called cities), sipping cider in ancient pubs in Dorset (glorious county) in the South, and rambling over the hills of the Lake District in the North. Incidentally, at Coniston, ideal lake in the autumn golden brown when the trippers have gone, I was strolling in a churchyard waiting for opening time when I nearly fell on Ruskin's grave!

Incredible place, this England!

And there IS something about it, provided you are not condemned for life to such horrors as Liverpool possesses with its sooty buildings, its empty buildings, its unfortunate unemployed, and its black grime. True, London has all those; but then, London has so much else be-

Nesbitt Sellers's employer in England is famous Commander Stephen King-Hall, writer, broadcaster and politician. When the "Record" once used one of King-Hall's articles without his authority he wrote a terse letter to the paper. Matters were happily smoothed over by the gift of a case of New Zealand apples from the "Record" to the commander!

campanile, the Doge's Palace, and all the rest, for ever—provided, that is, that Mussolini didn't come along and cast a shadow on the glories.

I nearly drowned in the warm waters of the Lido, partly because it WAS the Lido and partly because it was so marvellous to get some sea that was worth swimming in and didn't look dirty and cold.

Incidentally, on that trip I swam in the Danube, the Lido, Lake Garda and on the Italian Riviera. Not bad, eh? The Rhine looked just a little too big.



FOR candour about our own Royal Family one must look to the Americans, whose newspapers have long regarded the



be the next Governors-General of Australia and Canada.



AND the Duke of Windsor, ace Empire "salesman," will return to a role of Royal usefulness second only to that of the King himself.

Payment

vous tension of wondering whether it was really real that London MIGHT be devastated by bombs—London, centre of the world!



WE found the crisis very expensive. Whenever we had no work to do and became too glum, we hid ourselves to the "local" — generally with most effective results. One day we went to a little village about 20 miles out. Call it X. There the locals were saying, "Wot's all this about these 'ere See-zecks, these 'ere Sudeneese, and this 'ere 'Itteler?" I really believe they thought the Sudeneese were black.

I have lately been again to the same village. Now the locals are saying, "Aye, this 'ere 'Itteler—'e must be stopped. But 'OW?" So you see, England is awakening.



APART from the political and international situations—if anything in life now can be

sides, and London is London—the place where you feel that life is grand and full of elan. Is that not so?



OF course, apart from London, the chief joy of being here is that it's so near the Continent. As you probably know, I had a perfectly wonderful 4000-mile trip through Ger-

by

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many and Italy last August.

Did you call at Venice? There's a place for you! For me the most beautiful city in the world. I could sit in the Piazza San Marco sipping wine in the sunshine and gazing at the crowds, the cathedral, the

Crown as first-rate "copy." In "Look" I found the following:

King George has cast aside the do-nothing role his advisers designed for him and has taken a lead in affairs of the Royal Family and the Empire without parallel since Victoria's reign. His immediate objectives already almost achieved are: (1) to bring the Duke of Windsor back into the Royal fold and (2) to put all four Royal brothers, including himself and Edward, to work vigorously for the Empire.



WHEN he was enthroned twenty months ago, the new King was expected to be a mere passive symbol of monarchy. The biggest Royal "build-up" in history was conducted to distract attention from Edward's abdication and George VI's supposed handicaps of health, speech and personality.

But in the troubled wake of the Munich crisis King George has shown a firm will and a thoughtful mind combined with smooth tact.



COURT circles know nobody else could have healed the Windsor breach, for it required delicate handling both of emotions within the Royal Family and of British political sentiment.

They knew, too, that George VI impelled the sudden but well-planned programme of activity for the Royal Family. He will set the pace himself next summer with his trip to America. The Duke of Kent and the Duke of Gloucester will

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