



# “ENGLAND, with all thy faults, I love thee still”

**M**OST people who arrived in England in the early summer will probably agree that their first vivid impression is of the greenness of the countryside. This is often first perceived as one passes up Channel, when the rounded hills of Devonshire come into view, with further on the Isle of Wight, and the broad, rich Kentish meadows. This greenness is pleasant and grateful to the eye that has seen nothing but rolling seas for so long, but as we sail past Southend and the shore lightship and enter the Thames, it is not long before green fields give place to factories, dockyards, and endless rows of chimney-pots. For your happiest early impression of England it is better to land at Plymouth or Southampton, and travel to London by train, rather than to land in the Port of London especially on a day that may be cold and wet and foggy.

There is as much romance and history (and perhaps more real humanity) in the East End of London as there is in the West, but it is mostly ugly, monotonous streets—endless streets—that one drives through to reach a West End hotel or railway station, and your first impressions of the great city you have wanted all your life to see, may be disappointing and depressing.

London to the tourist is the West End with its parks and squares, its theatres and its shops. These are the things he has heard of and has come so far to see. And though he achieves so short and superficial an acquaintance with London, he feels under the spell that London casts on everyone—a spell that for those who really know the life of London, who live and work there—is a lasting and powerful one.

The fiery patriotism of the Scot does not excel the devotion of the Londoner to his great city. London is a royal city and as such stands aloof and indifferent, one feels, to the opinions of those who come to visit her.

Cities such as Paris or Brussels rather look for compliments and praise of their beauty. London is so sure of herself, so fine and of such ancient glory and dignity that ordinary words of praise are inappropriate.

But London is not England. Once you pass beyond its outer limits into the country and the country towns and the great industrial cities of the North, you realise that there is only one London and that everything else is—as one says—“different.” So that to understand the real England, do not spend too long in London. Travel through the countryside, northward, westward and to the south.

**T**HERE is no countryside in the world with quite the same charm as England, the quiet, gentle charm of village and wood and stream and hedgerow—and trees everywhere.

The elm is the commonest tree seen, and is, I think, the least beautiful. In Devonshire are the oak woods, on the South Downs and

North Downs are the beeches, in Surrey and Hampshire the pine woods. They are fond of their trees in England and conserve them carefully.

In New Zealand we burn and destroy with little compunction, though in recent years greater care has been taken; in England the art of forestry and tree surgery is understood and carefully practised.

Some of the counties of England have a character of their own, Surrey, Sussex, Somerset, Devonshire, Cornwall, the Fen Country, and the North of England. Other counties, such as Warwickshire, are, so to speak, just England. The ancient cathedrals, abbeys and churches have grown up with the life of England, are a part of her, because in them, as in all her ancient (Concluded on page 8.)

*In this talk from 3YA, Dr. F. V. Bevan Brown, who has recently returned from a trip to the Mother Country, describes some aspects of England and English life as he saw it. He went abroad, spending five days in Holland, and continues to give his impressions of that country, which has been reclaimed from the sea and held only because of the tenacity and skill of its people—the Dutch.*

*Doctor Bevan-Brown called his talk “Some Impressions of England and Holland,” but on hearing it we felt constrained to give it another title and say, with Cowper, “England, with all thy faults, I love thee still.”*