

STATIC

by
"SPARK"

THERE have been many talks recently from YA stations upon impressions of Holland, and one of the most interesting was that given by Mr. R. McGillivray from 3YA. Every visitor to the Netherlands is immediately impressed by the industrious habits of the people, their generous hospitality and proverbial cleanliness. It was mentioned that there is no language difficulty for the foreigner in Holland. The very young man usually seen behind the inquiry counter at the post office in the larger towns is frequently fluent in six or eight European languages, and the lads in the street can usually speak three languages. Holland has many art galleries, and evidence of wealth acquired from a colonial empire meet the visitor at every turn. The people greatly admire their seamen who founded their colonies. Statues to great admirals are to be seen in nearly every little "dorp." In fact the Dutch think much more of their defunct admirals than they do of their great painters. At school pupils learn much more about their historical sailors than the artists who made Holland famous in Europe before the Spanish yoke was thrown off and the Indies were conquered.

AS elsewhere on the Continent, the cafes are centres of attraction to any English-speaking visitor, and the severe climate of Holland is proof that the adoption of the system is not impossible in countries where the public house supplies the needs of the thirsty and weary. No tourist in the spring or summer can talk of Holland without mentioning the flowers, which strikingly add colour to an otherwise colourless country, but I prefer Holland in mid-winter, when skating carnivals take everybody to the frozen canals, and all the world is in merry mood. Every old building is a memorial to the Netherlands' one hundred and fifty years of war against the Spaniard. The Dutch deserve the tribute paid to the little boy who poked his thumb into the hole in the dyke, and thus saved his country so that other little boys from six years of age upwards may smoke fat cigars in the streets to-day.

FOR the last of the series upon "Great Personalities and their Influence," Mr. L. F. De Berry (3YA) spoke of Cecil John Rhodes, a figure who has left his mark upon the world, but who contrasts immensely with the other great men that have been subjects of Mr. De Berry's lecturettes. It is impossible to estimate the value of such scholarly men as De Vinci, Sir Thomas

The Fight

This paragraph wins "Spark's" 5/- prize for the best paragraph sent in during the week. Address entries "Spark," Box 1032, Wellington.

We had been listening the previous night to the boxing contests in New Plymouth, and it had all sounded rather terrifying to our gentle mother, who was on a visit to us from the south. This night, a little after 8 o'clock, I turned to Auckland, but found that everything was not as it should be—the sounds were thick and almost indistinguishable. Partly in explanation and partly in defence of my set, I remarked: "There's a regular fight on between Auckland and some Australian station." At which mother held up her hands and cried: "No, no, no! We don't want any more fighting. It's too bloodthirsty. Let's have Dunedin."

More and Henri Pestalozzi, but with Rhodes we are able to discern something tangible. This great business magnate with imperial dreams, accomplished something concrete within his own time and judgement upon his influence is possible. Unknown at the age of thirty-two, fallen at forty-four, and dead at forty-nine, Rhodes' meteoric career, spirit of service and sense of stewardship, make a romance in history that will last for all time.

THE very arresting series of stories with comments, of "Famous British Murder Trials," by Mr. C. A. L. Treadwell, from 2YA, was brought to a conclusion with an account of the life and trial of Dr. H. H. Crippen. This murder case was in our time, and many remember the trial and the part played by wireless which led to the arrest of Crippen. Crippen was an American citizen who, after attending many and varied universities and hospitals, eventually established himself as an eye-specialist and patent medicine advertising agent, in London. His wife, a veritable trull, with early ambitions for grand opera and later ambitions for third rate placing at second rate music-halls, was well-known to musical hall frequenters in London. In conjunction with the husband's and wife's professional vocations Mrs. Crippen conducted a boarding-house, and the sill of the kitchen window in this abode of a trollope, epitomised the propriety. On this might be seen letters, cosmetics, all kinds of apparel, saucepan lids and anything that the ledge would hold. In this uncleaned house where Mrs. Crippen harboured some of her lovers, the poor little wizened Doctor acted as boots and general menial, during the hours that his

office did not claim him. Some time after Mrs. Crippen's unexplained disappearance, Ethel Le Neve, the Doctor's ostensibly unsophisticated typist, was seen about with Crippen, wearing some of the wife's jewellery. This ultimately led to a search of Crippen's house, where human remains were discovered behind some brickwork. In the meantime a Mr. and Master Robinson had departed for Canada, and this is where the new miracle—wireless—played a part, as the two voyagers were arrested on the arrival of the ship at its destination. The Robinsons were Dr. Crippen and Le Neve, who were later returned to London, where Crippen was found guilty, and Le Neve discharged.

CRIPPEN was not very ably defended at his trial, said Mr. Treadwell, and many will agree with him. Although a great number do not think that Crippen should have escaped punishment, many think that he should not have been hanged. I was resident in London at the time, and the sordid details revealed by the half-penny press, were departures not usual with the traditional sobriety of English newspaperdom. A wave of pity swept the country among the temperate minded people, for the uncomplaining decrepid old man whose marital life had been one long period of misery. Le Neve also was the object of much pity until she accepted an engagement to appear on the music halls. Then there was an outcry—and not from the squeamish only, but from every decent person in the kingdom. Any pity that remained for Le Neve disappeared when a few days later some queer and wealthy individual whose compassion and values became mixed offered her

marriage, to make an honest woman of her. They were a queer lot, and the little old man was the best of them.

WHENEVER conditions were favourable I never missed the opportunity of listening to Captain Robertson, when he was scheduled to speak on "Flying" from 2UE, Sydney. His racy style, together with his lucid replies to correspondents, always made his appearance at the microphone welcome. Captain Robertson is so completely air-minded that he has no difficulty whatever in conveying to his hearers that there is really nothing in flying. Very apparently it is a matter of caution and confidence to commence with, and a good deal of human mechanism, once the pupil is familiar with the air.

PROSPECTIVE and even practical aeronauts were fortunate if they were tuned to 2YA on Wednesday evening last, when Captain Robertson gave a very illuminating talk on "Safety of the Air." The speaker emphasised the need for a thorough and actual training on the aerodrome ground, although he hoped that his little talk would help, and to the young men and women who propose learning to fly it certainly should have helped as it familiarised listeners with the instruments and controls of the ordinary plane. It was explained that there was nothing haphazard in training pilots. The system has advanced hand in hand with scientific developments, and instruction is given in carefully graduated stages by specialists employing only training aircraft, which offer maximum safety and complete facilities for instruction. It is incumbent upon New Zealanders to become air-minded as early as possible. Flying services in other lands have attained a pitch of perfection that is really amazing, and although many obstacles preclude aviation developing along ordinary lines in this country, with its mountains and high winds, specially designed planes for the comparatively short distances of regular routes hold out a promise of an efficient service as soon as air-sense is developed. Talks by authorities like Captain Robertson go a long way towards that ideal.

I LIKED the story of Mr. David Moore, from 2YA, of the owner who was mourning the loss of his dog and was commiserated with by the padre who, being a dog-lover too, gave the dog a soul—which he deserved—and informed the bereaved that he would meet his dog again—