

## LEONARDO'S GREAT FRESCO

### A Beautiful Mosaic for Birmingham

#### MILLIONS OF TINY PIECES

A rare and lovely thing, which for years has been seen by only the few, has been found a place in Birmingham where it can now be seen by the many.

It is a mosaic copy of Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper. The artist is unknown, nor is it possible to estimate the value of the picture in money; but what is certain about it is that it must have occupied its maker a good part of a lifetime. Experts who have seen it say it is one of the finest examples of glass-mosaic in Europe.

It is marvellously put together. There are millions of tiny pieces of mosaic, of which thousands could be covered by a watch. Every piece would have to be made separately by mixing powdered glass, oxides of metal, and other colouring matter, and fired in a furnace to fuse and harden into enamel. Then the pieces would be embedded in the cementing material, which is laid on a foundation of copper.

#### Rich Colour Harmonies

In this way the rich colour harmonies of the original have been faithfully reproduced. How lovingly the artist must have matched and graduated his colours and fixed each minute piece in position, knowing well that years must elapse before his labours ended and the picture stood complete! Little could he have dreamed that his work, done in another country, would find its way to such a place as the Central Hall of Birmingham Wesleyan Mission.

The mosaic was in the possession of Lord Dudley's family for many years, and was bought, in all probability, during travels in Italy. It came into the hands of Mr. John Gibbins, of the Ruskin Gallery, Birmingham, and was bought and given to the Central Hall as a memorial by the son of a man who was formerly treasurer there.

## HEIR OF KING CANUTE

### In Search of a Pedigree

For thirteen years a bookish gentleman has been haunting the British Museum in search of his pedigree.

As King Canute (to rebuke his flatterers) bade the tide go back, so did this gentleman bid Time turn back. At length he has satisfied himself that the family legend is true and that he really can claim Canute for his ancestor.

Ernst Vladimir Stanislas is his name, and he is the eldest son of Prince von Dembinski, who left Poland to become a British subject after the Crimean War. The present prince was born in England, took his M.A. at Oxford, and lives at Chiswick.

To all intents and purposes he is British—as British as the waves that took no notice of Canute's flatterers.

Prince von Dembinski is descended from Clotilda, Canute's daughter, who married a duke of Lotharingia. The family went to Poland in the eleventh century, and in 1279 one of them founded Warsaw, which was named after him. After all these centuries Canute's kinsman has returned to the isle Canute conquered.

Prince von Dembinski believes that eleven rich States in West Prussia really belong to him; but the descendant of the Norse king continues to be a quiet London citizen, living in ordinary fashion at 49, Barrowgate Road, Chiswick, and his years of dusty search have brought him only an illustrious ancestor.

## MUSSOLINI'S STAR CHAMBER

### The Exiles of Lipari

#### TERRIBLE PUNISHMENT FOR NOT BEING A FASCIST

Though Signor Mussolini has silenced many of his political opponents by imprisoning them on the Island of Lipari and other islands of deportation, he cannot silence Professor Carlo Rosselli, who has escaped.

The gravity of Professor Rosselli's charges does not consist in his description of the forms of imprisonment inflicted on these political prisoners, but in the way imprisonment arises.

There are two kinds of penalty in Italy. The first are the legal ones. The second are those which arise from the power conferred on the police to arrest anyone summarily and keep him in custody without trial, defence, or cross-examination.

#### Star Chamber Methods

These are what in England 300 years ago were called Star Chamber methods. From Professor Rosselli's descriptions, although the prisons of Northern Italy are not so bad, those in Southern Italy to which political prisoners may be sent are about the same as, if not worse than, English prisons under the wretched James the First.

The sanitary conditions are terrible; the daily ration of food is soup and a roll.

The political prisoners, nearly 1000 in number, suffer most from being herded with common criminals.

For the herding with criminals of men and women of good character, however much their politics may differ from those of the Fascists, there is no excuse. Nor is there any for detaining anyone without trial. That itself is a crime in any civilised country.

## ALL YOU WHO SEE A Word For Those Who Cannot

One of the appeals that the C.N. feels must succeed, instantly and completely, is that for providing every blind person with a wireless set.

The need for it is so great that the demand is irresistible. By an easy use of wireless the blind can come into contact with the world in many interesting and stimulating ways. Their whole life may be enlarged.

Of course a great many of the blind have the use of a wireless set already; but it is calculated that 15,000 have not. That is a loss the British people will not bear to think of. It must cease to exist.

That this is the universal feeling is shown by the completeness of the list of those who endorse the appeal for a Fund. The Prince of Wales is president, and the supporters represent all the Churches, all the politicians, and Science and Art.

The Treasurer of the British Wireless for the Blind Fund is the Mr. Reginald McKenna, 226, Great Portland Street, London, W.1. Please send a mite, all you who hear and see.

## MAKING THE TALKIE LESS SQUAWKIE

One of the services now making talking films sound more natural is a new kind of loud speaker the trumpet of which is of such huge dimensions that the entire screen on which the pictures are seen can be stretched over it.

The screen itself is made of very porous material which allows the sound to come through to the audience, and tones it in quality so that any harshness is avoided. These new loud speakers are the outcome of months of experiment, and so is the material of which the screen is made.

## OUR HERITAGE

### A Fine New Library

English Heritage Series. (Longmans. 3s. 6d.)

Shakespeare, by John Bailey.

English Humour, by J. B. Priestley.

English Wild Life, by Eric Parker.

The English Public School, by Bernard Darwin.

The C.N. congratulates Messrs. Longmans on this most promising series, edited by Lord Lee of Farnham and Mr. J. C. Squire, and introduced, with a typical appreciation of English country life, by Mr. Baldwin.

We have indeed a goodly heritage, and these books, with others to follow, are designed to make it popularly appreciated. The writers are wisely chosen; the books are tastefully produced; the price is temptingly reasonable.

#### Our Shakespeare

No living literary critic allures his readers more than Mr. John Bailey, the chairman of the National Trust. He always busies himself with central truths. It is so in this presentation of Shakespeare. He sees him as "a man kindly, friendly, gentle, genial; of a poetic genius so great as perhaps to have no rival in human history; yet also of a strong common sense and sure instinct for the practical conduct of life. No one ever was more English than he."

Starting with this note, Mr. Bailey studies the poet in his strength and his weaknesses. He sees him capable of absorbing all human experience and interpreting it universally. He advises readers to begin with the best plays and "drain at one draught the cup of genius."

A fine example of constructive criticism, sound, bright, and stimulating.

#### Our Humour

Is there an English brand of humour? Mr. Priestley contends there is, and he analytically traces it to its depths in English character. What is more, he evidently believes that it is the truest and most fundamental form of humour.

Starting with medieval clowning, Mr. Priestley traces English humour through our comedians, our comic art, our literature since Chaucer down to Punch. His conclusion is that our humour is one of our most glorious heritages and not the least of our trusts.

#### Our Public Schools

Mr. Bernard Darwin, who writes this bright survey of our Public Schools, is most generally known as a clever commentator on sports. He approaches his subject modestly, for it covers a wide and varied field. Eton was his school, but how shall that experience cover the rest of the schools? From that doubt he proceeds till his task evidently gives him a feeling of cheery enjoyment.

#### Our English Wild Life

All lovers of open-air life and observers of wild creatures that fly, or run, or creep, should welcome this fascinating book and put it where they can refer to it again and again.

Mr. Eric Parker has a remarkable knowledge of the haunts of wild things over a wide range of the country. He is an independent observer and tells what he has seen and heard with confidence but without dogmatism. He never writes finely for the sake of writing; but says what he has noticed with clearness, grace, and a feeling that fits the scene.

Beginning with the animals that are past, or passing, he goes on to the life of sea and shore, mountain and forest, moor and field, the wood, the river, the lake, and the pond, and finishes with observations by night. There is no better book, covering so wide a range, in such a compendious form.

## STAINLESS STEEL

### A Master Fact of Invention

#### WHAT MAY COME OF IT

*Good, said the Baron, sitting in his hall,  
For iron, cold iron, is the master of us all.*

Stainless steel may one day be the master of us all in the world of invention. It may revolutionise the British flying-boat and aircraft industry. Until lately this metal did not always live up to its high-sounding name, for it corroded in sea water.

After experimenting as patiently as any alchemist of old, Messrs. T. Firth and Son have evolved a nickel chromium steel which is definitely resistant to sea-water action. So great is the success of this precious new metal that flying-boats fitted with stainless steel-plated hulls will have a longer life than a ship. It is believed that the new hulls will be practically everlasting.

#### For Flying-Boat Hulls

For years the flying-boat designer has looked longingly at some kind of stainless steel as the ideal covering for flying-boat hulls up to the water line. The usual duralumin covering is liable to sea-water corrosion and must be constantly watched.

This particular type of steel becomes harder with cold rolling, so that special mills, stout enough to roll the required sizes of sheet steel, were set up by this enterprising firm.

Already Short Brothers of Rochester had experimented in all-steel aircraft, and they had been pressing steel makers to experiment in stainless steel. Directly this discovery was made they set to work enthusiastically to find out the difficult workshop technique for moulding this hard plate, which has a density three times that of duralumin, to the shape of a flying-boat hull.

It seems only a question of time for the manufacture of all-stainless steel aircraft both on land and water, for the extra weight is very slight.

## A STORIED STONE

### Pointing to an Ancient City

On the fringe of the plains of Phrygia, where Haroun-al-Raschid met Nicephorus the Roman general, a new village school was being built when Professor W. M. Calder was examining the region.

It was the symbol of the new knowledge arising on the foundations of ancient history, but its interest to Professor Calder arose from a single stone dug up from the old site.

It was inscribed with Greek characters. How had it come there? The villagers readily told the professor. It had come from a place of ruins just over the hill which was called Adaras.

Adaras, thought the archaeologist, "that sounds strangely like Hadrian," and when the site was examined it turned out to be the ancient city of Hadrianople, long lost, and now discovered to be lying on the forgotten road to Neapolis.

Thus knowledge grows from more to more.

## OUR BOOTS

If proof were wanted that the British are a highly civilised people it would be found in the output of British boots and shoes. The trade produces 120 million pairs a year.

That is nearly three pairs for every man, woman, and child in the British Isles. But Sir William Larke, who has quoted these figures, remarks that the money spent on research was only one farthing for thirty pairs!

A few more farthings might export more boots.