

JOSEPH PAXTON'S GLASSHOUSE

BLOWN TO BITS IN A MOMENT

One of the Surprising Little
Effects of the Great War

TROUBLES OF THE RICH

Some of the richest people in the world are having to change their lives because of the taxation following the war. They feel they must "cut their coats according to the cloth" available.

Among the foremost of the British nobility stand the Dukes of Devonshire, respected for their birth, public services, and well-used wealth. But they find that changing times are bringing a throng of difficulties around them, and the present Duke is facing the new conditions with energy and good sense.

He finds that the country is taking the cream off his wealth in taxation, on the ground that all who can pay must. But he cannot pay and also keep up the great country houses and estates left him by his ancestors; and so he is reducing his expenses, getting rid of what is costly yet of insufficient use. He is selling his house in London, and reducing the staffs of his country palaces.

Mansion Millions Have Loved

Devonshire House is being sold as a site for a cinema and other amusements, and the great conservatory at Chatsworth House, the beautifully-placed palace of the Peak, has been blown up to escape the cost of maintenance.

Who can blame the Duke? He, and the Dukes before him, have been very kind. They have kept up a lovely estate at great expense, and freely allowed everyone to see its beauties. They have never been mean or exclusive.

It is a pity if Chatsworth must cease to be the Chatsworth millions have admired, for it is one of the most English things in England. And it is a pity that Joseph Paxton's conservatory should perish, though a larger and improved copy of it still stands as the Crystal Palace at Sydenham. [See page six.]

Builder Copies a Water Lily

The conservatory, it is true, was but a big house of iron and glass, built on lines suggested to Paxton by the growth of a huge water lily; but it preserved the fine story of its designer.

When he was 25 years old, Joseph Paxton, a young Bedfordshire man, was working as an under-gardener for 18 shillings a week at the Royal Horticultural Gardens, Chiswick. There the Duke of Devonshire surprised him one day by offering him the head-gardener's position at Chatsworth.

The beauty of Chatsworth outside the house is largely due to the taste of Joseph Paxton. He laid it out, arranged its water system, and built the great conservatory now shattered by explosives into a million bits. It had 40,000 panes of glass. It was 277 feet long, 123 feet wide, and 67 feet high. It had six miles of waterpipes, and the cost of heating it before the war was £1500 a year.

Palace Ends in a Crash

In spite of the high value of material, the high cost of labour made it too costly to take the house to pieces, and it was decided to blow it all to smithereens with 150 pounds of explosives. The noise was heard seven miles away, and in a twinkling this great place was just a ruined mass.

Paxton also built the Great Exhibition building of 1851, in Hyde Park, since moved to Sydenham, and called the Crystal Palace. He was knighted as Sir Joseph, and elected to Parliament, but he ever remained the same kindly countryman who went down to Chatsworth as head gardener, and married the housekeeper's pretty niece.

Strange, is it not, that the war for democracy has shattered Joseph Paxton's great glasshouse? *Photograph on page 12*

SNAKE STORIES

FROM FIELD & THEATRE

The Fatal Adder of the British
Isles

TALE FROM A LONELY FARM

Three thrilling snake stories have just come into the papers.

One is of a little boy of two years old who ran into his home in Pembrokeshire with an adder round his neck. The father removed it with great difficulty, but the child had been bitten, and died.

The second story comes from Innsbruck, where a Hungarian girl was crushed to death by an enormous python while performing in a theatre. As the girl shrieked for help, the audience greeted her cries with great applause, believing them to be part of the show.

The third story is told by a correspondent of the Daily Mail, who has just received it from Australia.

On a lonely Queensland farm, while both the father and the mother were away, two little girls were playing, when a big brown snake slid out of a wood-pile and struck at a kitten in the arms of the elder child.

How Kitty Was Saved

The child seized its neck and called to her smaller sister to hand her a spade which was lying near. The snake twined itself round her body, but, maintaining her grip on its throat, she hacked it in half with the spade.

When the father returned he was greeted by two excited little girls with a thrilling story to tell, rounded off with the triumphant declaration, "And he didn't get my kitty, after all!"

It is not often that the adder, or viper, kills anyone. Now and again a child dies from a bite, and even adults have been known to die after an attack, but probably in most cases the person was not in very good health at the time.

Only British Poisonous Snake

Seeing, however, that an adder's bite is dangerous, it is important that we should all know how to recognise the creature, for it is quite common. We should also be able to distinguish it from the harmless grass-snake. No reader of the C.N. should be among those foolish people who, directly they see anything wriggly, take a stick or a spade and kill it, regardless of whether it is a grass-snake, a slow-worm, or an adder.

The adder is rarely more than two feet long, and is easily recognised by the dark zig-zag line which runs down the back. There are also dark markings on the head, including one which resembles an inverted V. The adder is usually seen in dry spots, where it suns itself among the half-withered vegetation. Two which were recently found in different parts of London may have escaped from captivity.

The grass-snake is larger, being often three feet long, and is usually found in moist places, such as grassy spots near water. It enjoys a bath, and lies coiled up in the stream with only its head showing.

Grass-Snake as a Pet

The harmless blind-worm, or slow-worm, is not a snake at all; nor is it blind, slow, or a worm. It is really a lizard which has lost its legs. It is about a foot long with a shiny skin, and has no markings of any kind.

Grass-snakes can be easily tamed, and make excellent pets. The schoolboy son of the writer kept a grass-snake for a long time, and gave it the nickname of James. All the family came to love it, and it was fond of them. It used to stay in its master's inside pocket for a whole afternoon while he sat in the garden reading. Now and again it would poke out its head to see what was going on, but a word or a touch from its master would send it back.

These harmless grass-snakes hiss very fiercely, alarming the ignorant, but they can do no harm, and once they know a friend there is no trouble.

Remember, however, that *the snake with a dark zig-zag line down the back is the poisonous adder, and may kill you.*

GENERAL DIES FOR HIS MEN

STIRRING SCENES IN THE SAHARA DESERT

Pathetic Last Order of a Brave Man

"KEEP UP YOUR COURAGE"

For weeks the French General Laperrière, of the Air Service, was lost in the Sahara Desert, over which he was flying with a pilot and a mechanic.

Then came the news that the general had been killed when the machine crashed in a remote part of the vast desert, but that the pilot and mechanic had been found at the point of starvation.

Now the pilot, Sergeant Bernard, though still in great danger from his privations, is well enough to tell what happened, and his story will shed a lustre on the name of General Laperrière that will never fade.

The general was not killed, but he chose to die to save his men's lives, if that were possible. Knowing that they were far from human aid, and their only plan was to remain by the broken machine, which had little food and water, he discussed the position with his men.

Unconquerable Hero

Rescuers, he pointed out, could not come under three weeks or a month. The food and water would not hold out for three men, but there might be sufficient for two. Then he continued:

"I am older than you, and I am your commander. I expect to be obeyed. I shall not take a share in the rations. You must keep up your strength and courage, boys."

And in this heroic determination the general remained firm, though his men begged him to take his share. Neither hunger nor thirst could conquer his resolution, and he weakened till he died.

Five days after his death the pilot and mechanic were rescued, on the very point of death, for they had been lying fifty hours without food or water, in the shade of an unbroken wing of the aeroplane. It is a story that does honour to France and to a great-hearted French gentleman.

DOCTOR'S ADVENTURE

A Hero in a Benzol Tank MAN DROWNING IN GAS

It is always a pleasure to pass round the names of brave, unselfish men. Dr. Armstrong and Arthur Waterman, of Kingston-on-Thames, are two of them.

While Francis Walker, of Putney, was cleaning out a benzol tank, the fumes overcame him and he fell helpless. Then Arthur Waterman rushed to his assistance, and tried to carry him up a ladder at the side of the tank, but was overcome and fell unconscious. He was dragged out by a hook at the end of a rope.

Walker still lay at the bottom of the tank, and Dr. Armstrong, braving its dangers, descended into it with a wet towel tied round his mouth, and tied a rope round the unconscious man's legs. In this way he was hauled up into the fresh air, but it was too late. The fumes had done their deadly work.

The praise given by the jury to the brave rescuers will be re-echoed by all who hear the story.

SO PERISHES THE DREAM OF THE WAR LORD

A French correspondent who has lately been to Heligoland, the island fortress which guarded the sea approach to Germany, reports that it is now only a few square yards of sand-flat, a field or two of grass, and a waste of shattered concrete forts, strewn with the remnants of great guns that have been blown up.

What a desolate monument of the failure of the German war spirit!

So perishes the dream of the War Lord, the dream of Heligoland as the fortress of a Prussian island empire controlling Europe.

AMRITSAR

A GENERAL'S TERRIBLE MISTAKE

Deplorable Chapter in the
British Government of India
379 UNARMED PEOPLE SHOT

By Our Political Correspondent

For every white man in the British Empire there are six men who are not white, and who have not reached the stage in civilisation at which they can, for the good of themselves and the world, govern themselves. On that point every civilised nation is in agreement.

Also, probably, the thoughtful men of all nations will agree that the British government of its dependencies and protectorates—where men who are not white live—has been, on the whole, considerate and just, and for the general good of mankind.

It is of great importance that Great Britain should retain this confidence, won by wisdom and kindness, not less than by firmness; but a terrible blow was struck at that confidence when the news went round the world that at Amritsar, in the Punjab, 379 unarmed men of India had been killed, and three times as many wounded, by native troops acting under the orders of a British general.

Britain's True Mind

All the circumstances under which this dreadful slaughter of a crowd occurred have now been considered by a mixed Commission of white and non-white investigators, and their report has been commented on by the Government of India, and by the British Government at home, so that the facts are made clear, and the true mind of the British authorities is expressed.

The result may be summed up by saying that what General Dyer did, when he ordered this massacre of unarmed people to be carried out, has been condemned alike by the Inquiry Commission, the Government of India, the Government of Great Britain, and by British public opinion. The general has been "retired" from the Army.

All feel that, though the general was placed in a most difficult position, surrounded by disorder, riots, danger to all white people in India, and a close approach to open rebellion, he made a grave mistake by acting with undue severity and taking life recklessly.

Lesson for the Future

What he did was contrary to British traditions, and it has cast a slur on the British methods of government of which the whole Empire has before been proud. The thought of cruelty done in our country's name is hateful.

What has been done cannot be undone; but we can show to all the world that the hasty act of a general, whose judgment failed him at a critical moment, is not supported by the British spirit, as it is felt either by our Government or our people.

This is shown clearly by the Commission's Report, the Government's comments, the views of the Press, and the opinions of the public.

What happened was one man's error, and an Empire suffers in consequence.

We are sorry, very sorry. Such mistakes are less likely to happen in the future; but the warning has been dearly bought by India, and by Great Britain too.

IN THE AUCTION ROOMS

The following prices have lately been paid in the auction rooms for objects of interest:

Six Beauvais tapestry covers . . .	£3360
A drawing by Fred Walker . . .	£1995
A water-colour by Turner . . .	£1207
Admiral Beatty's sea chart . . .	£168
A religious book of 1596 . . .	£140