

The CHILDREN'S NEWSPAPER

AND CHILDREN'S PICTORIAL

The Story of the World Today for the Men and Women of Tomorrow

Number 611

Week Ending
DECEMBER 6, 1930

EDITED BY ARTHUR MEE

Postage Anywhere
One penny

Every Thursday 2d

CAUSE OF THE WORLD'S MISERY

See
Page
Seven

ONE MORE SLUM GOING

OLD COTTAGES AND THE ARMADA

Romantic Story of the Bank of the Thames

BRIGHTER ROTHERHITHE

All who remember Oliver Twist and the scene of Bill Sikes's last hours will find their imagination stirred by the fact that part of the setting of that moving chapter is to disappear.

It is in Rotherhithe, that ancient dockside quarter of London where so much history has been made and so much misery endured. Sentence of destruction has been passed on an area of slum cottages which had their origin in romantic circumstances.

When our ships were being got ready to meet the Spanish Armada some of them took in ballast from the gravel by the riverside at Rotherhithe, and the old cottages which are now to disappear were built in the hollow thus created.

The Historical Background

It is the enterprising and public-spirited borough of Bermondsey which is doing the work, and in the place of these old cottages will appear model dwellings for people who will live to see a brighter Rotherhithe.

The historical background is, like most of that attaching to riverside sites, both picturesque and distressing. It was at Rotherhithe that Canute began the digging of the trench which, ending at Vauxhall, enabled him to attack London. It belongs to that old London which fancy paints as a romantic place, but which was really a medley of disease, crime, and misery. Rotherhithe had its famous grape vines, but the people derived their drinking-water from the horrible ditches described by Dickens.

It boasted a Paradise Street, not far from a Rogue's Lane, and it was the haunt of desperate men.

Plague and Fire

If we grasp the character of Old Rotherhithe we understand how it was that, when flames got well hold, such enormous damage was done during the Fire of London. Rotherhithe had two notable fires in about half a century. The first destroyed 300 houses; the second left 250 families homeless.

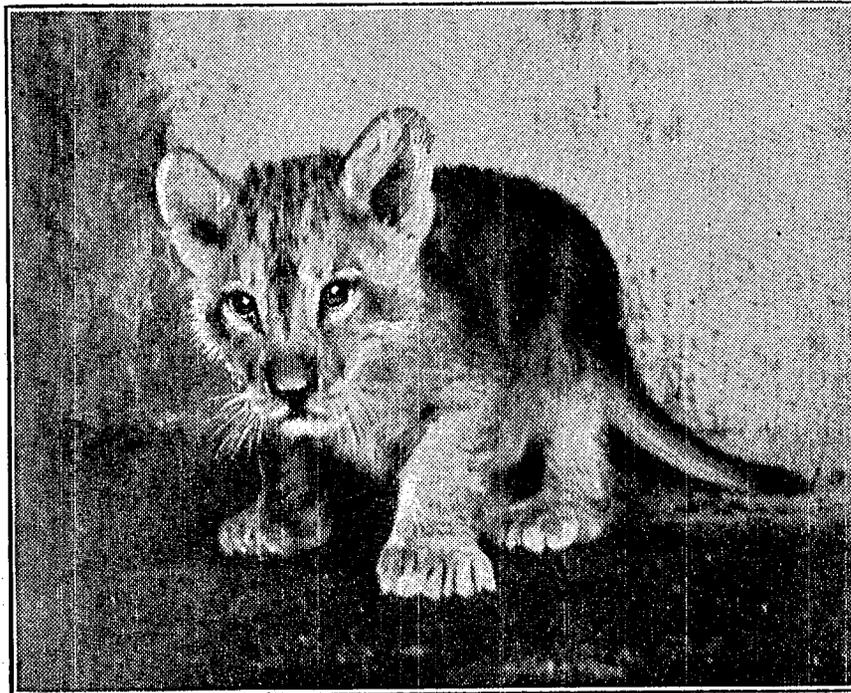
The houses were miserable wooden structures, without glass windows, without fireplaces, with floors of clay or mud, strewn with rotting reeds rank with garbage. Plague had its abiding place in such quarters, and fire was the only cure.

The Bermondsey Borough Council has the cleansing and regeneration of this neighbourhood well in hand, and this is the third instalment of their plan for a Rotherhithe worthy of the capital of the British Commonwealth.

King George's Lion Cubs



Its first peep



Suspicious

Three lion cubs born in the London Zoo in September have recently been photographed for the first time. Their parents are Pat and Doris, two lions presented to the King some time ago by the new emperor of Ethiopia. Two of the cubs are seen in these pictures.

THE ROLLING STONE

A MAN whose life was packed with adventure and who had sought it all over the world, has just died, a hermit, on Exmoor.

He was John Moles, a soldier who had roved farther than Kipling's Soldiers Three, but whose true adventures were stranger than fiction. He served in the 34th Foot in the Afghan War when Lord Roberts entered Kabul. He was with the expedition which forced its way to Lhasa, the Forbidden City of Tibet. So freezingly cold was the weather that hot tea froze to ice in the pannikins.

From India he went to the Sudan when Kitchener was preparing the way to Omdurman. He used to tell a tale

of how once he accompanied the Sirdar, who was disguised as a native date-seller, venturing into the bazaars and souks of Suakin or Wady Halfa for the purpose of picking up gossip of Dervish movements.

When the army of the Sudan dispersed Moles went as a soldier of fortune to South America, and there found revolutions in plenty. In one at San Domingo he emerged as a General!

But he came home with empty pockets, and, having had enough of romance, settled down as a hermit in a cave near Dunkery Beacon. Hundreds of tourists went to see the Cave Man, as he was called, and perhaps this was the most profitable part of his odd career

THE WISDOM OF THE OSTRICH

WHY IT HIDES ITS HEAD

The Splendid Creature That Will Race a Car

AN ANIMAL'S RESERVE FORCE

By Our Natural Historian

The C.N. has more than once contradicted the old story that the ostrich buries its head in the sand and, because it cannot see, imagines itself unseen.

The idea, however, is embedded in our language; politicians, critics, and authors are always using it to suggest the blind folly of others. Now a great authority, Mr E. G. Boulenger of the Zoo, has spoken out in defence of the good sense of this much maligned bird. He, of course, denies the absurd tradition.

If an ostrich does lower its head to the sand, he points out, it is not to escape detection, but to avert injury by violence, for its skull is thin and the head its most vulnerable point.

There is another ostrich curiosity which comes up from time to time in the papers: how fast can these birds run? They can be overtaken by horses simply because the birds run in circles instead of in a straight line, but there is little evidence on the subject.

On a Road in Kenya

Now a Kenya resident has had an opportunity of testing the pace of his car against an ostrich's legs.

As he was driving along a road in Kenya two ostriches started to run beside the car. The driver accelerated and so did the ostriches. The car's throttle was opened still wider and a speed of 42 miles an hour was reached. The car could do no more, but the ostriches could. They bounded past the astonished driver, got ahead of him, and crossed his path fifty yards ahead when still going apparently well within themselves.

This experience merits comparison with the performances of antelopes against the car of Dr Chapman Andrews in the Mongolian desert. The two together, combined with the feats of the enormously swift cheetah, which runs down Indian deer, once supposed to be uncatchable, remind us that animals have reserves of power of which we seldom dream. The horse, for instance, supposed to pull only three tons, will put his best foot forward and pull over twenty tons.

E. A. B.

THE DELIGHT OF DON BRADMAN

I cannot imagine any happier experience than to tour England as an Australian cricketer. To visit old-fashioned towns and busy cities, to look upon scenery much more beautiful than anything I had ever imagined, was an unending delight. Mr Don Bradman