

LIBRARY TREASURES FOR THE NATION

The British Museum has recently acquired some treasures from the Earl of Leicester's library at Holkham Hall, Norfolk. Altogether 12 rare manuscripts and 85 books—30 of which were printed before A.D. 1500—have been purchased for £95,000, of which the Government is providing £74,500.

The library at Holkham is one of the greatest private collections of books and manuscripts in Britain, and among the British Museum's purchases is a fascinating 14th-century Bible picture-book consisting of many drawings on vellum, described in Anglo-Norman.

Among the other rare works acquired are a beautifully-illuminated volume written for Edward III about A.D. 1327; a 14th-century Italian Bible which belonged to the anti-Pope Clement VII; a copy of The Mirror of Human Salvation which was printed in Utrecht about 1470; a second folio of Shakespeare; and a first edition of Miles Coverdale's Bible in English, translated in 1535.

Yet another treasure recently bought for the British Museum is a famous 10th-century manuscript which for many years was at Helmingham Hall, Suffolk. This is King Alfred's translation into Anglo-Saxon of the Universal History of Orosius. It has been bought for £10,000, of which the Government has provided £7500.

STRONGER SHOE LACE

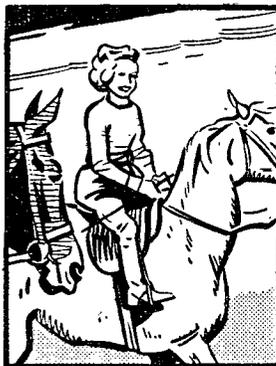
Shoe laces always seem to break at the most inconvenient time. But now the British Standards Institution has just issued a standard of strength for tagged boot and shoe laces.

The trade mark used by licenced manufacturers will signify that a shoe lace satisfies the standard and will not break before a strain of at least 45 lbs. is imposed.

Steps to Sporting Fame • Maureen Connolly



It is expected that 17-year-old Maureen Connolly, U.S. champion, will be at Wimbledon this year for her first attempt at what is regarded as the world title.



Maureen, modest and unaffected, grew up in San Diego, California, and for some years devoted her outdoor interest solely to riding. Then her family moved to a house near the Balboa Park tennis courts.



Passing the courts frequently Maureen used to watch Wilbur Folsom, a professional coach, instructing pupils. When the ball came her way she returned it; and one day, Wilbur invited her to try her hand with a racket.



Progress was swift, and swifter still when Eleanor "Teach" Tennant took control. At 14, Maureen won the U.S. girls' championship. At 16 she won the national title, defeating Doris Hart and, in the final, Shirley Fry.

FILM ACTRESS BY CHANCE

A beautiful English girl who happened to be passing through Hollywood on her way home to England from Australia was offered a part in the new Paramount Film, Botany Bay. It sounds a tall story, but it is true.

Barbara Bendle of Plymouth had never thought of taking up acting as a career. She had been in Australia demonstrating perfumes and cosmetics. At Hollywood, a friend of hers was showing her round the Paramount studios, as one of the local places of interest, when they met Director John Farrow.

He at once decided that this pretty fair-haired English girl was just the one he needed for the part of a convict girl in the film which is about Australia's early days, when people guilty of only petty misdemeanours were sent there as convicts.

Barbara was more than surprised, but she signed the contract. "I still can't believe my good luck," she says.

Acting with her in the film is Cedric Hardwicke; he plays the part of Australia's first Governor, Captain Arthur Phillip, who landed at Botany Bay with 720 convicts on January 18, 1788.

LONDON'S GROWING PAINS

What will London be like in 1972; to what extent will it differ from the London of today?

The London County Council has partly answered the questions in an exhibition of pictures, maps, diagrams, and models of its plans for development of the Capital in the next 20 years. It is open to all at County Hall every weekday until March 28.

The centrepiece of the exhibition is a six-foot-wide model of the Greater London area, showing the great sprawl of London with the new towns rising around its edge.

NEW-OLD RAILWAY LINE FOR BRITAIN

One of the biggest changes that has ever occurred on our railways is at present taking place. The "chaired" rail, used here for over a century, is being replaced by the "flat bottom," as employed on the railways of practically every other country.

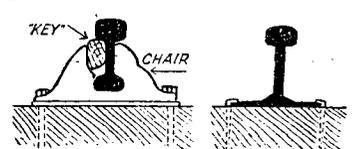
But in adopting the flat-bottom rail, the British Railways are not really copying foreign countries, for it was an English invention (for English railways) in 1836. The designer was Charles Vignoles—a staunch Englishman despite his French-sounding name—and his rail was for a time in service in Britain.

It was of an inverted T-shape, and was fastened down directly on to wooden sleepers. The woods then available, however, were very soft, and it was found that the rail bit in deeply, thus making the track uneven.

A rail was therefore designed with an intermediate bracket, or "chair," which distributed the load over a greater area, thus keeping

the iron from sinking in. This is the type of make-up that has been employed in this country for the last century.

Having designed the "chaired" rail, England for some reason began to look upon the flat-bottom rail with disdain. It was thought of as a track only suitable for pioneering railways, and for



countries where safety was not considered so important as in England.

Then a short time ago railway men found that other countries were building a flat-bottom track that was superior to our own chaired type. It was 59 per cent stiffer in a vertical direction and 136 per cent stiffer from side to side.

Furthermore, it was easier to

lay—16,000 fewer parts per mile being required—and was more readily kept in repair; it was likely to last longer, and also retained better alignment. And to crown all, it gave smoother and quieter running.

The fact was that engineers of foreign railways had eliminated the faults of the early Vignoles rail. To stop the biting into the sleepers they had put in a plate between the rail and the wood, thus spreading the weight; and to avoid the danger of spikes drawing, they had used screw bolts.

There are two weights of the rail in Britain—one for heavy traffic, of 109 lbs. per yard, and the other for lighter traffic at 98 lbs. The new track will not be cheaper, but a saving is hoped for later, in its longer life and ease of laying and maintenance.

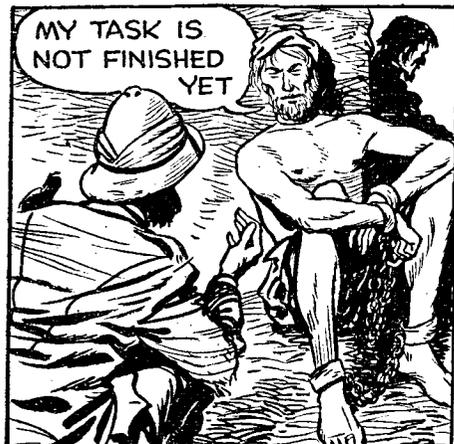
There is a long stretch of flat-bottom rail at Clapham Junction. Eventually some 27,000 miles of track in Britain will be relaid with it.

THE FOUR FEATHERS—PICTURE-VERSION OF A. E. W. MASON'S GRAND STORY (8)

Harry Feversham, whose brother officers had sent him three white feathers because they thought him a coward, had by a brave exploit in the Sudan persuaded one of them,

Willoughby, to take back his feather. That was not enough for Harry. The second officer who had sent him a feather, Castleton, had been killed in action, but the third,

Trench, was a prisoner in Omdurman. Harry resolved to try to rescue him and he let himself be captured by Dervishes, who took him to the dreaded prison at Omdurman.



Harry recovered from his delirium, and when he realised where he was he rejoiced. Trench was amazed at his courage, and felt remorseful that he himself was partly responsible for bringing him here. He offered to take back his white feather, but Harry refused to give it up until he had rescued the sender. Trench was tremendously excited at the suggestion of escape. He had been here for three years.



They walked across the enclosure, and Harry outlined the preparations he had already made for their escape. He said a man loitering near the prison house would help them when they gave the signal. Camels were waiting near Omdurman and rifles were buried nearby. Water and provisions were in readiness for their desert journey. But they must wait until Harry was strong enough to ride a camel.



Harry had money with him and he bribed the gaoler to let them sleep in the open instead of in the prison house. He grew stronger, and they decided to make the attempt in three days' time. But Trench's excitement was too much for his body, exhausted by suffering, and he fell ill with fever. By the time he recovered, the men with the camels had grown afraid of waiting any longer and had gone.



Harry had given the man who was helping him a note with money for a Greek in Egypt who, he hoped, would send more camels. They might arrive in six months' time, he told Trench. Then their hopes of liberty were dashed. The prisoners were ordered to build a strong, high wall round the prison enclosure, to take the place of the thorn fence. There had been too many escapes lately for the Khalifa's liking.

Even if help comes, how can Harry and Trench, fettered, get over this wall? See next week's instalment