

Since the sixteenth century the British Empire, with London as its capital, steadily grew, until England became the centre of a large commonwealth. Westminster has also become the centre for democratic government which has influenced the whole world. Therefore London, with its great history and wealth and still the largest population, has every claim to the title of Capital of the World.

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## SOUTH-EASTERN UNION OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES

THE 55rd Annual Congress of the South-Eastern Union of Scientific Societies was held at Canterbury from 19th to 23rd April. Members were received by the Mayor of Canterbury at the Guildhall. The meetings of all four sections—Geology, Zoology, Botany and Archæology—were held in the King's School by kind permission of the headmaster. Space permits only a brief reference to the Archæological Section.

The President of this section was Mr. Sheppard Frere, F.S.A., who gave an address on "Roman Canterbury," and later conducted a visit to excavations begun in 1944. The opportunity for this investigation followed the disastrous air-raids of 1942, which demolished buildings over a wide area. The most spectacular find was a large tessellated floor with well preserved mosaic panels in the basements in Butchery Lane. The panels conventionalised flower design executed in red, yellow, white and black, and the floor is thought to have been inserted in the third century in a building of first century date.

Another interesting lecture entitled "The Street-plan of Mediæval Canterbury" was given by Mr. W. King, B.A., Keeper of Manuscripts, Cathedral Library, who took us later to see the Library. Among other treasures it contains a vast collection of administrative documents, many dating from Anglo-Saxon times.

Excursions were made to the Roman station at Richborough, Sandwich, Ebbsfleet and Minster. In Canterbury itself members of the local committee guided us round the numerous places of interest. Particular mention must be made of the delightful visit to the cathedral on the afternoon of our arrival, conducted by the Dean.

D. E. HARVEY.