

no doubt as to the condition of the Thames five hundred years later when *Punch* could write:

“Filthy river, filthy river,  
Foul from London to the Nore,  
What art thou but one vast gutter,  
One tremendous common shore.

And beside thy sludgy waters  
And beside thy reeking ooze  
Christian folk inhale mephitis  
Which thy bubbly bosom brews.

And from thee is brewed our porter,  
Thee, thou gulley, puddle, sink,  
Thou, vile cesspool, art the liquor  
Whence is made the beer we drink.”

Arthur Bryant has written a *Saga of London* as well as of England; and he shows that, in spite of many failures, the London of 1940 which the Luftwaffe has sporadically damaged, is a cleaner, healthier, happier, though a far larger place than the London of a century ago.

## NOTES AND QUERIES

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I. FUTURE OF LONDON SQUARES.—Henry Shaw, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Town and Country Planning, speaking at a meeting of the Chelsea Society, pleaded for a revival for the respect of our great English tradition in town planning. The Chelsea Society endeavours to preserve as much of old Chelsea as is possible, and to keep alive the civic spirit in a village made memorable by the career of Sir Thomas More. London Squares the speaker regarded as great contributions to its architecture, and he hoped and believed that

no central planning authority would allow another square to be treated as St. James's Square has been in recent years. Berkeley Square might be added to the list of those squares whose amenities have been sadly curtailed. He insisted that such areas as Bedford Square and Queen Anne's Gate must be preserved intact in any future plans for rebuilding. The Temple should be rebuilt much on its original lines, but St. Paul's must be left clear of encroachments. Town Planning could not be successful as long as our children were slaughtered on the roads; and one of the biggest needs of good planning was the segregation of through traffic from places where people lived and shopped and played.

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2. NINETEEN CENTURIES OF LONDON LIFE.—The presence in London of so many of our own and overseas Empire troops, those of the U.S.A. and of the other Allied nations, has brought about a revised and renewed interest in the City's history. Destruction of buildings all over Central London has revealed hidden things of interest, and there is always the expectation that rebuilding may lead to still further discoveries after the war.

In this connection the London Museum arranged an exhibition to mark the nineteenth centenary of the foundation of London by the Romans. This exhibition was planned to last from July to November, is partly sponsored by the Army Bureau of Current Affairs, and two duplicates of it are being circulated to men of the Forces near London.

It is chiefly concerned with the inter-relation of Architecture, Commerce and Social Life; and it shows besides the appearance of London at six stages of its development.

Special reference is made to the London squares, so delightful a feature of past centuries, now sadly spoiled by the intrusion of commercial offices and blocks of flats.

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3. THE GENESIS OF THE L.C.C. PLAN.—At a Press Conference at the County Hall in July, the Right Hon. Lord Latham explained the circumstances in which the Plan was drawn up. When Lord Reith was Minister of Works he asked the L.C.C. to prepare a bold plan for post-war London. The Plan now published is the answer to that request. "It deals . . . in a bold and far-reaching way . . . with roads, open spaces,

residential communities, business groupings, rail transport and density of development. The authors of the Plan have assumed that the broad principles enunciated in the Barlow, Scott and Uthwatt Reports will be translated into laws before the time comes for carrying out the L.C.C. Plan. It is not proposed to ask the L.C.C. to approve the Plan as published, but to use it as a basis for "analysis, admiration, energetic attack and constructive criticism."

We must remember that planned reconstruction, though it may look expensive on paper, is in the long run far cheaper and infinitely more satisfactory than haphazard reconstruction. It is our desire as well as our duty to avoid "leakages of time, money, and energy that spring from inconvenient housing, badly arranged industry, inadequate roads and obsolete communications." Let us plan a labour-saving city as well as labour saving houses. Lord Latham's final words are memorable and pertinent:—"This bold inspiring Plan is probably the greatest study of how to plan a vast city that has ever been attempted. If it helps to make us planning-minded it will have achieved a great public service."

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4. THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME.—We are warned that patience will be required in rebuilding London, but we must not let this demand become an excuse for doing little or nothing.

The slogan used after the last war about "Homes fit for heroes to live in" did not last long enough to produce the requisite number of houses at a reasonable price. Profiteers, private enterprise, real estate and industrial speculators made a complete fiasco of our good intentions then. The task before us is an immense one, and we shall have to catch up the lag of the war years, to rebuild blitzed houses, to clear slums, to re-adapt factories, to erect new schools and many other vital problems to face.

A writer in the *Builder* for March, 1943, suggests that "it is extremely unlikely that the City of London will again be rebuilt in our lifetime on its old foundations, not merely for aesthetic reasons or reasons of convenience, but because it is unlikely that there will be the labour and material to do it." He warns us that small businesses, small-scale architects and the old craftsmanship may tend to disappear.

Two wars and the economic stringencies of peace will tend to

accentuate these changes, and bureaucracy may secure further triumphs. He concludes with a very significant parable which we do well to examine very carefully. "We are not marching forward into a land flowing with milk and honey, but to hard work and bare living. To complete the simile, we have left the flesh-pots of Egypt, which admittedly by softness and self-indulgence were bringing us to ruin, and are painfully battling our way through the Wilderness of Sinai, to a better land, it is true, but one which very easily not we, nor even our children, but only our children's children may see."

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5. JOHN GWYNNE.—W. R. Davidge, F.R.I.B.A., in an address given at the recent English Town Exhibition, paid a well deserved tribute to John Gwynne, a would-be London town planner towards the middle of the 18th century. He lived at the time when once again the need for constructing fresh arterial roads, designing new squares and generally dealing with London's problems was becoming obvious. The north circular road, which we call City Road, Euston Road and Marylebone Road, was in process of construction; and Gwynne re-published Wren's plan for rebuilding London after the Great Fire, which, incidentally, was turned down by the Privy Council at the end of three days. He also had some far-reaching schemes of his own, and suggested that some limits might be placed to London—Park Lane on the west, and Euston Road on the north. In the plan he then put forward were included "almost every improvement that has since taken place. There was a Thames Embankment, a bridge where Waterloo Bridge was afterwards built, a square in a rather better position than Trafalgar Square, an ornamental entrance to St. James's Park, where the Admiralty Arch now stands. Among improvements which he suggested, but which are not even yet carried out, was an embankment on the south side and the moving of Covent Garden."

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6. A CHAMBER OF HORRORS.—Sir William Beveridge opened the "Rebuilding Britain" Exhibition at the National Gallery in February, 1943, and emphasised the need to attack and destroy five giant evils of Want, Disease, Ignorance, Idleness and Squalor.

He reminded his listeners that on coming down from Oxford he went to live and work, as some others of us did, at Toynbee Hall in Whitechapel. As he walked about the East End streets he used to try to imagine how many miles he and the people living there were separated from real country sights and sounds, not a smoke-smutched open space. He used to imagine himself a multi-millionaire, and plan to buy up all the unbuilt land for five miles around London, and make London start again on the other side of the belt, if it wanted to expand. A glance at two large maps of London, with thirty or forty years in between, showed how many dismal miles have been added in every direction to the distances from Whitechapel to the Green! How much more of a millionaire a man would have to be to do to-day what had been imagined forty years before.

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7. THE ENGLISH TOWN EXHIBITION.—This Exhibition, designed to show something of the continuity of the English Town, and to suggest some ideas for the future, was held in St. Martin's School of Art, Charing Cross Road, from Thursday, 22nd April, to Saturday, 8th May, 1943. Thirteen societies, among them our own, joined in the work, which was both historical and prophetic. Among the towns illustrated were Salisbury, Oxford, Guildford, Stamford, Lincoln, Kendal, Winchelsea, Welwyn Garden City and Letchworth. In all these towns the market was the centre of activity, and the high road often became the chief shopping centre. Mediaeval towns were full of charm, and of useful amenities, while the Georgian town was one of the most successful of period pieces, combining beauty and utility.

It was realised that the Industrial Revolution had a lot to answer for in throwing up hideous, unhealthy, joyless, sordid slums, for whose makers no words can be too strong. Drawings by such masters as Frank L. Emanuel, Dennis Flanders and Hanslip Fletcher helped to interpret the possibilities of intelligent planning. Leisure towns, pleasure towns, garden suburbs and cities, satellite towns, and housing estates, all presented problems which the Exhibition did its best to solve. There was a very interesting scale model for a new Charing Cross Bridge Scheme, with a plan for rebuilding the terminal station and providing a double purpose river bridge with railway below at the existing level and a roadway and footbridge above.

The peaceful setting of our English cathedrals in their garden closes was also well illustrated, and a contrast clearly made with most foreign cathedrals, which are cheek by jowl with shops, dwelling houses and market.

The Exhibition was well patronised, as it deserved to be, for it was of real educational value. Each society made itself responsible for an afternoon, and provided a lecturer to deal with some specific topic associated with the various ideas of the development of the English Town. A book has been produced giving details of the whole exhibition, and publishing all the lectures given during the fortnight and more that the Exhibition was open. The gratitude of all who are interested in the unbroken development of our English towns, and in the handing down of our best traditions are due to J. Dudley Daymond, the Honorary Secretary of the Exhibition.

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8. WREN SOCIETY.—The nineteenth volume of the Wren Society is the last of the famous illustrated publications, and the twentieth volume is reserved for a complete index. From 1924 to the present year, Arthur T. Bolton and H. Duncan Hendry have worked to identify and portray all buildings designed by perhaps 'the greatest of all English architects. In this volume there are, amongst others, pictures and descriptions of Chelsea Hospital, Greenwich Observatory and Temple Bar, parts of old Chelsea, and Morden College at Blackheath. One plate with sad association is that of St. Dionis Back Church, destroyed by the blitz on London. A review of this volume last year referred to the reviewer's "humility before Wren's versatility and courageous acceptance of disappointments, and Mr. Bolton's energy and care." May we add our tribute of admiration for the magnificent work of our fellow member.

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9. REPLANNING BRITAIN.—It was very appropriate that Alfred C. Bossom, M.P., F.R.I.B.A., should have spoken on this topic at the English Town Exhibition seeing that he is the leading authority in this country on the rebuilding of Williamsburg, Virginia, about which he lectured recently at the Society of Arts. In a full address he discussed the problem of house or flat, stressing the fact that in London, as elsewhere, 90 per cent. wanted house and garden.

Terraces, squares, circuses were advisable, but sound-proof

walls, running water, commonsense appliances, labour-saving devices were all essential. In order to tackle the 4 million new houses required during the ten years of the immediate post-war period, money, materials and method were needed. Probably traditional local building materials were most suitable, and Lord Portal's promised booklet on the subject would be a very real help. A tribute was paid to the eleven Societies which had planned the Exhibition; and it was emphasised that their influence was badly needed to prevent many undesirable developments.

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10. THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING.—W. S. Morrison, M.P., Minister of Town and Country Planning, opened the Exhibition of the L.C.C. Plan for the County of London at the County Hall in July, 1943.

He congratulated J. H. Forshaw, the L.C.C. architect, and Professor Patrick Abercrombie, the two heads of the team of architects, surveyors who have produced the plan, and felt that everyone in the team was deserving of praise. No 50-year programme for the reconstruction of London would ever be carried out in exactly the same shape as it left the draughtsman's hand. It must not be regarded just as a blue-print to be followed unchanged by the needs which half a century may disclose. But the production of the report and the Exhibition at County Hall "demonstrate the amount of research demanded by the framing of a plan for the reconstruction of a great city. They set a notable example of the lucid and attractive exposition of ideas. Above all, they pass a signal to the world that the County of London, for all its recent trial by fire and explosive, still has the vitality and the courage to plan for a future even greater than its past."

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11. THE GEORGIAN GROUP.—The last meeting of the English Town Exhibition at Saint Martin's School of Art was marked by a lecture on the work of the Georgian Group by Professor A. E. Richardson, A.R.A., F.R.I.B.A. He emphasised the need for returning to first principles in art, for protecting works of merit and for the broadening of public taste. Architects must return to geometry and scale, and let the sun into the conspiracy of light and shade. Proportion was axiomatic; and height and width and the right use of materials would bring about the desired results. Seemliness and order must be

cultivated, and vulgarity and ostentation avoided. Uncouth Towers of Babel, so fashionable in recent years, were not beautiful, and the ordinary man in the street often knew better what a good building should be than the highbrow.

"In the distant future London preserved, remodelled and in part re-organised, would rise resplendent, with, perhaps, open spaces marking present wounds; but nevertheless the greatest of cities, because when this war was over, the English-speaking peoples would lead the world as never before."

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12. THE SQUARE MILE.—In a recent discussion on replanning and rebuilding the City, almost the first since 1666, it was pointed out that to reveal the proposed plans now might prejudice the position of the City as a whole, and jeopardise discussions with the appropriate Ministries and other interested public bodies.

Now that the Government has signified its intention of accepting the Uthwatt Report in the main, and of restricting prices for land to what they were in March, 1939, there need be no great delay in revealing the plan. While Greater London is concerned with nearly a hundred authorities, and the L.C.C. plans with more than a score, the City Scheme, though complicated and intricate, is concerned only with one. It is a plan for more immediate realisation, and it aims at bringing back evacuated firms to the City, and at trying to appreciate the difficulties of those whose premises and goodwill have been destroyed. Perhaps firms' that have been evacuated to Sevenoaks and Sandhurst, to Reigate and Guildford, to Elstree and Harpenden will prefer to keep their main businesses in their new surroundings and have a consultative office in the City. The wonderful views of St. Paul's Cathedral and other public buildings which the blitz has revealed may persuade the City to leave many compulsory open spaces alone. Perhaps in the City, where there is little residence and much business, flats will be preferred to houses, and shops, offices, and even small factories will be accommodated in this way.

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13. HOLIDAYS AT HOME.—St. Pancras has always been conscious of its past, and its collection of local prints and books, helped by Ambrose Hill, is well known. In a laudable desire to interest people who have to spend their holidays in London the Borough Librarian compiled a guide for its citizens,



giving them some idea of "What to do," "What to see" and "What was." The *Observer*, in a sympathetic notice, writes "Gay with Ghosts. No child of that borough should be ignorant of its mighty past, from Boadicea, who fought the Battle of King's Cross (perhaps) against the Romans, to Bernard Shaw, who fought his battle against all and sundry in the Borough Council, 1897-1903. The whole area is a typical piece of London history in stone and brick; the *Wells* and pleasure-gardens of *Totnam Court*, then London's end, surrendered to the great new railways, and the dingy chaos of the monster dust-heaps described in *Our Mutual Friend*, and of Agar's Town, which Dickens helped to clean up. Dickens becomes even livelier and more aromatic reading (scents assorted) when you know your London history; and any seemingly dull street in St. Pancras (and most other boroughs) can be gay with ghosts, when a shrewd historian bids them rise. Other towns please copy." Here is sound advice, not only for war-time, but as a "general lesson in town usage when we arrange our peace-time life again." More boroughs must try to tell their folk what they are missing, try to recapture local patriotism by showing them the "sights and views that travellers know about, and locals fail to see, and all the queer bits of history and romance which are the forgotten patchwork of every town in the country."

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14. WHICH LONDON?—A leader-writer in the *Evening Standard* asks this pertinent question once again in relation to re-planning. "Is it the square mile of the City Corporation, from Temple Bar to Aldgate, and Aldersgate to the Thames, with a night population of 10,000 (exclusive of fire-guards) and a day population rising to the million.

"The Lord Mayor, pointing to this fount of literature and law and enterprise and finance, surveying the glittering piles above which St. Paul's still proudly rides, might be tempted to say 'yes.'

"Or is London the area of the L.C.C.? This area covers Poplar and Putney, Finsbury Park and Crystal Palace; it embraces five million people. Within its borders are the City; the 28 Metropolitan Boroughs and numerous other authorities, including the Masters of the Benches and the Innes and Temple. Emphatically, says Mr. Herbert Morrison [and Lord Latham] this is London.

“But what about *Water London*, 573 square miles of it, over which the Metropolitan Water Board presides? And that still larger London to which the Metropolitan Police give protection? And Lord Ashfield’s kingdom of ten million travellers? And extra London, which Essex, Herts, Kent, Middlesex and Surrey are proud to possess? Does the capital really comprise the 100 or more directly elected local authorities within the greater London area? Clearly, a plan which will permit the Plan to survive examination and, perhaps, amendment by all these powerful groups, is among our capital needs.

“Happily, we know who these Cockneys are. They are the Cockney and the Sudeten Welsh and the oppressing minority of Scots, and the migrants from Manchester and Montreal and Melbourne. They are the great company who emerged from the furnace made hot by Hitler, to glorify their neighbours and to discover in London the spot ‘beloved over all.’ London’s pride must be in its people—well housed in a gay and graceful city, flocking to meetings and ballot-box in millions instead of thousands, exercising vigorously the democratic freedom they have exerted themselves so grimly to win.”

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15. THE ABBEY MONUMENTS.—In one of those famous fourth leaders which delight all readers of *The Times*, especially perhaps in war-time, two suggestions with regard to these time-honoured memorials are discussed. One of them is the labelling of monuments so as to give to visitors the assurance that they are not missing trivial monuments of great men by reason of their finding more pleasure in seeing distinguished memorials of less famous folk. Of course it is not always clear which of the two is the better thing to do. Some of us prefer memorials to persons otherwise unknown—to Glaucus and Medon and Thersilochus—(*vide Spectator* for March, 1711), men whose life was but as the path of an arrow. We feel, with Viscount Wavell, that perhaps the great leader in a battle is not the general but the platoon commander who blazes the path. These labels, if done at all, must be placed with discretion, because “To overdo the ticketing would be to call up the spirit of the bargain basement rather than that of the crypt.”

The second suggestion is that statues should be coloured. It certainly would brighten up the white marble figures of the Statesmen’s Transept, opposite to Poet’s Corner, though it might be too reminiscent of Madam Tussaud’s.

It is suggested in *The Times* that the famous surveyor of the Abbey, one whose books on its building and treasures are almost without rival, William Richard Lethaby, would approve. Those who built and adorned the Abbey would be horrified at its chaste severe beauty, the "gloominess of the place," and the idea of accepting an Abbey all ablaze with colour has been encouraged by the work of Professor Tristram and Dr. Jocelyn Perkins, who applaud the practice of colouring our carved and statuary stone works.

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16. FINDS ON BOMBED SITES.—A conference was held at the Institute of Archaeologists, Regent's Park, during August to discuss "Archaeology and Replanning." Sir John Myres pointed out the great possibilities of discoveries in N. Africa, Sicily and Southern Italy, and Sir Cyril Fox emphasised the need for keeping a full record of all recent archaeological discoveries. There was a good deal of divergence of opinion as to whether the State should finance such work, and become the depository or custodian of all kinds of antiquity. Most people seemed to want the work to be done by amateurs; but a representative of the Ordnance Survey Office pointed out that Civil Service Archaeologists were people of the highest reputation. It was also realised that foreign countries gained a good deal in respect and consideration because their excavations were Government-financed.

It was decided to ask the Council of British Archaeology to take appropriate action at home and to suggest similar policy for forming an association to deal with overseas problems.

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17. WESTMINSTER ABBEY AND U.S.A.—Mr. John C. Winant, the American Ambassador, gave one of the holiday-at-home lectures in the Abbey, and thanked the authorities for the use of the sacred buildings made so easy for the Armed Forces of America. The Abbey, he emphasised, was full of the traditions of England and of the U.S.A., and it would not be difficult to prove the great influence of the Abbey on his country. Not only so, but the reverse was true, and American ideas had penetrated into Great Britain during the last 300 years. There was only one American buried in the Abbey, Sir James Wright, who was born in 1716 and died in 1785, and was Governor of Georgia during a period of difficulty and unhappiness. During the Revolution Americans sent sons to Westminster School,

now evacuated from its home owing to serious damage to its historic fabric. This custom still prevailed, and to-day 18 Americans who had been educated at Westminster were fighting side by side with the British for ideals in which they both believed.

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18. ENGLAND'S CAPITAL.—Other lectures on the Abbey were by Mr. Arthur Gardner on "Westminster as a home of British Sculpture," which gave rise to the interesting leader in *The Times* already referred to, and one by the Revd. Dr. Jocelyn Perkins on "The Abbey, as the Birthplace of Westminster's Civic Life." When the question is sometimes asked, "Since when has London been the capital of England?" the correct answer is that Westminster has always been technically our capital, as the home of the Sovereign, and of the three branches of government, Legislative, Executive and Judiciary. When one considers how convenient it is for the Government offices to be in Whitehall and the Judges in the Strand, while Parliament is sitting in Westminster, all of them metaphorically within a stone's throw of one another, one can realise the inconvenience for the Union of South Africa, where the Parliament sits in Cape Town, the Cabinet meets in Pretoria and the Judges exercise their function in Bloemfontein. If the Abbey is, in same senses, the religious capital of the British Commonwealth and Empire, in very close proximity is situated its civic capital.

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19. CLEARING THE CLINK.—The ancient borough of Southwark, the twenty-sixth ward of the City of London, has suffered severely in the various raids on London. In Southwark street demolition and clearance have produced one vast open space, and this has removed a good deal of crowded property, much of it squalid. It will now be possible to build a new Southwark far more worthy of its great past. How far back the story of Southwark goes is not easy to say, but some have argued that "before the Romans came to Rye, or out of Sussex strode," the Britons had embanked the south side of the Thames near Southwark. In early Norman days the Bishop of Winchester built himself a town house to the west of London Bridge on the Surrey side, and this developed into a palace with ten courtyards and seventy acres of parkland. This estate was a "Liberty" like several others not far away, and it was exempt

from any jurisdiction but his own. "In that liberty," writes *The Times*, "lay the seeds of all that is most distinctive, most exalted and most disreputable in the history of a place whose fame must never be allowed to fade."

In this episcopal manor were the chief Inns, including Chaucer's Tabard, the most important City playgrounds for watching bull and bear baiting, and the stews "which before the Reformation were conducted under licence from the Bishop and after the Reformation with the other sort of licence which came of want of supervision." There is a notice near the river to say, "The house formerly on this site was frequented by Sir Christopher Wren. Thence he watched the building of St. Paul's Cathedral." Southwark's Embankment of Bankside certainly gives a fine view, and the sunset makes it still finer. Along the Bankside, in Elizabethan days, stood the four famous playhouses, the Rose, Swan, Hope and the Globe, where so many of Shakespeare's plays were first produced.

Another site in the neighbourhood is that of the Clink, in which the Bishop of Winchester imprisoned heretics. In later years it had the reputation of being a "very dismal hole," where drunkards and debtors were confined; and it has given its name as a slang synonym for prison. The site recently cleared is at the junction of Clink Street, still a narrow cobbled way, and Stoney Street, which is an old Roman Road. A recent demolition removed one of the few relics of Winchester House, used by the Bishops until 1626. The chief trace of the age-long connection is to be found in the names of Winchester Walk, Winchester Square and Winchester Wharves.

The Borough Market is still busy; the Gothic Cathedral, where Gower and Shakespeare's brother are buried, is untouched, but no planning can recapture the fame of old Southwark. "One of the hardest tasks of our planners," writes *The Times*, "will be to realise that archaism is always futile, and that the safest way to preserve the ancient spirit is to be boldly faithful to the modern"

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20. STEPNEY AND BETHNAL GREEN.—One of the outstanding features of the London Plan of the L.C.C. is the way that such areas as these East-end groups are tackled. But there are two sides to every question, and the folk who live in Stepney and Bethnal Green also have their opinion as to future planning. Stepney Reconstruction Group, under the chairmanship of

Dr. J. J. Mallon, Warden of Toynbee Hall, arranged an imaginative exhibition at Whitechapel Art Gallery from 14-31 October, which was opened by Mr. Lewis Silkin, M.P., Chairman of the L.C.C. Town Planning Committee.

One of the proposals in the L.C.C. Plan was the reduction of population in the whole county area by well over half a million, and this involves a drop in population in Stepney from 200,000 to 94,000. Stepney makes it quite clear that it does not want its population thus reduced, nor does it want flats instead of houses. Recent train journeys through the bombed East End have shown with what devotion the folk there make the very most of small back gardens to produce vegetables and flowers, and this problem of retaining garden room for every inhabitant needs facing. The Exhibition starts from 1777, when Stepney was still a village, and there was little or no dock development, and it shows that high cost of land, poor planning and worse building have been the chief causes of to-day's crowding, congestion and chaos. After showing the Stepney of yesterday and to-day the Exhibition makes some hints for to-morrow. It asks that this important dockland and workshop shall be controlled so as to be improved, and insists that public interests in the matter of housing, planning, open spaces and communal amenities shall be put first. Bethnal Green, in co-operation with the Town and Country Planning Association, is also discussing its reactions to the L.C.C. London Plan.

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21. PAST AND PRESENT.—1943 sees the centenary of Carlyle's unexpected comparison of the England of his day with the England of the Middle Ages. "How horrified the men of the Middle Ages would have been if they had known that their plain customs and kingships would degenerate into the dirt and slavery of Manchester, and the tomfooleries of Chancery and St. Stephen's." And Carlyle's effort to improve the lot of the poor was being emphasised at a time when the people were feeling outraged by the New Poor Law of 1835, and were publishing their demands for the Charter, and were some of them threatening physical force if their demands were not satisfied.

*The Times* for 17th October, 1943, quotes a passage exactly a century old, when the paper cost 5d. a copy, and traces Carlyle's influence in a long and fervent appeal to the social conscience, which gave rise to a large correspondence. "One

of the evils of the vastness of London, and one which is productive of a large number of most seriously ill consequences, is the sad dissociation of the rich from the poor. . . . From Tottenham Court Road to Bayswater, from Regent Street to Kensington, from Whitehall to Maida Hill; miles and miles of streets may be traversed without more than a passing glance at anything like poverty. . . . But take the district between Shoreditch and Dog-row, Bethnal Green and Whitechapel, and there destitution is the rule. . . . It is for you, the rich and at leisure, to set your own hands to the work which your parochial institutions leave unattempted; it is for you, Protestants, to make up to the poor their loss through the Reformation of the old monastic doles; it is for you now to prove yourselves Christians in act as well as in profession."

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22. BEDFORD SQUARE.—C. E. Vulliamy had a delightful gossip about this comely square in Jonathan Cape's *Now and Then*; contrasting it with Tottenham Court Road, a very near neighbour. "London," he wrote, "upon the whole, is an immense congregation of ugly houses. Traces of earlier beauty or design are being swept away by ingenious methods of destruction and erection; they are being quickly replaced by a new liberal expanse of sooty muddle. Perhaps the world is unable to produce an avenue of horrors more depressing than our Tottenham Court Road." And then he tells us that a wren may fly from this region of unregulated ugliness into the dignity and order of Bedford Square in four seconds. But even the harmony and uniformity of this Square, with its air of comfortable distinction have been disturbed by A.R.P., by "trenches and timbering and banks of dirt which defile the green oval in the centre." The Square was built "in a noble age of town architecture, an age when the Georgian designer still appreciated the value of his Palladian inheritance. Without undue haste, between 1775 and 1780, the houses of Bedford Square grew up on the pastoral edge of London, near a space of green grazing where cows ruminated and horses nibbled their grass. . . . To some extent its elegance is due to the work and influence of the Adam Brothers, but the Square as a whole seems rather to be a collaboration than the work of a single architect." It is good news to see that Bedford Square has so far avoided the blitz, and to hear that there is a Committee appointed to

consider the replanning of Tottenham Court Road, with L. W. Spriggs as its chairman.

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23. LENIN'S LONDON HOME.—Attention has twice been drawn in recent months to the fact that Lenin lived and worked in exile in two small rooms at 30, Holford Square, Finsbury. In March, 1942, after the enemy air raids over London, little was left of Lenin's lodging save the bare wall at the front of the house. But in Finsbury's "Aid-for-Russia" Week a plaque to commemorate Lenin's life there and his part in the building of modern Russia was unveiled by Mme. Maisky, wife of the U.S.S.R. Ambassador. M. Maisky, then Ambassador to this country, made a speech in honour of Lenin, whom he characterised as one of the greatest men of all time, a man destined to play an exceptional rôle in the history of Russia and of all humanity. Only a year later the plaque was damaged by miscreants; and another important gathering was held to commemorate the repair of the memorial to Lenin.

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24. THE SPRAWL OF LONDON.—The problem of cottage in a garden or flat without one affects most Londoners, and both ideas have their defenders. If 50,000 migrate each year, as they did before the war, it may suburbanise what should be green belt. Perhaps new towns can be planned 20 to 40 miles out, and "Factories on rental, houses for all tastes, garden space, public services and the physical apparatus of a fine town life and culture could be economically provided." So says F. J. Osborn; and we are inclined to agree until we read Lewis Silkin, M.P., L.C.C., who tells us that to permit 80 per cent. of London dwellings to be houses we shall have to move two million Londoners and provide 200 Welwyn Garden Cities for them to inhabit. He suggests that the choice between a flat in London and a house forty miles away in a dull new town admits of only one answer from the average man. The "Gallup Poll" is not necessarily convincing, because the ideal cottage, envisaged by so many, might be too far from amenities to be convenient. To plan L.C.C. suburbs at Oxley and Chigwell is one side of the story, while the purchase of Wall Hall Estate, Aldenham, as an open space is altogether a different affair.

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25. JOHN BURNS'S BOOKS.—It was John Burns who spoke of the Thames as "liquid history," and his library of London



books was the type of collection that such an enthusiast would make. It is good news that his famous library is not to be dispersed but will be available for London students through the foresight and generosity of Lord Southwood. The news has now been made public that the L.C.C. Library will house this magnificent collection, and it will be an ideal spot for researchers. "Burns would have liked to think that his books were making good Londoners, among all classes, folk sharing his own curiosity about the unfamiliar past of familiar places, and his relish for a new phrase which plays like sunlight on old walls."

## REPORTS ON THE SOCIETY'S VISITS 1943

1. THE BOMBED HISTORIC BUILDINGS OF THE CITY OF LONDON.—Owing to enemy action on London the majority of the meetings arranged at the end of 1940 and up to the end of February, 1941, were not proceeded with, and in fact the activities of the Society were left in abeyance until after an Annual General Meeting held on the 24th April, 1943, it was decided to resume with a limited programme. Thus it was that the current programme from Saturday, 19th June, 1943, to Saturday, 11th March, 1944, was issued to members.

On the 19th June, 1943, under the able guidance of Edward Yates, F.S.A., the bombed historic buildings of the City of London were visited and a good number of members formed the party.

At the Church of All Hallows, Barking, which is opposite Mark Lane Station, the Rev. Leslie S. R. Beckley received the party and kindly explained the discoveries of Roman paving. The Church, which became after the First Great War the centre of the well-known work of Toc H, had its east end destroyed by high explosives in December, 1940, and three weeks later its roof and interior were devastated by incendiary bombs, with the result that its four walls and nave arcading alone remained. The nave arcading was so badly damaged that its demolition was advised and carried out. It was unfortunate that some methods were not considered to strengthen the western bays, as if their preservation had been possible interesting examples of 13th century work would have been retained, linking up with the 15th century work.