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THE BRITISH
deplored the atomic bombing of
Japan.

300,000 bicycles for the Dutch
Government and Dutch police."

shelter to British families during
the war.

THIS WORLD OF OURS

Burma from Within

I HAVE just been reading a brilliant article on the Burma fighting. It appeared in "The Statesman" of Calcutta on July 10, and was from the pen of H. E. Bates, the novelist and short story writer, who is now a Squadron Leader in the R.A.F. Although the fighting in Burma is over, I hope his article will be included in our permanent literature of the war to remind us always of the grim and tragic facts of that campaign. For, as Squadron Leader Bates says, "there is a danger that the achievement of the men in Burma will be forgotten. And they cry out passionately not to be forgotten. Not even to be obscured any more. Not even to be thrown out of perspective."

This is how he describes Burma:—

Twenty-six thousand square miles of high mountain ranges, low jungles, difficult rivers, malaria-ridden mangrove-swamps and elephant gaza, a climate where heat becomes an enemy and rain a scourge of temples and dust, of heart-breaking roads, dusty bullock-tracks, metre-gauge railways, of map distances that have the deceptiveness of a mirage, of violent electric storms and fierce light, and even fiercer dust—and then more dust, and still more dust, and dust again.

Under Brazen Skies

THE men who felt with pain that they were the "forgotten Army" can never really have believed that we at home had forgotten them. I think they used the term to express their fear that people in this country could not begin to comprehend the multiple enemies they were fighting. You begin to feel the heartbreak of it when you read Mr. Bates:—

Sunlight and heat have deep effect on emotion: they sharpen the faculty for emotional pain. They can turn nostalgia into a sickness. Distance simply aggravates these things so that it becomes, not a question of the pain of one moment but of a long and unnumbered succession of futile moments stretching away before you through a series of brazen days all alike in the fierceness of their colour and light.

It is the not knowing that hurts: the not knowing how long the days will repeat themselves before you are reunited to someone you love, before you bathe in a decent bath, drink water that is not foully contaminated, breathe air that is not vapourised dust, sleep somewhere whose ticks will not give you typhus and mosquitoes impregnate you with malaria, and where distance from home does not constantly haunt you like a cloud.

Solitude in Danger?

MANY people, I think, will feel a little uneasy about the general approval of large holiday camps expressed by the Minister of Town and Country Planning, to which our London Correspondent refers. People who enjoy a communal holiday have, of course, as much right to be considered as anyone else, and camps holding from 500 to 5,000 people would certainly go some way towards solving the

problem of holiday accommodation. But everything depends on where such camps are situated.

There are pleasant areas in which they could be established without danger to the amenities of the district. But there are other areas whose essential quality is their solitude and the sense of remoteness which they convey to the visitor. Now it is certain that if you place 5,000 people in a solitude it will no longer be a solitude, which means that its compelling attraction will be destroyed. And the less will be felt, not only by those who prefer to travel in ones and twos but by the 5,000 themselves. By coming in large numbers they will have put to flight the very quality which they came to capture.

But it is a reasonable assumption that people who wish to spend a holiday in groups numbered by the thousand find their chief pleasure in the company of their fellows, and if that is true then the invasion of the remote places by the multitude would add nothing to their pleasure, while it would detract from that of less gregarious folk:

A Play for Germans

DURING one of his rare periods of relaxation, a colleague tells me, he was twiddling the knobs on his wireless when he heard loud Teutonic laughter. Closer tuning brought through a radio version of the "Captain of Koepenick"—that incredible but true story about the power of the Kaiser's uniform which, in a film version, amused the last days of a republic. The radio play was very nicely done, and at the end the commentator confined himself to saying: "You have seen listening to the 'Captain of Koepenick,' a play about Imperial Germany."

This seems a servable form of propaganda. It might have been thought that the story of the impostor who baffled official Germany for a number of days simply because he was wearing a captain's uniform might have proved a convenient peg on which to hang a disquisition on the evils of militarism and its connection with Nazism. But of this there was no evidence. The German audience was left to draw its own conclusion; and the principle which went to the designing of this broadcast was evidently the well-tried French one that it is ridicule which kills.

Leeds Airman's New Job

FLIGHT SERGT. G. H. PETCH, of Stourton Grange, Stourton, Leeds, who has become a flying medical orderly after finishing his war job of manning a Liberator's guns, speaks in high terms of the work he is now doing of helping to remove by air former prisoners of war held by the Japanese. "We are all very glad to be on this job," he says. "It is one of the most

worth-while that I have done so far."

Explaining how the work is done, Flight Sert. Petch says:—

Our unit is based on Raigoon, and we fly as medical orderlies with the R.A.P. crews to Bangkok and Saigon, evacuation points for the hundreds who were interned as prisoners of war by the Japanese. Expressions of war fly 25 to an aircraft and are immensely excited by the experience. Sometimes they are scared by the swaying of the aircraft as it flies through the clouds, but we pretend not to notice them, and when they see we are calm they think everything is all right.

George Saintsbury and the Brontës

PROF. GEORGE SAINTSBURY, the eminent scholar and literary critic, the 100th anniversary of whose birth falls on October 23, was keenly interested in the Brontës. In January, 1899, he attended the annual meeting of the Brontë Society and delivered a notable address, in the course of which he said:—

I read "Jane Eyre" so early that I never seem to have read it for the first time. It forms part with other things of a sort of primary stock with which I seem to have started. I did not meet with the poems so early, and it was not until my first year at Oxford my tutor set me Emily's "Remembrance" to turn into Latin elegiacs.

After a brief survey of the English novel up to the time of the Brontës, Professor Saintsbury summed up:—

It is not, I think, rash in substance or disproportionate in expression to say that what Emily and Charlotte did was to effect the union of realism and dream in the English novel.

Golf in War-time

A COLLEAGUE, returning from his first round of golf in England since the early days of the war, tells me of his experiences at the Royal and Ancient game abroad. He found the brown "greens" in Syria rather puzzling, for not only was the top dressing of baked earth and oil very fast but the recent passage of tanks had created additional hazards.

There was a more involved handicap in Calcutta, where the Royal Calcutta course had been placed at the disposal of Service golfers. Clubs were provided by the members and so, in theory, were the golf balls, which were unobtainable in the shops. In fact, however, there was a ration of one ball per round per player, and this was usually provided by the caddy or his assistant, the ball boy. On more than one occasion my friend started the round with a dirty-looking, odd-shaped object, with no cover, and with odd ends of elastic sticking out. The chief hazards at the Royal Calcutta Club are water tanks, and my friend, a natural slier-cum-slasher, would persevere until, having driven into one of these, he would retire to the clubhouse for a cool drink, leaving the caddy, and ball boy, to dive for the ball.