England to Have Huge Rail, Bus and 'Plane Merger

London, Eng.—Within 18 months there will be no more railway stations in England. The heads of the leading four railway services are trying to find a new name for the present depots. Some have suggested "travel," others "transport stations." Nothing definite has been decided upon as yet.

This change is due to the fact that the "Big Four" have decided to rationalize their services and to cut out unnecessary wastage and competition. Within less than a year these railway companies will control all the road services. Already they control 85 per cent. of the motor transport and 75 per cent. of the coastal shipping.

Efforts are now being made to draw the Imperial Air Service into this huge transport scheme. When this is done, a traveller will be able to purchase a ticket which wil take him to his destination by rail, motorbus, or aeroplane from "anywhere" to "anywhere" in the United Kingdom. Where road or air transport is quicker than rail, travelers will transfer to motor coaches or aeroplanes, and vice versa.

One of the results of this rationalization will be that this country will have the best transport service in the world, and the present railway depots will be used as travel centres for all public transports.

Atlantic is Spanned Many Times By Planes

Captain Charles E. Kingsford-Smith and his companions, flying non-stop across the North Atlantic from Ireland to Harbor Grace, N.F., accomplished a feat that had been performed only once before and attempts at which had taken a toll of eight lives.

More than a score of planes had preceded Kingsford-Smith in Atlantic flights, however, some of them having crossed in the opposite direction over approximately the route chosen by him, and others farther to the north or to the south. Among the latter were several important flights across the South Atlantic.

Successful trans-Atlantic flights in heavier-than-air craft have included the following:

1919

May 31—NC-4 flying boat crossed from Trepassy Bay to Lisbon with stop at Azores.

June 14—Alcock and Brown made first non-stop flight, flying from Newfoundland to Ireland.

1922

April 18—First South Atlantic crossing, by Cabral and Couthino, from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro.

1924

August—Army flyers crossed from Europe to Labrador via Greenland in flight around world.

1927

February 8 to June 16—Colonel the Marchesi de Pinedo made a round trip, Europe to South America and United States via Azores to Europe.

May 20, 21—Colonel Lindbergh flew from New York to Paris.

June 4, 4—Clarence D. Chamberlin flew to Germany with Charles A. Levine.

June 29, 30—Rear Admiral Byrd made his crossing to France.

August 28—Brock and Schlee flew from Newfoundland to London during Newfoundland-Tokio flight.

October 10 to 20—Costes and Lebrix flew from Paris to Buenos Ayres and continued to the United States.

1928

April 12, 13—First non-stop westward flight, the Bremen flew from Ireland to Greenly Island.

June 17—Miss Amelia Earhart crossed to England in the Friendship.

July 3, 4—First non-stop flight from Europe to South America, Ferrarin and Del rPete.

1929

March 24, 25, 26—The Jesus del Gran Poder flew non-stop from Spain to Brazil.

June 13—Yellow Bird flew from Old Orchard Beach to Comillas, Spain.

July 8, 9—Williams and Yancey flew from Maine to Spain.

1930

June 23, 24, 25—Captain Kingsford-Smith and companions flew from Ireland to Harbor Grace, N.F.

French Births Exceeds Deaths During Quarter

Paris—The first three months of this year have shown that France again has more births than deaths.

The mortality report made public ere lists 10,797 more births than deaths. In the first three months of last year deaths exceeded births by 7,000.

The improved showing was attributed to a lower death rate, the reduction being nearly one-third, while births remained the same. For the entire year of 1929 there were 12,000 more deaths than births.

'Best Brain' Contest Excludes Women

Bernard Shaw Found to Possess Best—Sir Oliver Lodge Second

London.—George Bernard Shaw, according to readers of the Spectator, the well-known weekly review, possesses the best brains of any man in the country. The Spectator is a journal circulating among the more thoughful class of people whose opinions in regard to mental ability are worth considering.

The result of a recent vote is interesting in many ways. Here are the leading men in their "order of merit": Bernard Shaw, 214; Sir Oliver Lodge, 183; Lord Birkenhead, 162; Winston Wells, 86; Lord Melchett, 62; Lloyd George, 50; Philip Snowden, 48; Sir John Simon, 45.

The present Prime Minister does not receive a vote and Mr. Baldwin gets but 13. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Lang, finds no place but the Archbishop of York (Dr. Temple), with 32 votes, follows closely upon the heels of Lord Reading, who obtain- of 35. Sir James Barrie is "placed" by 15 voters and follows G. K. Chesterton's 17.

No woman was included on the list.

Library Has Sound-Proof Music Room

Many unusual services are offered by public libraries, but one of the most interesting recently noticed is that performed by a branch library of New York. It contains a sound-proof room equipped with a fine phonograph where people may go by appointment to hear their favorite music. Fifteen hundred records are on file, most of them symphonies, operatic numbers and other standard works.

If the cry raised by educationalists that taste in music is being lamentably lowered by the influence of the radio is to be believed, a project such as this would appear unlikely to prosper. But the contrary is true. The music room is patronized every minute of the nine hours a day it is open. Several hundred people apply every month and appointments are made weeks in advance. Besides music lovers who go to hear their favorite pieces, musicians, concert soloists and members of orchestras come to study different works as they are interpreted by various artists.

Trustees of public libraries or philanthropic citizens might well contemplate following the example of this enterprising New York library. A "library" of recorded music and the opportunity to "read" it may have cultural benefits approaching those afforded by collections of the printed word.

Germany Limits Muskrats Menace to Public Works

Berlin—The Commissioner of Forests, Ludwig Scvhuster, has put his foot down on wholesale muskrat breeding on the ground that the rodents would undermine railroad and river embankments and impair the safety of dams, waterworks and roadways.

Commissioner Schuster pointed out that 50,000 muskrats were killed annually in Germany to arrest the damage they cause. To raise them commercially, he said, would be to invite great trouble.

U.S. Slayer Faces Electric Chair Or Inoculation With Disease

Albuquerque, N.M.—Woo Dak San had the choice recently of death in the electric chair or of redemption in the service of humanity.

Sentenced to death for the murder of a countryman, the Chinese was given the alternative of submitting to inoculation with trachoma germs that science may learn more about the disease that is the scourge of Indian tribes.

The plan to offer Woo life imprisonment instead of the chair on this condition was presented by Dr. Polk Richards, United States research physician, at the Albuquerque Indian School. Dr. Richards promised Alvin White, the slayer's attorney, that every effort would be made to have the death sentence changed if he would grant the use of the Chinese for experimental purposes.

The trachoma germ long has been a scourge among the Indians. Four years ago, Dr. Hiedyo Noguchi, noted Japanese scientist, did considerable research work here among the Indians. He believed that he had isolated the germ, but he died in 1928, a victim of his own research.

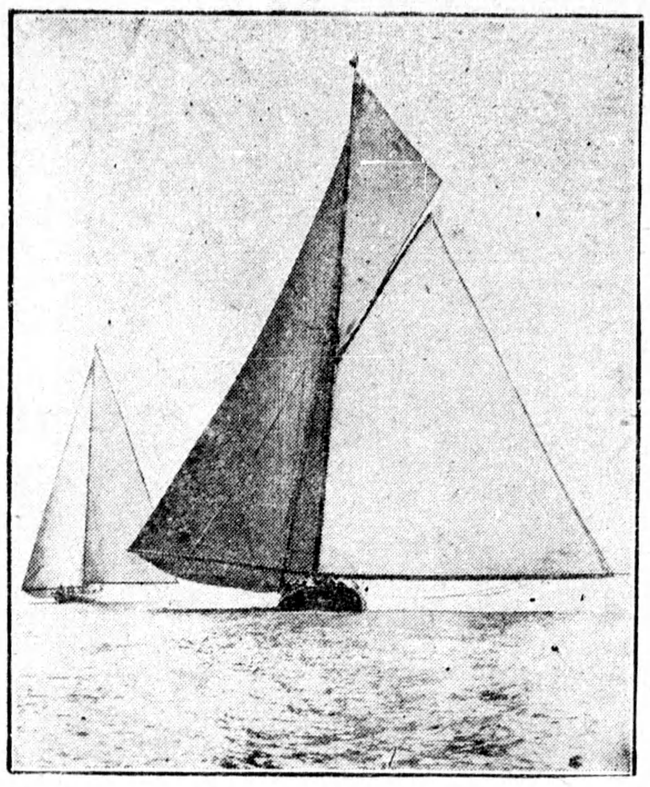
No opportunity, however, ever has been granted for experimentation of inoculation upon human beings. Only monkeys and other animals have been inoculated.

Medical authorities generally have conceded that an experiment upon a human being is needed to complete research.

If the Chinese will not agree to the plan of Dr. Richards, he must die next month in the electric chair.

Neither White nor Woo has made a decision.

Yachting Spectacle



It was a thrilling spectacle for yachtsmen when his majesty's yacht, Britannia (right) raced Sir Thomas Lipton's challenger for the America Cup, Shamrock V, on the Solent, recently.

Britain Accepts Equality Status

Lloyd George Says Dominions Won Independence in Great War

London—The determining factor in the Great War was the British Empire, said Mr. Lloyd George recently in an address to members of the Imperial Press Conference.

It was a very near thing as it was; much nearer than I care to think when I reflect upon it, he added.

The effect of the war upon the constitution of the Empire had been revolutionary, and the quality and independence of the young nations of the Empire were now accomplished facts, accepted unreservedly by Great Britain, and acknowledged by the world. But the problem of the future still remained.

"The next step after equality is effective unity. Make unity as effective as you made equality; if you don't the Empire will not remain," advised the speaker.

R-100 to Start Late in July

London.—The Air Minister, Lord Thompson, told the Imperial Press Conference recently that the airship R-100 would leave for Montreal on its maiden trans-Atlantic journey during the last few days of July.

Lord Thompson added that he would be making a journey in the other new British dirigible, R-101, to India, in September.

Flier To Carry Own Automobile

New York.—Capt. R. D. Archibald, British flier, plans to carry an automobile on his flights hereafter, mainly for picnics when he lands somewhere.

He has come from England with the car, a tiny thing, weighing half a ton and three feet high. A plane he is having built has parking space.

X (incredulously): "Did you say he was a prosperous farmer?" Y: "Yes, he sold his acres to the golf club!"

Old Swiss Town Will Be World Bank Seat

By R. ORKHARD

Basle has been chosen as the seat of the Bank for International Settlements as a town favorably situated in the heart of the European Continent, equally exposed to Central and Western European civilization and under the protection of Swiss neutrality. Even before Basle became a member of the Swiss "Bund" about 500 years ago, the town was the banker of the Swiss Confederation.

Basle is an independent State in the Swiss Confederation and has a government and a Constitution of its own. The comparison with other towns of similar size is, therefore, not quite an adequate comparison. According to the census of 1920, 73 per cent. of the residents were Swiss citizens, and of the total of 27 per cent. of foreigners, 20 per cent. were Germans, 3 per cent. French and not quite 2 per cent. Italians.

Basle has never had a pronounced international character like other Swiss towns, especially Geneva, since the League of Nations. Though progressive in a general way, the progress is, compared with towns of the United States, slow, and we find its social life still rich in deep-rooted traditions. The Basle as pictured in the Revue des Deux Mondes in 1863 is still largely the Basle of to-day. "The cleanliness which one remarks seems to be the result of old habits; it has passed into the character of the people. Solely occupied with their affairs where they manifest a persistent and calculated patience, they do not let business transgress the borders of their homes.

No doubt the establishment of the Bank for International Settlements will mean many changes for this old town on the Rhine.

English Girl Typists Fail

London—Five out of every six girls failed at the latest examinations for typists held by the civil service commission. All aspirants were between the ages of eighteen and twenty-eight and only 150 out of 920 passed the test.

King Opens Althing on Spot Where First One Met in 930

Simple Rites Mark Opening of World's Oldest Parliament—Thousands Attend Ceremony

Thingvellir, Ice.—Christian, King of Iceland, opened the 1930 session of the Icelandic Althing June 2 at the very spot where 1000 years ago this oldest parliament in the world first was convened.

King Christian stood upon a huge rock in the middle of the plain of Thingvalla where grim Goatbeard, the lawgiver, in ancient days, recited from memory the entire code of Icelandic law.

The ceremonies were simple as of old, so simple as to obtain an almost religious aspect.

The broad plain was dotted with many thousands of persons who had come from far corners of the earth.

Crowds began arriving from Reykjavik, 35 miles away over twisting mountain roads, early in the morning. From a pulpit hung high on the side of a cliff like an eagle's nest, Bishop Jon Helgason conducted divine service, after which the Icelanders formed into a long procession and crossed a dashing river that cascades itself through Almannagja rift. They plodded along the winding road over the same route taken by the first legislators of the ancient Icelandic Republic to the great Rock of Laws in the center of the historic plain. There they grouped themselves in the manner of the ancient Vikings under the banners of their respective localities.

The Icelandic Parliament, or Althing, is now held in Reykjavik, but formerly it was held at Thingvellir or the Plain of Assembly.

The Althing is reckoned to have been established in 930. A universal code of law for the Icelandic Republic was then accepted. At the time the northern peoples did not write down their laws, but memorized them and had them rehearsed in public at their "things" or "assemblies. The exact wording of the first code of laws of the Icelandic Republic is not known, for it was not until 1117 that Icelandic laws began to be recorded in writing.

Scotsman and Jew World Mirth-Makers

American Wit is Smooth—German Ponderous and Chinese Polite

"A Scot opened his purse and a moth flew out!"

That is a classic one-line laugh that has tickled the ribs of the world. First published in an English newspaper, it was speeding out of this country by wire, wireless and cable to Europe, America, and the East, almost before Britain had begun to smile. Within a week it had appeared in twenty different languages in every corner of the earth. White, black, brown, red, and yellow faces had opened from the centre because of it. It comprised the perfect Esperanto laugh—a joke the whole world understands.

The reasons were its brevity and its simple language. It contained no double meanings or play upon words. A Scot is a Scot, a purse is a purse, and a moth a moth, in any language. The joke is as good in Sanskrit or Bantu as in English.

Not all jokes that appeal to English-speaking people make foreigners smile. You have heard that yarn, no doubt, of the Englishman, the Scot, and the Jew who went into a public-house; the Englishman stood a round of drinks, the Scot stood six foot two, and the Jew stood in silent admiration?

That is the sort of joke that is only funny in English. Try to translate it into, say, French or German, and you are lost. The core of the joke is the triple meaning of the very "to stand." There is no equivalent word in any other language.

The alleged meanness of the Scot and the Jew's shrewd bargaining are subjects of world-wide appeal. That is because Jews and Scots are more widely distributed over the earth's surface than are any other nationals. Mothers-in-law, too, are good for a laugh in most countries. A Portuguese paper published the following recently:

Judge—"You are accused of killing your mother-in-law."

Accused—"I did it out of pity, sir."

Judge—"Out of pity?"

Accused—"Yes, sir, out of pity for myself!"

That might as easily have been used in an English, American, or German journal. But here's a warning. I once told a mother-in-law story to a Chinese. It all but lost me his friendship. He listened gravely to my chuckling and then told me frigidly that he had made a mistake—he had once thought me a gentleman.

Chinese of all classes regard home and family ties as sacred. Anything that disparages a mother or father by marriage is sacrilege. Much the same applies to Indians. When an Indian calls you his father and his mother, he is paying you the highest compliment. Yet he is invariably guilty of an unconscious joke whenever he wishes to be unusually polite. A stock phrase for such occasions is: "Sahib, you are my father and my mother, and I am the son of a pig!" It never strikes him as funny!

Even before Prohibition gave a glut of drinking jokes to the world, the subject of alcohol was a universal smile-winner. Spain was laughing the other day at the story of a man whose oculist had told him that his weak sight was due to too much drink. "On the contrary," the man replied, "when I drink I see double!" And the adventures of the heavy father and timid suitor raise a smile in every land where a man and a maid make love. I pick this one from Rome:—

She: 'What!! You come to ask my hand armed with a rifle?"

He: "Well, you see, someone told me your father was an old bear!"

The "dear old lady" yarn is known in every country except in the East, where age is venerated. This is from Belgium. A young man has taken his elderly aunt to the theatre. He tells her that the next act takes place a year later.

Old Lady: "Are you sure our tickets will still be valid?"

The Germans and the Swiss never fail to "fall for" a joke against doctors. A Swiss told me this quite recently. A doctor was showing a woman a fine tiger skin.

"Yes," he said, "one of my friends wounded it, but it was I who finished it off."

"Now, now, doctor," cooed the woman, "you'll never make me believe that this tiger was one of your patients!"

And this floated through the ether the other night from a German wireless station:—

Doctor (after examining a patient): "You are suffering from alcoholic abuse and a weak heart."

Patient: "You'd better give me something for the heart!"

American humour includes skits on domestic differences that would offend many people. Thus, a prominent journal had a sketch recently of a young wife with a revolver in her hand and a little girl looking up at her. The mother is saying: "Run and get the movie camera, dear; mamma's going to shoot at papa again!'!" And another—of a husband returning home at Christmas-time to find his wife embracing another man—bore the caption: "By jove, I forgot the mistletoe!"

Just as American humour is slick, German ponderous, and Chinese polite, so the main characteristic of the French has always been an aptitude for the quick retort. Prince Talleyrand, the famous diplomat, limped badly, and one day on entering a room he was met by a woman with a bad squint.

"Monsieur de Talleyrand," she exclaimed, "how you walk!"

In a flash came the answer:—

"As you see, madam, all cock-eyed!"

Whether your face is white, black, or yellow, a laugh makes brothers of us all.

An Old "Sky-Hawk"

Cheyenne, Wyo.—Arriving here recently from Omaha, Neb., James (Jack) Knight, veteran pilot of Boeing Air Transport, Inc., completed his 8000th hour of flying, representing an air mileage of approximately 800,000 miles.

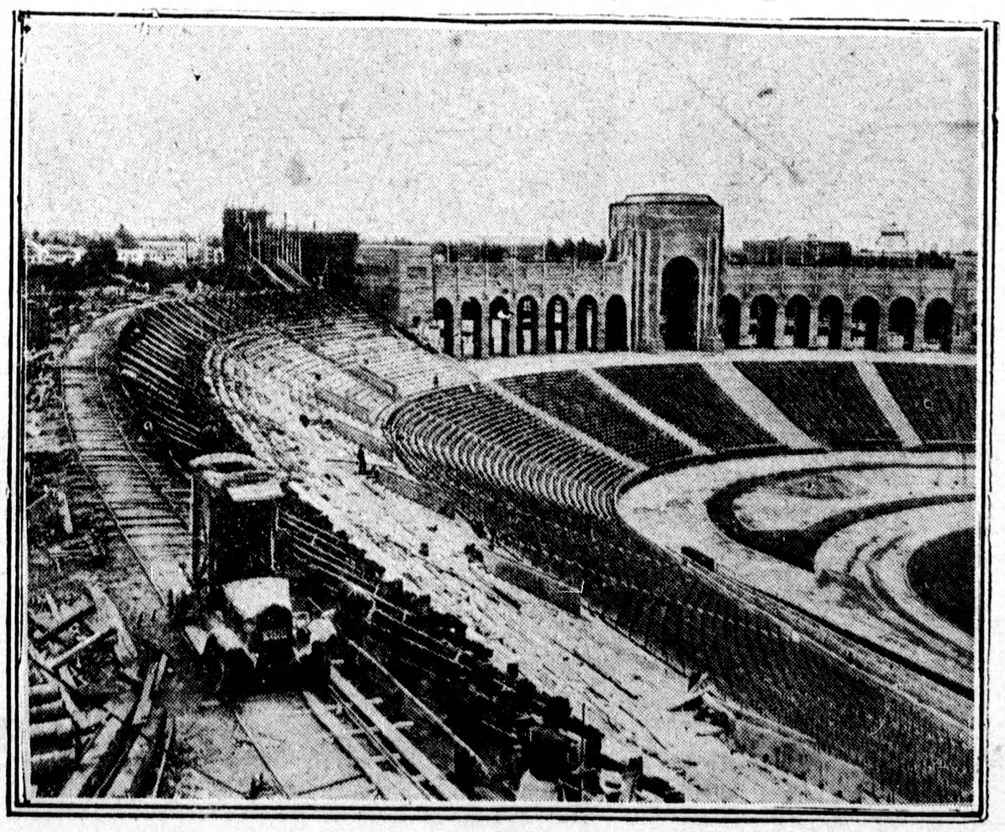
He has never had a major mishap during his flying career.

A WATCHER

A poor man watched a thousand years before the gates of Paradise. Then while he snatched one little nap it opened and shut.—Persian.

The only way a population can keep young is to have a birth rate above the death rate.—W. S. Thompson, Scripps Foundation.

Gigantic Olympic Preparations



Thousands of tons of concrete are poured into famous Los Angeles coliseum, where most of track and field sports will be held in 10th Olympic games.