

BRITONS HAVE A GREAT MANY
HOBBIES, INCLUDING TOY TRAINS,
TIN SOLDIERS AND SPIDER WEBS

It is often asserted by Englishmen that hobbies have a greater hold in Britain than in any other country. But some medical authorities insist that the number of hobbyless individuals, especially at the retiring age, is still too pronounced. "Get a hobby and live longer," is their dictum, and several learned judges have expressed the opinion that the medicos are right. In certain quarters it is contended that a great many men who are approaching the retiring age are hobbyless because when they have reached the time of life when it is usual for hobby fever to develop they were completely immersed in the job of helping to win a war. Yet the war encouraged domestic hobbies, such as knitting, crocheting and embroidering. There are peers of the realm who derived so much comfort from knitting in the years 1914-1918 that they often resort to needles nowadays to obtain relief from political and other worries. One peer invariably falls back upon the game of "knit one purl one" on long railway journeys, and there is a well known member of parliament who knits his own neckties and makes about \$100 a year knitting them for his friends, the money being turned over by him to charities. In fact, the knitters and embroiders, a very considerable company in this land of hobbies, are not by any means done with business or politics. Doctors who have no intentions of early retirement figure

prominently among the embroiderers. The altar cloth of some parish churches were embroidered by professional men resident in London. A distinguished physician executed the beautiful embroidery on altercloth which he frequents in summer. The Prince of Wales learned to knit during the war and several pieces of his handiwork were sold at bazaars for fancy prices. Golf is his hobby nowadays. King George's principal hobby is stamps, of which he has a collection worth more than \$500,000.

Best of All

One Britisher insists that his hobby is the best of all. He has for more than forty years spent his day off in courts of law. Another makes a hobby of collecting every published photograph of members of the royal family. Many English hobbyists find relaxation and entertainment in toy trains. One individual who has the toy-train complex has spent a small fortune on tiny railroad paraphernalia and in converting an acre of his ground into a model of a section of one of the main lines. The train hobbyists have a society and a magazine of their own. According to some toy shops there has lately been an increase in demand for toy soldiers despite disarmament propaganda. This development has not been taken to mean that juveniles have grown more warlike, but that adult toy soldier hobbyists are adding to their collections. One of these can

place at least 5,000 "men" in action and several others have more than 2,500. The most enthusiastic of these hobbyists generally buy the metal soldiers unpainted, as they desire to do the painting themselves to get absolute accuracy in the matter of uniforms.

Popular Hobby

As in the United States, gardening is one of the most popular hobbies in the British Isles. But in London there is not the same opportunity today that there was a few years ago. Many Thousands of Londoners have become flat-dwellers since the war. The gardening hobbyist must go a long way out from the core or center of London, or to what has been described as the fringe of dormitory towns, to be free from the restrictions of window boxes or a few square yards of unfruitful soil. In the slums the garden hobbyist must be content for the most part with the window boxes, and they are encouraged with substantial prizes to make them as richly colorful as possible.

Most flat-dwellers are driven back on commonplace hobbies, yet there is room for eccentric or unusual. A certain Londoner has made a collection of spiders' webs when roaming about the countryside. He preserved them between thin sheets of glass. Another Londoner does not mind the restrictions of apartment house life, for his hobby is gallivanting about the King's realm of circuitous or out-of-the-way stretches of railroads. There is a map on the walls of his flat indicating the mileage done on the railroads for a period of ten years, something equivalent to a circuit of the globe. He will spend \$5 or \$10 to reach a spot where he can start upon

NOW PROBING
CHARGES OF
STERILIZATION

Detroit, Jan. 13—Charges that a number of patients at the Wayne County home for mental defects have been sterilized over their objections, resulted yesterday in an order for an investigation and brought out the fact that thousands of operations have been performed in Michigan institutions under a state law enacted four years ago.

Auditor Edward H. Williams laid the charges before the board of County Auditors. In reply Dr. Robert H. Haskell said that 61 operations had been performed on inmates in the county school and all were carried out on the petition of the patient's families.

Dr. Haskell said that 84 sterilization operations had been performed at the Michigan Home and Training School at Lapeer up to last May 31. The law, enacted in 1929, also is invoked frequently in the state asylums, he said.

Williams said that his information was that the rights of the individuals and their parents were wantonly violated. He said he had been informed that a social worker for the training school had induced some of the parents of inmates to give their consent for sterilization operations by representing that they were signing petitions for the release of their children.

No Basis For Charge

Dr. Haskell said that the social worker named assured him that there was no basis for that charge and added: "I think there is some error there."

"No child has been sterilized at the training school except where application has been made to the court by the family of the child, not by the training school," he said. "Everything has been done according to law."

In some instances, he said representatives of the County Home have called to the attention of inmates' families the necessity for such an operation but that was done, he said only in "particularly urgent" cases, usually where hyper-sexuality was a factor.

Of the County Home patients sterilized, Dr. Haskell said that 14 were boys and 47 girls. The ratio, he said, was about the same as in other State institutions. At the State Home, he gave the figures as 197 boys and 645 girls. The disparity, he said, was due to the difference in "risk that the two sexes constitute to the community."

Ages of the patients, he said, probably range from 16 to 20.

A few months ago a young man in Osceola County, Michigan, secured a \$3,200 judgment against three county officials whom he charged with inducing him to submit to a sterilization operation. The case is to be retried soon.

A GASOLINE
PRICE WAR ON
IN TORONTO

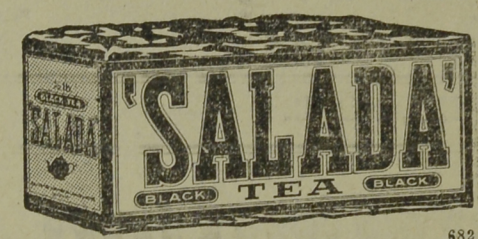
Toronto, Ontario, Jan. 13—Gasoline prices tumbled today throughout Toronto, major companies reducing their product from 21 1-2 a gallon to 16 1-2 cents and less. The price-slashing was said by some officials of the larger companies to be a temporary measure to defeat what they called "irresponsible dealers" who, they said, were offering low-grade gasoline cheap. This figure is without the six cent tax.

In some cases the price was cut to 15 1-2 cents and there were indications it would go lower before nightfall.

A factor in the price war was said to be wide distribution of United States gas, some U. S. companies with large surpluses on hand "dumping" the surplus on the Canadian market.

a branch line trip costing a quarter. He prefers always—in his vacation time—to do any railroad journey by the most circuitous instead of the shortest route, a state of mind that baffles the fellow who sells the tickets. But it should be said in this Londoner's defense—as he himself has emphasized—that he always seeks the most rapid means of transportation to and from his home when he is at work and has no time to burn.

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