THE RECORD OF PICTURESQUE BRITAIN

By DR. VAUGHAN CORNISH

THE second year's work of artists engaged in recording picturesque features of England and Wales is now on view at the National Gallery, London. This valuable work, initiated by a committee set up by the Ministry of Labour and National Service, has been made possible by a grant from the Pilgrim's Trust. It is intended that the drawings (which are the property of the Trustees) shall ultimately form a permanent collection.

A special feature of the present exhibition is a group of drawings of Windsor Castle by John Piper, lent by H.M. The Queen, who commissioned their execution after last year's exhibition. The rest of the present collection of drawings (about two hundred in number) includes examples from twenty counties, of which ten counties are additional to those comprised in last year's exhibition.

Of picturesque Buckinghamshire a charming corner house in Winslow and the red-brick town hall of Buckingham are faithfully depicted by Stanley Anderson, R.A. Notable examples of London and its environs are the Embankment, Pimlico, by Edward Walker, and The Admiral's House, Hampstead, by Norman James. Petersham and Ham in Surrey have been recorded in detail, both on account of the beauty of their seventeenth-century houses and the special risk of demolition owing to the nearness of London. Among these pictures are a general view of Ham Common, and the representation of two houses at Petersham with Dutch gable-ends facing the road.

Of towns in Hertfordshire, the steep street of Bishop's Stortford is shown in a charming pen-and-ink sketch by S. R. Badmin. The broad, open spaces of flat Suffolk are well shown in Martin Hardie's water-colour of Bawdsey Ferry.

On the western side of England, Ledbury in Herefordshire has been selected for its remarkable timber-frame houses; and, finally, crossing to Wales, Mona Moore's water-colour shows the low stone houses, of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, offset by a mountainous background.

In addition to buildings, the record of articles in use comes within the scope of the record of picturesque Britain. An interesting example is shown in Kenneth Rowntree's careful drawing of a coracle, the primitive boat which has come down from British times.

As this present World War goes on, we need to consider more carefully than hitherto the importance of the beauty of town and countryside in relation to the nation's welfare. When we look back to the early eighteenth century, we find the beauty of the countryside enhanced in both building and planting by the educated taste of the great landowners. Without attempting to consider the justification or otherwise of the taxation to which they are now subject, there is no doubt that if their mansions and parks be not preserved, the nation will lose one of its greatest assets of beauty. At the present time, it is of great importance to realize that an environment of beauty is no mere luxury but an essential condition for the happiness and spiritual welfare of the nation. If, however, such an environment is to confer its full benefit, the nation as a whole must be educated in the appreciation of scenery, both natural and architectural. Now that, in the twentieth century, education is no longer confined to the well-to-do classes, the proper understanding and full enjoyment of the æsthetics of scenery can be brought within the reach of all, if, but only if, the subject is brought properly before the attention of the whole community. Picture galleries are, of course, a help, but by no means sufficient. The most evident means at the command of the Government is a weekly broadcast allotted to the systematic teaching of the æsthetics of scenery.

COMMUNICATION PROGRESS

IN a lengthy article entitled "Milestones of Communication Progress" (*Elect. Comm.*, **20**, No. 3; 1942), H. T. Kohlhaas presents a comprehensive review of the developments in electrical communication which have occurred within the last twenty years. In the planning and co-ordinating of long-distance telephone communication, an outstanding event was the creation in 1924 of the International Consultative Committee on long-distance telephony in Europe, following a proposal made by Sir Frank Gill in his presidential address to the Institution of Electrical Engineers in 1922. Between 1923 and 1926 a succession of recorded steps led to the establishment of the first trans-Atlantic radiotelephony circuit between the United States and England. The first Madrid–Buenos Aires radiotelephone circuit was inaugurated in 1929 and it was followed in 1930 by the first radiotelephone circuit between the Americas. In 1931 the first demonstrations of single sideband short-wave radiotelephony were carried out between Buenos Aires and Madrid and between Madrid and Paris, establishing the now well-recognized improvements in transmission efficiency and the economies which this method makes possible.

In 1931 and the following years outstanding developments in the ultra-high frequencies were described. Long-distance telephone communication was established across the English Channel on approximately 1,600 mc. using very sharp beams. Work in this general field was continued with great activity and publications appeared on propagation of these very high frequencies in 1936 and 1937, the latter including a description of the first multi-channel ultra-short wave telephone link. Later, work on ultra-high frequencies was directed also to television transmission. On one hand, there were references in 1939 to the Eiffel Tower television station delivering 30 kw. to an exceptionally long feeder over the wide band of frequencies necessary for television, and on the other, to transmission over dielectric guides at frequencies from 1,000 mc. to 30,000 mc., using various types of positive grid triodes, klystrons, magnetrons or other tube structures.

High-power broadcasting on intermediate frequencies and high frequencies took a prominent place at this period. The Prague station with 120 kw. carrier was described in 1932 and was followed two years later by the Budapest station with the same carrier power. The latter was unique for its anti-fading mast antenna over 1,000 feet high, the highest antenna ever constructed. On higher frequencies, mention was made of two British Empire transmitters added in 1937 at Daventry, rated at 50 kw. carrier power at 22 mc. Early long-distance telephone communication to ships at sea was also recorded: on the *Berengaria* in 1929; the *Belgen-*