

NEWS FROM ROME.

100,000 people will crowd this stadium next year. It's being built in Rome for the Olympic Games, and Italians from all over the country, even student-priests, are already getting excited at the prospect. The Eternal City will be a worthy host to the world's athletes. Smaller, but still impressive, will be the swimming stadium, where it's reasonable to hope that a gold medal or two will come the way of Britain. However, that's looking ahead. There's a lot of work to be done before the crowds roar, inside or out, and all eyes are on Rome. Many events will be contested under cover, boxing and wrestling, for example. In all the buildings, Italian constructional genius is apparent, so, of course, is the artistic sense; an eye-pleasing reminder of the athletes of old, who set an example to the modern world.

The Queen Mother, on holiday in Rome, went to the Villa Borghese to unveil a statue of Lord Byron. Her Majesty said that culture is one of the enduring links between civilised peoples. In his lifetime, Byron's works were translated into Italian and widely read. "Oh Rome, my country, City of the soul", is inscribed on the plinth. The statue is a copy of the famous one by Thorvaldsen, now at Trinity College, Cambridge. Here in Rome it is a gracious tribute by Italy to a great English poet.