

(continued from previous page)

more interesting to read than any set of notes we had ever seen used by a student of agriculture in peace time.

And what applies to agriculture applies to carpentry, engineering, biology, book-keeping, agriculture, and most of the other courses provided for the Pacific army. Those who are fact-hungry are fed with the facts they are sighing for—and sometimes, of course, a few meals are enough. It has happened that men who have been hankering for years after a life on the land, say, have not hankered any more after a week or two spent on a farm course. Some, on the other hand, who did not know that they wanted to be architects, say, or keepers of bees, and who entered on a course idly, because there seemed to be nothing more interesting to do, have suddenly discovered their vocation. In both cases the study course has been an asset to them—in one case by ending foolish longings, in the other, by opening new and satisfying vistas.

Social Adjustment

Put another way, it means this, Lieut. Congalton suggested: that the men of the Pacific army are adjusting themselves socially for the days that will follow the war. Many who were wrongly placed before the war began are being helped to see what they should have been doing. Many who were doing their work mechanically are being shown how to do it with fuller knowledge and a livelier interest.

Nor is it necessary to point out that there is hardly any battlefield in the world in which work of this kind is carried on under greater difficulties. It might be worse in Burma, perhaps, or among the guerrilla bands in the Balkans, but in general, jungle fighting in the Pacific Islands is about as unfavourable as campaigning can be for regular study.

Continuity is Difficult

Lieut. Congalton did not pretend to us that it was possible to maintain unbroken regularity with either classes or correspondence courses. Action necessarily stopped everything. But within a fortnight of the last operations in which they were engaged, our Pacific fighting units had built themselves a theatre to hold 3000 men, and supplies of reading matter went forward during actual operations as often as transport was available. When a man has nothing to do but sit in a foxhole waiting, a book or a magazine or a bulletin on current affairs can be very precious to him. If he is close to the enemy, he will not be able to read by night; and even if he is back a little in a tent or a semi-permanent dug-out, he will not have electric light to read by. A candle in a bottle is a poor substitute for even a kerosene lamp; but it is the best most men can be given in forward areas, and makes it all the more surprising that so large a proportion not only follow systematic courses but actually ask to be examined in them.

Demand Exceeds Supply

There are, in fact, far more applicants for study courses than can be supplied. And there are several men, too, who are taking degree courses for

university examinations. These men Army Education assists by supplying textbooks on hire. But it does not offer to coach them. The most it can do is to facilitate their studies by receiving and forwarding material to them, and arranging for their final examination. But in spite of all these drawbacks—accentuated by the fact that a student must work in his spare time and in a hut or tent shared by others who are not students—in spite of all that, the men who sat for degrees last year gained as good marks, without any concessions at all, as those studying in New Zealand.

Reading Becomes Serious

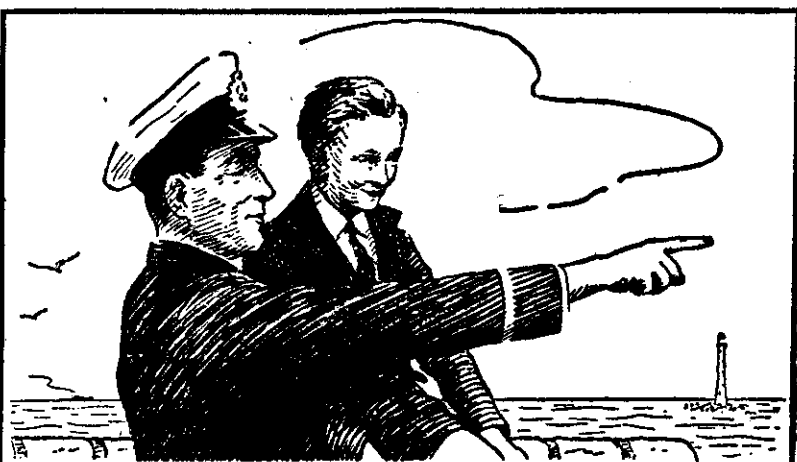
One curious fact that should be mentioned before this article closes is the appreciable change in literary taste shown by the users of camp libraries. For this Lieut. Congalton had no explanation to offer—he merely suggested that getting adventure in one's daily life is perhaps sufficient for most people without adventure in print as well. There might, he said, be other factors, too. But it was beyond doubt that while the literature of violence—Western and detective fiction, and so on—was most popular to begin with, there had been a swing lately to serious and factual books.



Leather needs "feeding" to keep it supple and "alive"... Kiwi is a double-purpose Polish—its fine waxes and dyes in the purest solvents "feed" and polish the leather. That's why your shoes will last longer when Polished and "FED" with

KIWI

BLACK POLISH



Looking Ahead—

The future is a great adventure, full of opportunities. To make the most of them you will need money sooner or later. That is why you should avail yourself of the ideal Savings Plan and put as much as you can spare into a Policy with the Government Life Insurance. It will help you to be ready for your chances when they come.

Government Life

INSURANCE DEPARTMENT