## **BOOK REVIEWS**

(continued from previous page)

begins and ends with the next dance: a youth capturing one girl by paying attention to another; a solemn husband with a butterfly wife; a scene in a hospital or a day on the beach; a skit on radio, or a grin at the Yanks—she does it all so neatly that you do not ask whether it is worth doing. Not at the time. You enjoy yourself as you read, and if you are aware of any other emotion than the pleasure her competence gives you it is your satisfaction in feeling that most of her scenes are authentic New Zealand. Then an hour or two or a day or two later you begin to wonder why she trades in such small beer. Is this her measure, or has she something else to say that her smartness prevents her from saying? If she is the victim of her own slickness, will she one day realise that and break free? Or has she just a clear, small voice, a little thin, and a little metallic? The mere asking of such questions is the tribute one pays to her unmistakable talent, but she alone can supply the answer. Will she?

## SOUTH SEAS

STRANGE STORIES FROM THE SOUTH SEAS. By Eric Ramsden. A. H. & A. W. Reed, Wellington.

MR. RAMSDEN says quite frankly that he culled these stories from "rare books and manuscripts, early newspapers and official files" in the Mitchell Library in Sydney. The culling has perhaps been well done, but the reconstruction is romantic and often foolish. It is also irritating that he is not content to write English, or even journalese, but seizes every opportunity to drag in a Polynesian word whether it adda meaning or a pointless obscurity. He does, however, cover a wide field—earthly and unearthly—and throws in an excellent photographic section which his printers have handled admirably.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

THE DOMINION SONGBOOK, No. 10. By Vernon Griffiths (Whitcombe & Tombs).

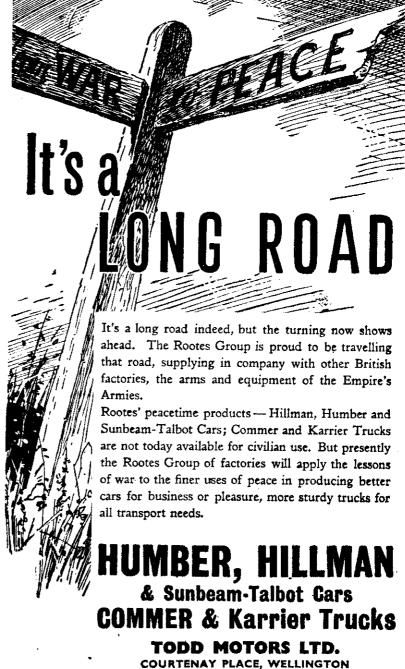
SIX well-known songs ("The Bailiff's Daughter," "The Bay of Biscay," "Heart of Oak," "John Peel," "The Miller of the Dee," and "There is a Tavern in the Town") are arranged to encourage the formation of large fourpart choirs in post-primary schools. The settings are done by one who well knows all the limitations of such choirs—the male voices sing the melody only and the girls sing Dr. Griffith's spirited descant parts, The instructions to teachers are notable for their common sense, and should make good results possible if they are followed carefully.

BAND OF THE ROYAL NEW ZEALAND AIR FORCE—Pacific Tour, 1944. From the Air Department.

A 30 - page illustrated brochure addressed to U.S. servicemen as much as to the New Zealand public, explaining the background of the band which toured the Pacific this year, and of the music it played, with plenty of good photographs and some explanations for Americans, about how New Zealanders live.

WHISPERS OF MEMORY. Poems by Frank Collins. The Handcraft Press.

SIXTEEN emotional little poems, eight of them mentioning hearts—one rueful, one "so light and fair," one aching, one uplifted, one dreaming, one true, one saddened and one heavy.



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