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up" girls, semi-undressed beauties included in packages of cigarettes issued only to the men of the Royal Navy a few years ago.

When *The Listener* saw him, Mr. Murtagh said that cigarette card collecting is a really valuable hobby. "Nearly every card teaches some lesson; items of geographical or historical interest, botany, sport, travel, animal or bird life, astronomy, science are among the thousand and one topics included. The information printed on the backs is concise and reliable and often culled from remote sources."

Why Some Are So Rare

Asked if there were anything in the frequently-expressed theory that some cards in a series were sent out fewer in numbers than others in order to make a set difficult to fill and thereby keep up sales, Mr. Murtagh said the question was one that had for long attracted the attention of cartophilists. After considerable investigation they had decided there was nothing in it. "Cards are usually printed in sets on sheets and the same number of each is printed. Later they are inserted into the packets by machinery and the whole process of printing and packing is carried out straightforwardly. That certain cards do become harder to obtain than others is true, but this might be attributable to the sudden popularity of one particular card. In one set of motion picture stars, for instance, a very fine photograph of Jean Harlow was included. This set appeared at the time of Jean Harlow's death, and for sentimental reasons or mere curiosity this card was not discarded by most smokers, with the result that it did not get into the usual channels of circulation."

At other times full sets were sought by interested sections of the community. A noteworthy instance was one of the last sets printed before the war caused a suspension in publication. This set, "Stamps, Rare and Interesting," was in great demand by stamp-collectors, and their interest had a marked effect on the numbers of cards generally available.

To round off this story of New Zealand's "ace" cigarette card collector, it should be stated that Mr. Murtagh is a non-smoker.

—C.H.F.

Burial At Sea, Off France

*AIRMAN, your eager spirit fled,
Too long you rolled in the tide
Unheeding, unheeded, now not wedded
To those bright wings, now dead;*

*TAKING the sodden papers from your
side,
What could we do more, with clumsy
prayer,
Than give you again to the deep
In which you died?*

*BURYING you, we saw the lives that
each
In plane, ship, tank or landing craft
Hoped to preserve yet thrust
Numberless, nameless, to the desperate
beach,*

*NECESSITY compelling. But loss
Even of the ultimate breath
And body of being meant more
Than sad wreckage the waves tossed:*

*YOU, airman, from the cloud
Spinning on that last sortie
Played your unwished-for part,
Making our triumph less proud.*

—Denis Glover.

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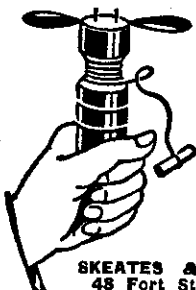
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