

(continued from previous page)

supply the ammunition. The same principle would apply to the handling of a piece of field artillery—n.c.o., aimer, and fuse-setter would be Nazis, the rest non-German. And for all branches of the Army a similar method was in operation—all officers, n.c.o.'s and keymen were trustworthy *Deutschers*, while the rest—the ammunition handlers, the hacks, the trench diggers, the lumpers, all the routine menial, easily-supervised workers—were foreigners.

It will be noted, too, that even here Hitler took no chances—he mixed the different nationalities so thoroughly within their little sub-units that their petty racial rivalries effectively prevented any cohesion that could work to the detriment of the *Wehrmacht*. And in addition he was not such a fool as to have a whole battalion or regiment composed of about 80 per cent foreigners. Here and there would be found a platoon or a troop composed entirely of Germans, apparently included haphazardly in the formation, yet always in such a manner that they could control their brethren in arms if the necessity arose.

What is disclosed above is not based only on the remarks of two press-ganged Russians, but was confirmed in conversations with "German" soldiers on many other occasions while I was behind the lines pretending to be an Italian peasant. The fear instilled into these poor devils was such, however, that they were ordinarily very careful, and it was only when they had been looking on the wine when it was red, and in response to leading questions, that they opened up at all. And then only after extreme care to ensure that they were not overheard. I may mention that by this time my Italian was better than theirs, and I could thus pass as a disgruntled peasant.

Treatment of Austrians

An Austrian from near Vienna, and an erstwhile supporter of Dolfuss, had some interesting observations to make. Apart from demonstrating delight at the great defeat that Alexander had inflicted on Kesselring, and confirming what our Russian and Polish friends had told us, he said that his countrymen in the *Wehrmacht* were treated differently from either the Germans themselves, or the other foreigners. Since they spoke the same language as the Nazis, the Austrians were broadly regarded as partners, but only up to a point. They were not ostracised as were the others; discipline was not quite so harsh; but nevertheless they were obviously not trusted one hundred per cent. In Austrian divisions and battalions was to be found a definite sprinkling of good Nazis, clearly to keep an eye on their "brothers" from the South, while there was always a preponderance of Germans among the officers. A most noticeable feature, and one which galled Austrian soldiers more than anything else, was that behind the lines they were not—unless they had performed particularly well against the enemy—allowed to carry the customary pistol worn by all Germans, but had to content themselves with bayonets only. And when they left the forward areas, something over half the rifles, and all the machine-guns, were withdrawn—just in case.

The Germans Sometimes Forgot

Foreigners in the *Wehrmacht* were not altogether helpless, however, and occasionally did hinder the cause of their hated masters. In most areas the old

THEY ALSO SERVE

—Who Only Wait At Table

SCHOOL teachers take on so many different kinds of jobs these days during school holidays that it would not be surprising to see a complete new Training College syllabus emerge. It would include laundry work, wards maids' duties, work in abattoirs, hoppedicking, waitressing, general farm work, and so on. It might cause a revolution in education. It might also cause a revolution among the teachers, for their reactions to this type of work during the holidays have not always been favourable.

But the other day we met one who really enjoyed her vacation work. She became a waitress in a hotel at a seaside resort. She liked it so well that she says, "After the war I would like to take on the work for a year or so on full time, just to have the chance of moving round and meeting people. I've met more varied and interesting people during these holidays than I meet in a whole year of school teaching. It isn't nearly as tiring as teaching, either. When you are away from the job you relax. Your feet become tired, of course, but a little rest soon fixes that. Best point of all, there's no homework to do."

This is the second year this teacher has spent her holidays as a waitress, so she can talk with authority now. She has worked in both private and licensed hotels. According to her experience licensed hotels are much better, for they make their profit from the bar-trade, which means no extra work for the waitresses. Private hotels have to rely on all

kinds of little extras to bring custom, and this of course means all kinds of little extras to be performed by the waitresses.

"We Learnt Great Restraint"

The conditions these holidays were not easy, we were told. "In the hotel I worked in, five people had to do all the cooking and cleaning for 70 guests. Three of us ran the dining room—a fellow-teacher, a training college student, and myself. Later the student left and we two did all the work in the dining room for five weeks. Luckily I had had experience in canteen work at the American Red Cross, so the work wasn't so strange for me. We used to get up at 6.30 to help with the 'primitive services,' as we called early morning tea. But breakfast was always the worst meal. There were coffeepots to fill, tea to make. You see, there are such a lot of things for breakfast that can't be set down beforehand. Toast, for example. Each individual needs special attention, which means much more running backwards and forwards. We were never in a good temper anyway, at that time of the morning. Neither were the kitchen staff. But of course the guests don't realise that, and their demands always seemed twice as many at breakfast time. Once I had to go back to the kitchen three times before I brought a boiled egg that just suited a querulous guest. I was afraid to go into the kitchen the third time. Imagine cooking 20 eggs at once for 20 different tastes. But a waitress can't show her temper. We certainly learnt great restraint."

A Baby and a Dog

She paused for a moment as she thought of those hurried mornings. "People don't realise how a little request can make such difficulties," she continued slowly. "Take the matter of sweets. The different combinations are all set out beforehand to save time in serving. It seems a small matter for a guest to ask for a different combination, but what a train of trouble that starts up when the dining room is full of hungry people."

"Another routine to speed things up is to serve only coffee with dinner. Once I was foolish enough to bring a cup of tea to a customer who had been helpful and easy to look after. The result was pandemonium. I was flooded with requests for tea and nearly caused a mutiny in the kitchen. Then there was the woman with the baby who expected me to bring the bottle at all hours, whatever I was doing. I was nicknamed 'Karitane' by the rest of the staff about this time. There was also a dog I used to feed."

Talking of Majors

That was one of the things which impressed this teacher more than anything, the way the small routine matters of the private home became major affairs when translated to the complex life of the hotel.



"... They sat there with their tongues hanging out."

"But talking of majors," she continued, "we had one at the hotel who always managed to upset our dining room routine completely. He altered the seating accommodation regularly and when he wasn't doing that he was calling out orders. I had a cure for him, however. He had a very strong accent. He would call out 'We want some watah,' and that was my cue to ignore him. I would take no notice for some time, then I would say sweetly 'Do you want something?' Whether I shamed him into a semblance of good manners or whether his thirst grew too much for him, I don't know, but he always added 'please' to his second request."

They Wait to Eat

The dining room staff always "did" the silver. They washed and polished it every morning, squeezing it in between breakfast duties where they could. But it always extended well into the morning as well. It was one of the tasks they liked least, to put it mildly. To make it worse, the waitresses were generally hungry at this time. But most meal-times were hungry times for them, too, for waitresses cannot have their meal till after all the guests have been fed.

"The entree orders used to save our lives," the teacher explained. "We used to put in special orders for ourselves when we had settled the guests well into the meat course, and eat it in the pantry. We just had time to get through a small order such as an entree or sweet. Without this we could never have stood the agony of seeing the guests eat."

"The Second Sitting"

"But if there was anything we abhorred it was the second sitting. Before we could turn round the tables were filled up again with hungry people. We had to clear the table while they sat there with their tongues hanging out and then start all over again with the soup. I pity the poor girls in city restaurants."

She had one more observation to make. "You'd be amazed," said she, "at the people who came to stay and didn't do the least to help the short-handed staff. Sometimes the housemaid would say, 'This is a good crowd now, four out of every six have made their beds,' but mostly the people were only too willing to get away without doing anything. On our way home we stayed at a hotel ourselves for a few days. I can tell you, we were most careful to do all we could for that staff. We had our reward, for we heard two housemaids saying 'Those two aren't at all bad, they've made their beds.'"