

HELP OUR RELIEF TEAMS HELP GREECE



The Greeks, still near to starvation, ill-housed, without clothing, asked for New Zealand relief workers because they know us and trust us. Four teams of workers have just arrived in Greece; they include doctors, nutritionists, transport experts. We must pay these highly-trained people a bare living wage. Help CORSO to maintain these teams and reap the gratitude of our hard-hit allies who stood alone with us in desperate days. China, our Pacific neighbour, has also asked for help in her great need.

Your chance to help

Money is urgently needed. Donations should be clearly endorsed CORSO and forwarded to your nearest CORSO District Committee. Or, if preferred, they may be sent direct to "Greek Relief," Wellington, C.I.

CORSO (New Zealand Council of Organisations for Relief Service Overseas Inc.)

EAT and SMILE!

Keep a tin of Hardy's handy. For safe, speedy release from the agonies of indigestion and heart-burn, reach for your tin of

HARDY'S
INDIGESTION REMEDY

and oh...the relief

R. M. Hardy,
33 Bond Street, Wellington.



"BARLASCH OF THE GUARD"

THE NBS is now receiving from the BBC some of its recorded serials, and the first of these to make its appearance in our programmes will be *Barlasch of the Guard*, adapted by Norman Edwards from the book by H. Seton Merriman. This will begin at 3YL on Sunday, April 14, at 7.56 p.m., and will be heard weekly at that time. The narrator, who will link the dramatic sections of the story, is Henry Ainley, the famous English actor. Frederick Lloyd plays the part of Barlasch. The production is by Val Gielgud and Martyn C. Webster.

When the BBC first broadcast *Barlasch of the Guard* in January of last year, Val Gielgud (who is BBC Director of Features and Drama) introduced it to readers to the *Radio Times* in a short article, which we now print here:

I have been credibly informed that when Tolstoy's *War and Peace* was serialised over the air it was almost impossible to obtain a copy of the book from any Public Library. It is hard to believe that there was no connection between the sudden recent boom in Anthony Trollope and Mr. Oldfield Box's adaptations for broadcasting of two of the famous Barchester novels. The popularity of Dickens in the same connection is an accepted fact. It should be interesting to see what sort of demand arises for Seton Merriman's novel now that his *Barlasch of the Guard* is to be broadcast.

In the Buchan Class

Seton Merriman, of course, is not to be compared with the Victorian giants. He belongs to the Edwardian—a considerably less classical era. His canvases were not vast, his casts of characters are small, but as a sheer teller of stories he ranks high. I do not think it unfair to place him in a category with John Buchan, Anthony Hope, and Stanley

Weyman—even perhaps with Robert Louis Stevenson. His style may not be particularly distinguished, but it is clear, forthright and eminently readable, and his characters are never puppets. He realises, as do too few modern writers



VAL GIELGUD
Library reactions would be interesting

of so-called "thrillers," that it is very difficult to get excited about people who are merely silhouettes in black and white.

I must have read *Barlasch of the Guard* myself for the first time in 1915 when I was still at school. It probably ranks with *The Vultures* as the best known of Merriman's books. It is a story of 1812 and of Napoleon's invasion of Russia, but it makes no attempt to challenge comparison with Tolstoy's masterpiece. Napoleon's figure is hardly present, though his travelling carriage, rolling into the streets of Danzig marks the turning point and impulse of all that follows. It tells the tale of the great invasion, not in terms of powers, princi-



"YOU! Who are you?"—"Barlasch. Of the Guard. Once a Sergeant, Italy, Egypt, the Danube": A scene from the first instalment, when Barlasch arrives at the house where he is billeted at Danzig. (Drawn by Stephen Spurrer)

NEW ZEALAND LISTENER, APRIL 5