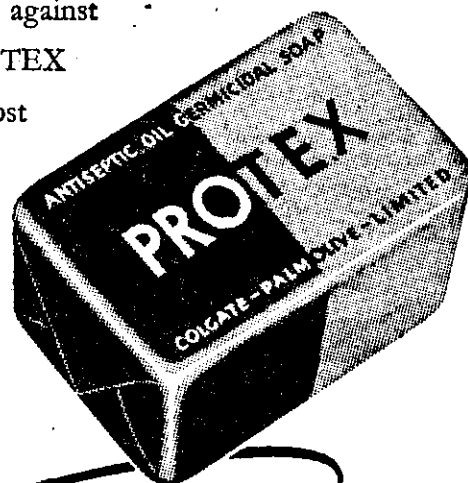




This is what you feel like after you have PROTEX-ed yourself. PROTEX SOAP is the popular family soap. Its mild, effective antiseptic guards you against infection and yet PROTEX is safe for even the most sensitive skins.



SHE PROTEX-ed HERSELF THIS MORNING

PR.124
COLGATE-PALMOLIVE LTD.
PETONE.

THROUGH NEW ZEALAND

(continued from previous page)

and as long as he likes on the platform at Whangarei with the rain coming through the roof and splashing him from the down-pipes if he moves more than a yard in front of the open seats.

I admit that it would not be easy to fortify railway stations against boredom and that it would be unreasonable to expect changes at the present time. It is better to accept some situations than even to try to change them, and there are some things about railway stations that I would not change if I could. I would not change the notices on the walls, with their recurring reminders of our duties as citizens: if they could be more attractively printed sometimes, they tell some of us all we knew, and all we ever learn, about health and diet and justice and law and defence and public administration. They tell us where to go and how to get there, and it is a pity some of us don't read them more carefully.

Nor would I have missed the lessons I have had on railway stations in social and economic democracy. I have long thought that those who are afraid of democratising the fighting services must have been blind to what has been going on for 50 years in the transport services, where there is perfect discipline without any class barriers at all. The station-master who would not eat or drink or swap yarns with a guard or a porter does not exist in New Zealand, but the trains run to time, and I never believe the man who tells me that railwaymen are uncivil to the public. They have not been uncivil to me in 50 years, and if they have sometimes cost me a little in taxation they have always kept their agreements to carry me safely home.

I DID not travel from Kaipara to Hokianga without getting involved in the Waipoua controversy. On the contrary, I just escaped getting involved

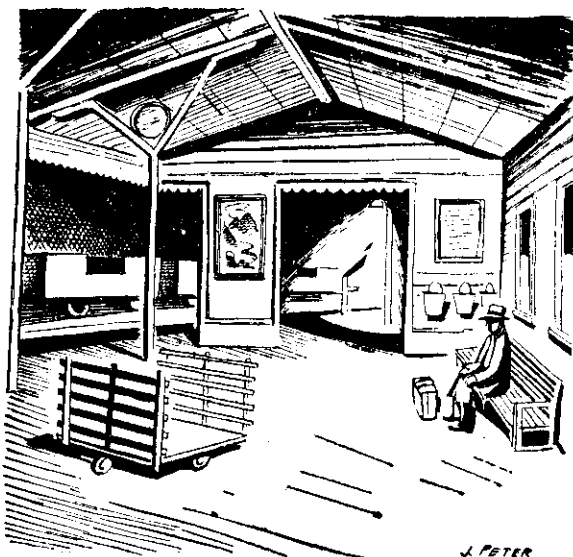
TREES OR HOUSES?

in a semi-judicial visit of inspection in which, with my present prejudices in favour of trees, I am sure I should have felt most uncomfortable. For it is easier to be romantic about trees than to be practical. Even when the need for them is as great as it is today, five minutes under a tree that has stood for 500 years is long enough with people like me to drive housing into the background. And that of course is the issue: to supply one generation now or enrich the lives of a hundred generations and in fact of all posterity.

That is the crude issue—over-simplified and over-generalised, but reduced to terms that most of us can understand. Those who favour cutting do not favour cutting the forest right out: they say only that some cutting does no harm, that scientific cutting actually does good, and that not to cut at all means

leaving dead and damaged trees standing and greatly increases fire hazards. The cutting abolitionists say that enough, and far more than enough, heads have fallen already; that we have destroyed in a hundred years what can't be replaced in a hundred thousand years; but that we still have a chance, if we take it at once, to preserve a botanical glory that nature has not reproduced anywhere else in the world.

The administrative problem is to find a reasonable course between romance and necessity, if one exists, and to be ruthless enough if it doesn't. But I found it both interesting and encouraging that local opinion, so far as I came in contact with it myself, was against further



"It would not be easy to fortify railway stations against boredom"

cutting except for protection against fire. I do not suggest, of course, that I consulted the sawmillers.

IN the meantime am I right or wrong in thinking that no one has done justice to the beauty of the kauri bark? Artists have painted the trees and poets praised them, but I don't remember a tribute anywhere to the beautiful pastel colours of the trunks. I am speaking now of the older trunks, which in any light are movingly beautiful, and in some lights glow, and smoke, and fade, and come again like beaten copper, if copper could ever go peach, and gold, and pink, and orange, and luminous grey, and peacock blue.

IT was a shock when a handsome Maori in Kaikohe asked if I had come from Wan-garee. I had heard of that place often enough from people of my own colour, but was not ready for it when it was thrown at me by a Maori. I might not have been so surprised if he had

PESSIMA CORRUPTIO OPTIMI

been a young Maori, but he was a man of 50; or if I had met him in Invercargill or Gore, but Kaikohe is almost a Maori town. It is true that everyone in Auckland talks about Oracky, that white people all over New Zealand talk about the Rangiticky, and that tourists are urged not to miss Wairacky. But now we have corrupted the Maori himself. I feel so confused that if someone invites me when I reach Dunedin to join him in a duck and dorris I shall expect to get a cup of tea.

(To be continued)