

TIRITIRI LIGHTHOUSE The ivory is reinforced

IVORY TOWER. 1947 MODEL

Writer takes up Lighthouse-Keeping

by in this day of shortages, but an Auckland short-story writer, seeking that "time to stand and stare" which he cannot find in the hurly-burly of the Dominion's largest city, has discovered a reasonable substitute in a lighthouse in the Hauraki Gulf-it is a tower even if built of concrete, and, while it may not provide complete isolation, three families are less likely to prove a distraction from writing than 300,000

The writer is G. R. Gilbert, author of a book of short stories published some time ago and a contributor of stories and verse to a number of magazines both here and abroad. Since last August he has been script-writer at 1YA, and he has now resigned to become one of the three lighthouse keepers on Tiritiri Island.

Lighthouse life is not entirely unknown to Gilbert, for, during his four and a-half years' service with the Air Force in New Zealand and in the Pacific,

VORY towers are hard to come he spent some time with a radar unit Moko Hinau, a bleak, windswept lighthouse island off Whangarei, and a much more isolated place than Tiritiri. "The boat trip to reach it was so rough that some of the men would not take their leave, knowing that they would spend all the time recovering from the voyage and another week in sick hav after their return," Gilbert told us. "So I am very pleased to have been appointed to Tiri."

His interest in lighthouse-lieeping as an occupation for himself is, however, of more recent origin. While he and his wife were staying at Moana, near Greymouth, some 12 months ago, they met a former lighthouse keeper, who painted an attractive picture of this life gave Gilbert information about applying for such a position. Meanwhile he received the appointment to 1YA and the idea was shelved.

Now after 11 months of city life, he and his wife will be glad to quit it. "We have both lived most of the time in the country and we are like a couple of lost lambs in the city," Gilbert conlessed.



G. R. GILBERT Life through a telescope

Anyway if you get tired of Tiri you'll be able to get into the city on leave without much difficulty--not as much as there was in getting from Moko Hinau, for instance, we suggested.

"Yes, we'll be able to get in for the day, take a look at the place, and get back smartly," he replied. "We can see the lights of Auckland from the island, and through the telescope the human gnats crawling on and off the ferry boats are visible. I think that'll be just about all we'll want to see of Auckland."



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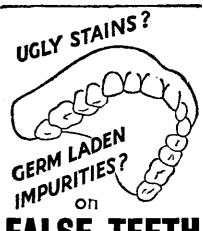
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