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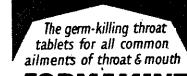
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BOOKS

GOOD PROPAGANDA

A. J. Harrop. Jarrolds, London.

(Reviewed by Dr. G. H. Scholefield)

F the reader takes up Dr. Harrop's book expecting to find a harrowing description of damage and emaciation on a national scale he will be disappointed. It is not easy to reconcile the author's title with the contents of the book, in fact to justify the title at all. He seems to have found difficulty with it himself, for he slips to and fro, from historical narrative to guidebook, back to history and then across to travel notes in rather a disconcerting fashion.

The five wars, he tells us, are the Maori War, the South African War, World War I, World War II against Germany and Italy, and World War II against Japan. It may be a shock to some New Zealanders to be told that "since the Maoris ceded sovereignty to Queen Victoria in 1840 New Zealand has been at war, internally or externally, for some 30 years." Dr. Harrop appears to mention this with pride, but the pride is obviously not so much in the necessity for 30 years out of a century being devoted to fighting, as in the soldierly achievements of our citizen soldiery in each of the wars. He tries to give "a picture of New Zealand's recent achievements in war and peace, against an historical background." That tends to produce a medley result which is not, however, displeasing. He writes of what he calls the era of settlement with the deep knowledge necessary for his earlier works. This is a good light résumé beginning about 1820. In that year Samuel Marsden wrote complaining of the state of the mission in New Zealand:

All the difficulties in New Zealand that I All the dimenties in New Zenand that A have met with have been in governing the Europeans. They will not do what is right. They will not live in unity and brotherly love. The love of money, the thirst for preminence, the want of industry and zeal for the good of the heathen have greatly militated against the success of the mission.

There are good chapters on the gold discoveries, to which the author, as a West Coaster, has previously devoted his pen, and there is a particularly useful outline of New Zealand's dreams of Pacific annexation and her participation in the affairs first of the Empire and then of the world. As the natural climax of that interest Dr. Harrop cites our prompt entry into both world wars, and quotes the classic words in which Mr. Savage, from his bed of sickness, declared our position:

Both with gratitude for the past and with confidence in the future, we range ourselves fearlessly beside Britain. Where she goes we go; where she stands we stand.

That this expressed the centiment of the country at large there can be no doubt. Dr. Harrop mentions incidentally that in the dark early months of the struggle "a whole football team enlisted in a body after a game at Wellington.'

Seventy pages are devoted to an inspiring account of New Zealand's war effort. The story is thickly dotted with the names of soldiers, sailors and airmen who have yielded lustre to the Dominion. related to the text, are excellently chosen The policy of New Zealand Labour in world affairs was clearly enunciated in



DR. A. J. HARROP

1936 when the Government vigorously condemned the Italian conquest of Abyssinia. Nor has her loyalty to the system of collective security abated. As long ago as 1933, when the Nazis had just got into the saddle in Germany. Mr. Nash declared that what New Zealand wanted was an international organisation with strength. That, says Dr. Harrop, is what she still wants.

The volume concludes with 40 pages, written in an optimistic but not uncritical tone, epitomising what New Zealand has done in a wide field of rehabilitation and her future intentions. The chapters on education and cultural matters are fairly written and usefully provocative. It is evident that the author will welcome some recent developments in connection with the University Senate, which he regarded as a danger to the system.

Its members (he says) tend to be elderly, with ideas fixed in a previous generation. On relinquishing the office of university agent in London, I suggested that it might be made incumbent on members of the Senate to retire at the age of 80. I find there are universities in Britain where some such rule would also be welcomed. I am not at all sure, however, whether the best solution of the New Zealand university problem would not be the abolition of the Senate altogether, giving the colleges full self-gov-

The author suggests meeting the need for immigrants and housing by the creation of new towns on the South Island main trunk railway between Christchurch and Picton and a return to systematic colonisation to attract the immigrants. The book ends with another spasm of travel trivialities. That is, in fact, the only serious fault to find with it. Dr. Harrop introduces quite irrelevant material and opinions in a manner which gives a sense of unreality to a story which really requires no bush. For instance, in writing of the Taranaki war (1860) he says:

Many went to Nelson, among them the family of Mrs. Rutherford, one of whose sons was to be Lord Rutherford of Nelson. Years afterwards she returned to New Plymouth and, until her death at a great age, took pride in the achievements of her son, who wrote to her by every mail.

The illustrations, though not strictly and produced. This is an interesting book and distinctly good propaganda.