

(continued from previous page)

French soil to give the German miners an opportunity of overcoming their nationalistic prejudices. This emphasis on German humanitarianism might appear slightly offensive and perhaps insincere to French audiences and to us in New Zealand 17 years later. For identical reasons that great French film *La Grande Illusion*, which tackled a similar problem from the French point of view, caused some offence to Germans. The unfortunate fact that the dialogue slipped "unnoticed in at one ear and out at the other" allowed Jno. to miss the real drama of the story, which lay in the extraordinary circumstances required to overcome the bitterness and tension existing in that border region.

A New Zealander who has not experienced this conflict and national antagonism which still exists in many parts of Europe might consider it perfectly natural for a rescue party to go from one part of a mine to another. He might not realise that the "little things dividing nations" which irritated Jno. were not only necessary to the story, but also very big and real things which entirely conditioned life in that district. The German miners swept aside these emotional barriers to help their French comrades. This was the crux of the film. And very cleverly the director built up this story of conflict—the two boys who could not play together without quarrels, the petty restrictions at the border, the incident in the dance hall—reaching its climax in the dramatic dialogue in the Germans' shower bath where the realisation on the part of the few that all workers should stand together slowly overcame the nationalistic prejudice of the many. Finally, Roger Manvell and Dante to the contrary, did not the aged Frenchman call out for his grandson Jean—and not Georges?

BERT AND MARGOT ROTH
(Wellington).

(Jno. replies: "It might be a little unfair to ask Bert and Margot Roth in what countries the gospel of international co-operation

could be most profitably preached to-day, but I would remind them that Germany was deeper in defeat in 1931 than in 1918. When *Kameradschaft* was made the danger was not from German *revanche*, but from French intransigence—the withdrawal of French credits from Austria and Germany in 1931, for example, caused widespread distress in both these countries. Leaving history and politics aside, however, it appears that we share common ground in regarding *Kameradschaft* as propagandist in intention. We are also agreed that the overt theme is internationalism. The question therefore is how that theme is served. I maintain that it has not been served well. There is too much truth in the picture to make good propaganda, and the suggestion that it was necessary to build up a story of conflict to point the moral of co-operation betrays a radical misunderstanding of the power of the moving picture. It is the total emotional effect of a film which counts, and the total effect of *Kameradschaft* is that a frontier separates different peoples as well as different political systems—whether it be *Frontière 1919* or *Frontière 1935*. Cleverness is frequently caught in its own toils. Finally, I heard the word 'Georges' with my own ears, not Roger Manvell's, and I am therefore prepared to concede that I may have erred—if Bert or Margot Roth can show me a medal 'r' in Jean, or in any of its diminutives."—Ed.)

NATIONAL FILM UNIT

"THE CHANGE-OVER," to be released by the National Film Unit on April 9, is a story of civil aviation, with the leading parts in the film filled by a Dakota aircraft and two pilots. The picture, which is made entirely in natural sound and dialogue, shows the workings of a civil airline and what has been done to meet the tremendously increased demand for air travel in New Zealand since the end of the war in the Pacific.

JOURNEY THROUGH TARANAKI

New Mobile Unit Programme



RE-ENACTMENTS of old battle scenes, with Maori hakas and exploding muskets, the story of the founding of Inglewood when the settlement was christened with a bottle of champagne broken over a rimu stump, and a description of a visit to the Stratford Demonstration Farm, are some of the highlights of the latest series of programmes produced by the Mobile Unit of the NZBS and presented under the title *Here and There in Taranaki*. The first of the series, which follows on previous Mobile Unit programmes dealing with Hawera, Wanganui, and New Plymouth, will be heard from 2YA at 8.0 p.m. on Wednesday, April 14.

The series—which is in two parts—has been made up in the form of a motor journey through the province in which three narrators describe what they see on the way, interview celebrities of the district, and record local bands and choirs in action. The first programme deals with Waitara, Inglewood, and Midhurst, and the second with Stratford, Eltham, and Patea.

Plenty of imagination, and a wide variety of sound effects—most of them

recorded on the spot—have been used in these programmes, so that they form an entertaining but authentic documentary record of the activities of the province and the many historical associations with which it abounds. Other items of particular interest are a visit to Mr. Porter's pool of tame eels and trout at Midhurst (together with a running commentary on the feeding of the fish by their owner), the tale of an old Chinese settler, Chew Chong, and a description of the river port of Patea, together with the story of that town's first school as told by one of its old boys.

No resident of Taranaki will fail to be entertained and stimulated by *Here and There in Taranaki*, and for all other New Zealanders too, who want to know more about how life is really lived in their own country, this is a session that should not be missed.

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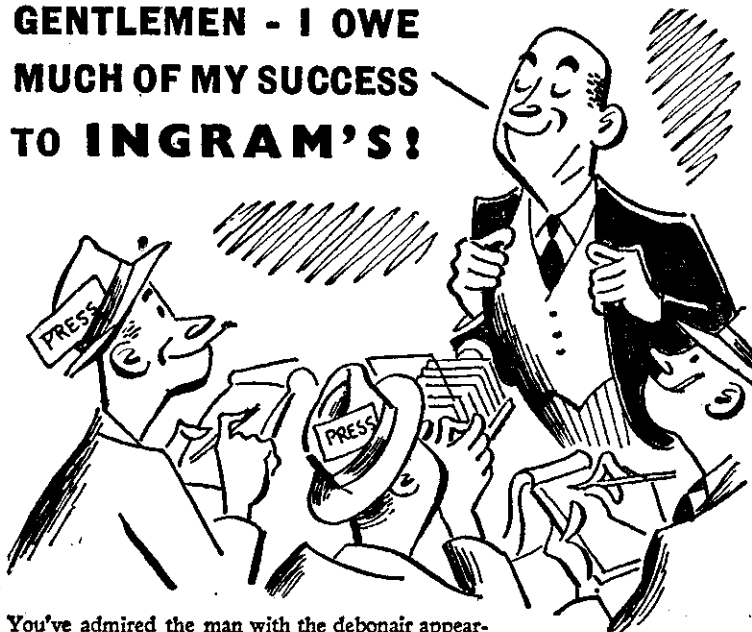
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