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Give STEEDMAN'S POWDERS
FOR CONSTIPATION

THROUGH N.Z. TO-DAY

(continued from previous page)

is the most exciting stretch of tall timber still left in New Zealand. Only deliberate folly can now rob us of Wai-poua, which goes back to the beginning of time and will continue to the end of time if the earth itself endures and escapes control by madmen. Rimu is not in that category. Its cycle is shorter, its destiny tied more closely to our own. I am too ignorant even to guess at the point at which rimu begins to die of old age. I know only that a rimu 50 years old is still immature, which makes me suspect that most of the really big trees I passed in Westland had seen seven or eight generations of men come and go—say 200 years—and that they will last at least half as long again if they are left undisturbed.

They will of course *not* be left undisturbed as long as that, and clearly should not be; but I was glad to discover that the "situation is under control." When I saw logs perhaps seven or eight feet round going in at one end of a mill and emerging before long as boards and beams at the other end—when I saw that and asked a benchman if the supply of timber was giving out, it was reassuring to be told that there was "any amount of rimu if the Government will let it be used." I hope "any amount" is true. But I hope that the Government proves it true before it opens the door too wide.

* * *

A HEATED bearing before I reached Ross had rather pleasant consequences. As I waited in the service station admiring, as I always do, the competence with which mechanics locate faults, the conversation turned to hotels. I refuse to say turned inevitably to hotels since that would be the big Westland lie. I asked about the hotels because it was clear that I was

IN A HOTEL

going to be detained for a day or two, but the silliest of all West Coast libels

is the legend that drinking is the chief occupation. In three days and four nights in the Empire Hotel in Ross I saw no more drinking than I would have seen in half a day in half a dozen places in Lambton Quay, or in half an hour on a sale day in Wallacetown. Instead of non-stop drinking I saw drinking conducted as it ought to be—in something like a family circle. Because of the rain there was no work going on outside, and the bar sitting-room was seldom without occupants. But they were not noisy occupants, or guzzlers, or brawlers. They played cards or ninepins, read the papers, discussed the news, stoked and sat round the fire. Everybody knew everybody else, and if they usually filled up again when their glasses were empty, it was social drinking and not gulping against time. In the afternoons some women came in, most of them with sewing or knitting, and when it was time to go home husband and wife went away together.

The game I have called ninepins was probably not the ninepins of tradition, but an adaptation of that. They gave me a local name for it, which I have forgotten, but told me that a visitor from England had identified it as the ninepins of old English inns. I think it was a kind of table variation of ninepins, with a suspended ball taking the place of a ball thrown along an alley, but although anyone could play it and nearly everyone did, the finer points come only with practice and concentration. It was humiliating, but no doubt salutary, after a lot of solo practice on the sly, to be made to look thoroughly silly as often as I tried conclusions with other visitors, whether they were men or women. The proprietress was so skilful that she easily beat two of us together, though I never once saw her practising, and as she was without a cook, and yet served the most excellent meals, she could have had no time by day to leave the kitchen.

(To be continued)

AN EXTRA HOLIDAY

It is comforting to reflect now in our profound puzzlement, Now in our fear for the future, trouble, and deep unhappiness, That the twelve men we know of most susceptible to love and goodness Were angry and ignorant men often and one was a low traitor.

It makes you suspect that if He came down to us a second time, came soon, came now, Walking our streets openly and proposing a fresh climate, Bringing us a last chance to live fully and purposefully in that fresh climate, Men would be found presently to hear and perhaps follow

That the sons of Zebedee, shouting, would tie up at the wharf hurriedly, Forgetting the wage dispute and their anger against the new government, That Peter would look up testily, then radiantly, great hands sweating and shaking uncontrollably,

That Matthew, coat flying, would dash from the Land and Income Tax Department instantly,

That Judas, even sick Judas with his dark, twisted, and all-destroying love, Would hear and for a time follow.

And we should go wandering for a day's outing to a mountain (O it might be a mountain near one of our large cities),

Go by train and on foot and in special buses (Book Here for the Mountain), Saying: "A holiday! Hallelujah, a special holiday! An extra day for the King, bless Him."

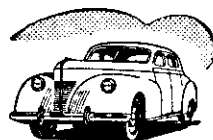
There to look up piteously at the new bringer of good tidings, fresh hope, fresh courage and understanding;

There to hear humbly the awful and liberating words of love, not fully understanding; There to eat afterwards, too weary for fright or question, provisions that came not in the trains or buses.

With no thought openly (at the time little covertly) of criminal proceedings, Of crosses.

—S.P.L.

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