

# DID YOU HEAR THIS?

## Extracts From Recent Talks

### "Snooping Around a Bit"

POSSIBLY many of you will remember the former England test cricket captain, A. P. F. Chapman, whose bulk made him a real giant among cricketers. Incidentally he concluded a sort of sporting treaty of union with New Zealand by marrying the daughter of T. H. Lowry, the well-known Hawke's Bay sportsman. Well, Chapman enlisted in the army and was accepted, but strange as it may seem, was discharged shortly afterwards on the ground of physical unfitness. He was then given a special duties post under the Ministry of Home Security. Part of his work consists in inspecting wild stretches of country in the Home counties looking for ground that may be suitable for possible operations by an invading enemy air unit. He travels alone by car round England and when he sees a piece of likely-looking country he pulls up and, as he puts it, "snoops around a bit." However, keen amateur observers have spotted him on this job and he recently was stopped and interrogated as an espionage suspect no fewer than five times in one day. It's funny that while practically every New Zealand schoolboy would have no difficulty in recognising Chapman from his photograph, in his home country he requires an officially visaed passport to enable him to go about his work without interference from enthusiastic anti-Fifth Columnists. (*"Personalities and Places in the News,"* by George Bagley, 3YA, July 30.)



### "Gambler's Garden"

"Gambler's Garden" is a pleasant chapter for New Zealander readers, because Humphrey John has a good deal to say about the introduction of New Zealand natives. He has had happy adventures, with a defeat or two among the pittospores, the senecios and the veronicas, and is just beginning to make a do of the leptosperrus. If he has his way the Royal Horticultural Society will choose leptospermum scoparium for distribution . . . which is rather like giving it the honour and the opportunity of a Rhodes Scholarship. But Humphrey John is disappointed because, a century and more after Joseph Banks opened the plant life of New Zealand to English gardeners they have made only timid and lame advances in introducing and establishing examples of it. (From a review by J. H. E. Schroder of "The Skeptical Gardener" by Humphrey John. 3YA, July 23.)

to be put into cooking or cleaning than the amount necessary to prepare simple but nutritious and appetising meals, or to give the house its usual routine weekly and daily cleaning. To do more than this, at present, may be to waste valuable time, and if there is anything else which the housewife might more profitably be doing she must realise that her delight in fancy baking, or in keeping the house absolutely spotless, is a luxury which she must give up—for the duration—at least.

Over-finicalness over trivial details and all other little unjustified prides must go by the board too. I feel that I must emphasise to-day, as I have done in an earlier talk, that there is no virtue in a woman's working herself to a standstill. On the contrary, it is a form of waste, for it robs the family of the higher and more important contributions which she could make if she devoted more time and energy to organising the home and living with the other people in it. (*Home Science Talk*, 4YA, July 5.)

### Too Many Local Bodies?

I THINK that much of the trouble outlined by Professor Hudson, a lack of public conscience regarding the importance of the land . . . is a question of administration, especially local administration. This is a new country and it lacks a sense of local patriotism. It has developed in three generations from isolated pioneer settlements to a highly centralised state, but it has done this at a price—we have drift to the towns, rapid transfer of land ownership, dislike of labour for farming pursuits. You cannot, of course, force man to live and work on the land but you can make life there attractive so that it has a greater appeal. You can do that by making your local administration a vehicle to consciously develop community life. Let it make both the utilisation of the land and the provision of social amenities its particular and continual concern. Local government in New Zealand is an administrative hotch-potch. We have 693 local bodies including 129 counties. They fall over themselves with overlapping duties, complete absence of plant and extreme weakness in finance, status and initiative. I would divide New Zealand into not more than 40 counties on a regional basis, that is, every county as far as possible should be a geographical unit. I would have the planning of county affairs done by committees and use the full council only as an approving or vetoing body. These committees would have the assistance of experts. Lastly, I would have the whole work of

the county co-ordinated by a county manager who would head a staff which would perform the work planned by the committees and approved by the council. (From "Microphone Roundtable": "Second Century Prospects," 3YA, July 24.)

### Macdonell's Cricket Match

IN A. G. Macdonell's cricket match (in "England, Their England") there are various human oddities and peculiarities in the landscape and a string of funny incidents. The village fast bowler is the local blacksmith, and the ground at the end from which he bowls slopes away, so that the bowler has to run up hill to deliver the ball, and it is only during the last three or four yards of his run that he is visible to the batsman. The visiting team includes a Professor of Ballistics. When at the very end of the game a high catch comes to him, he makes a lightning calculation of angles, velocities, density of the air, barometer readings and temperatures. On the visiting side there is also an American who has never played cricket before, and when he manages to hit the first ball that he receives, he throws down his bat and runs fast in the direction of cover point. "Well, well," he says, "I thought I was playing base-ball." Now, the curious thing is that much of what seems to be a farcical account can be paralleled in real cricket. The writer of this sketch has been told by a New Zealand Rhodes Scholar that he played on a village ground near Oxford where the field did slope away from one end exactly as Mr. Macdonell describes, and the fast bowler did come running up the slope to deliver the ball. Moreover, one of the college sides that this New Zealander played in included a Canadian student who behaved exactly as this American did in "England, Their England." He hit the first ball, dropped his bat and bolted towards cover point. Apparently anything is possible in English cricket (From a sketch of Mr. A. G. Macdonell broadcast by the NBS.)



### Building a Fireplace

THEN the bricklayer who was referred to as Brick arrived to do the fireplace. He was a nice chatty old fellow, too much so in fact for quick results. He spent the day discussing the arrangement of the fireplace. He said that a labourer would come the next day and carry up the bricks and he would then really be able to start on his job. Next day Brick arrived, nice and chatty, bricks on the side of the road, but where oh, where had the labourer gone? "Sorry Mrs., not my job to carry those up—so I'll have to leave it till next week when the bricks are sure to be up at the house." Mary was in despair—another hold up. Brick must not go. Then she had an idea. "Would he stay and get on with it if she pushed the bricks up in the baby's pram eight at a time?" He laughed. "O.K. Mrs." What a day! The baby was left with a kind neighbour and had to spend the day indoors, but he was a good little soul. Then Mary and the pram got the bricks up and the fireplace went up too. I don't know which finished up more worn out—Mary or the pram. (*"Mary Makes a Career,"* No. 5, 2YA.)



### Wasting Time at Home

THE housewife's problem is to weigh and judge the importance of each of the factors which make up home life, so that when something must be sacrificed the thing given up will be one of least real value to the family's welfare. Sometimes the housewife will find that there is quite a lot that she can give up without hardship to anyone. Take, for example, all the work which some women put into baking cakes, or in dusting and polishing their houses so that they are kept always cleaner than the proverbial new pin. Much of this time is time wasted, as there is actually no need for more time

### The Lamp of Liberty

OUR first question to-night is as follows: "Can you tell me the inscription on the base of the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbour?" Yes, I can. Here it is. Very few seem to know it:



("Do You Know Why?" by "Autolycus," 4YA.)

### "Man Alone"

I HAVE referred previously to this excellent first novel by a young Auckland, "Man Alone," by John Mulgan, but had time only to mention the title. It deserves further notice. It is in many ways the most original New Zealand novel yet written. It is realistic in type, slightly reminiscent of Hemingway in its prose rhythm. The hero is an Englishman, Johnston, who migrates to this country after the 1914-18 war. A roving life gives him experience on dairy farms, sheep farms, and a coastal scow before being caught by the Depression which throws him into the ranks of the unemployed in Auckland. His social education begins with the Auckland riots of 1932. Through his eyes we see New Zealand, a different New Zealand from that of previous novels, New Zealand of the cow-cocky, and the relief worker, a hard tough New Zealand, where new human values are being hammered out. (*Book Reviewer*, 4YA.)