

Endurance In Wartime

Although the ultimate for some
be bone
And crushed flesh wearying to
clay;
Though in a broken furrow man
has sown
The bitter seed of death; and
though the day
Has grown so dark and horrid
none may see;
And though in diverse form, by
diverse threat,
Earth is demanding back the
town, the tree,
Although the tower, the book, the
mind is yet
Inadequate; though children cry
for bread;
Though all that has been built
be dust again,
And man, distraught, stands gas-
ing on the dead;
Though earth take back the forest
and the plain,
The gems, the bright white metal
and the ore;
There still remains with us in-
volute
This light, this stuff, this leaven-
ing, this core,
This thing, which, not of earth,
is yet earth's fate.
And she may vent her anger in
the air,
Or down men's bodies in the
sweeping sea,
Hers is the final vengeance, but
more rare,
Man's is the final, grand, in-
tegrity.

—Isobel Andrews

LITTLE BRITONS

(Written for "The Listener" by WANDA HALL)

THE two boys were exploring their new garden. It looked a promising one, with lots of wild patches where the trees grew thick with branches low to the ground; secret places where whole armies could lie hidden, where spies could lurk and parachutists complete their disguises. All the well-tried war games had gained a new significance since a bomb had dropped in their village street in England, and they had just missed seeing a dead man. Nannie had whisked them away, scolding hard, before they could get a good look, but Bobby swore he had seen a hand, separate from a body.

Their uncle called them. He thought they might like to go for a walk to the township; it was Saturday morning, and he could show them round a bit. He took them to a shop where they got ice creams. They ate self-consciously while he talked to a friend—"Yes, my sister's kids, just out from Home a couple of days ago..."

They stood outside a shop to wait for him, and their faces burned as words came out to them "... couple of refugees ... least we can do ... great little chaps ..." Then they met a woman

in the street where there was no escape. He waved his hand proudly towards them, "These are Little Britons," he said. They stared at their feet, fidgeting. The woman beamed at them. "Oh, I say, isn't that nice? Welcome to New Zealand, boys!" Bobbie rubbed one foot over another in agony. He supposed he should say something, but what? People were walking and talking all round them but they themselves were a little island of silence, and the silence got heavier and heavier, and then he heard his uncle say, "Well, we must be getting along."

He tried to move, but his feet wouldn't go; miserably he realised that the last humiliation had occurred, and his shoes had knotted themselves together. Shame made his cheeks red as he bent to undo them, but when he caught the others up, his face was white and stiff, and as he walked back, his feet made a pattern with the words in his mind—"I musn't think of Mummie, I musn't think of Mummie." As soon as they got back, he crawled into the darkest secret place and lay there on his stomach. His brother joined him. "Mummie," he said. "I know," said his brother. Then, "That woman's a spy, she must be shot at dawn."

"Tortured," said Bobbie.

They sat up to make plans.

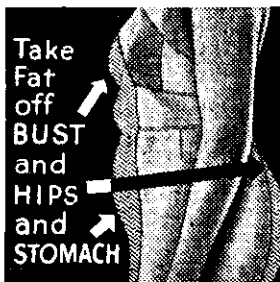
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YOUR GARDEN AND MINE

By Ann Earncliffe Brown (No. 51)

Making Friends with the Wind

IN one of our very first garden chats I said that "Good gardeners make friends with the wind." It is certainly easier to make friends with gentle zephyrs than to remain friends with the destructive gales that have vexed our Canterbury gardeners this year.

In this garden, as a rule, the north-west wind loses much of its force as it beats against the willows that fringe both banks of our river-boundary. However an "old man" nor'wester takes no notice of such things, and instead of a protection, those too-brittle branches become a menace, and certainly a source of much annoyance to a gardener who must gather riven limbs and piles of leafy twigs from lawn, flower borders and vegetable patch.

As I stoop, I am hoping the exercise will have a beneficial effect on the ageing figure, but how fervently I admire the poplars which so wisely bent before the fury of the storm and stand unscathed. But they are still young and alim and bending is no bother to them. As I straighten my back I decide that it is difficult to feel friendly with a wind that lays flat your onion tops and batters tender tomato vines.

In the flower garden lupins, bearded iris, delphiniums, and columbines have had to stand up to severe stresses, too. Wind damage can be mitigated if all tall growers in vegetable and flower garden are very firmly staked. Sweet peas (I do hope you are keeping these free of seed pods) and clematis, given adequate supports, secure themselves most efficiently, but stiff flower spikes in your borders should be well braced against firm stakes. Gladioli and the longer stemmed bearded iris should be given a stake to each spike. Clumps of perennial phlox, lupins, delphiniums, and michaelmas daisies are usually upheld by three or four strong but inconspicuous stakes round the clump, with a stout string or wire bound round these supports, so as to hold the plant mass together. Growers of exhibition blooms of delphinium stake the flower spikes individually, and for all who desire good blooms, it is advisable to limit the number of spikes according to the size of the clump and the strength of the stem. For small clumps three spikes and up to eight for large ones is a fair average. As the blooms come into bud, soak the ground well, then make a trench round the clump and fill with liquid manure. Do not let manure touch the plant. Cut blooms on a long slant in the soft stem, as the woody stem does not allow the flower spike to absorb sufficient water.