

# DID YOU HEAR THIS?

## Extracts From Recent Talks

### Genius of Winifred Holtby

THE English are not given to rhapsodising over people, yet I've heard the most reserved of them grow lyrical when they've spoken of Winifred Holtby. "When she came into a room it was as though the sun shone" said one, and another, "There was a radiance about her that was hardly of this world." Remarks that would have surprised Winifred, for she thought herself the most ordinary of mortals. A famous man said to Lady Rhondda one day, "Winifred Holtby is the most brilliant journalist in London. Why don't you get her for your literary editor of 'Time and Tide'?" But Winifred refused the position, for the reason that she couldn't say "No" to people—a fatal drawback in an editor. She was considered by many to be one of the geniuses of her time, and while history must be a judge of genius, it is safe to predict that "Mandoa, Mandoa" will be read in the future as one of the real satires of this age. And, of course, there is "South Riding." As a public speaker, she could move an audience as few people that I've heard—not so much by eloquence as by a spiritual quality which lent sincerity and conviction to everything she said.—(Mrs. Vivienne Newson, "Some Remarkable Women I Have Met," 2YA, November 9.)

### A Nice Old Lion

CAN you imagine a time when there wasn't a zoo in Wellington or when there were only a few animals there? Once there was only a lion, a beautiful, friendly lion called "King Dick," a king without any subjects. He was born a long time ago in a zoo in South Africa, where he lived for a while till the



zoo sold him to a circus—a very famous one, the Bostock and Wombwell circus, which made tours of the world. This circus decided to visit New Zealand in time to perform at the Christchurch Exhibition in 1906—King Dick, of course, was with it, and many people came there to see him perform. After a while the circus travelled round New Zealand, and finally came to

Wellington. It was here that King Dick left the circus. Perhaps he was tired of performing, or perhaps he just decided to retire, for the circus presented him to the City Council of Wellington. The City Council didn't know what to do with him, they couldn't keep a lion in the Town Hall, even if it was a performing lion, so they decided to make a zoo for him at Newtown. And there in a cage he spent the rest of his life happily watching the zoo grow around him and the people flocking to see him. . . . At the zoo now there are two lions and three lionesses: all but one bred at the Wellington zoo.—("Hinemoa," in "Creatures of the Wild, a Chat about Lions," 2YA, Children's Hour, October 23.)

### Dining, Ancient and Modern

HERE is a description from a novel by a medical man, of dining as practised by a Harley Street specialist: "He started with cocktails and wallowed in thick soups; fried sole was his favourite fish, and he smothered his meat with Worcester sauce; he froze his gastric mucous membrane with peche melba and then thawed it with boiling coffee and a strong cigar fortified with a liqueur brandy. Afterwards he would lean back in his chair . . . and think out fresh tortures for his docile patients." And here an Athenian playwright of the fourth century B.C. in

### Wakefield's Strong Faith In The Empire

IN 1828 an attempt was made to settle a colony on the Swan River, Western Australia. In the absence of preliminary surveys, roads and maps, a handful of colonists found themselves lost in a vast territory. Land was so easy to get that even the leader of the venture found himself deserted by those he had brought out. This fiasco led to the creation of Wakefield's Colonisation Society in 1830. It included the most brilliant of the younger radicals of the day. Wakefield showed that the recent failures were due to the confusion of immigration with colonisation. He offered a new plan embracing four main principles: (1) the abolition of transportation of convicts, (2) provision for cultural and educational needs of the settlers, (3) self-government through colonial parliaments, and (4) the sale of land at a minimum price, part of the purchase money to be set aside for emigration. This programme was a confession of faith in the Empire. "We spurn the mawkish affectation," said Wakefield, "which supposes that England has seen her brightest day."

The opposition was strong and persistent. The free traders had no use for colonies, the missionaries no use for colonists, the government no use for theories of colonisation. Nevertheless, the ideas of the Wakefield school made progress. His principles were adopted to a greater or less degree in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, and early settlements in New Zealand. Only Canterbury, however, was a true Wakefield colony.—(George Wilson, "The Story of Canterbury," 3YA, October 23.)

a revealing commentary upon the eating habits of the day. He is showing how a well-behaved eater should comport himself—or in this case herself: "She is not like the others," he declares romantically, "who at dinner make great balls of leeks and stuff their cheeks with them, or loudly chew with their teeth large lumps of greasy meat. She delicately tastes each dish in small morsels, like a lady. . . ." — (John Moffett, "Eating and Drinking," 4YA, November 5.)

### The Trials of Visiting

RECENTLY I paid a visit to some friends. It was a very cold night so we all huddled round the fire. Had I had my own way, I should probably have stuck my feet on the mantelpiece and smoked my pipe, but no. We were all on our best behaviour. You see, I felt that I shouldn't do that sort of thing when staying with other people, and it has only just dawned on me that they probably felt that they shouldn't do that sort of thing in front of me. The solution of such a problem, therefore, seems to be a compromise—a matter of give and take between the hosts and visitors. Bedtime came, and I was ready for it, but the bed looked so wonderful I was almost afraid to get into it. It seemed a pity to spoil it. The pillows were almost square cushion-shaped affairs, with the family initial "A" worked in raised embroidery in the centre. As I could find nothing to replace these works of art I had no option but to sleep on them, and



woke up in the morning to find the initial imprinted on my cheek. Then came the all-important business of the bathroom. I would peep out of the door and listen. Yes, it was engaged. At last, after the two sons had finished, I made a dive for it, got in and shut the door, to find that the bolt was broken and wouldn't "stay put." However, I had my bath and a very hasty shave, singing lustily all the while to keep trespassers away.—(Major F. H. Lampen, "Just on Being a Guest," 2YA, November 7.)

### Two Opinions on Diet

AS for what one should eat in this age of parsley and plenty, your choice is as good as mine. But I shall provide two opinions in which I generally concur. First the advice of William Waldorf Astor, first Viscount Astor, to his grandson aged twelve: "Drink plenty of wine from childhood on, spend a week with a barrel of oysters and a turkey, drink a bottle of champagne for luncheon, smoke all you want. My other rule for a long life is to kill my doctor." And for those with a distaste for champagne and turkey, or an allergy where oysters are concerned, here is a metrical dietary compiled by Professor Cathcart, of the University of Glasgow:



Eat all kind nature doth bestow:  
It will amalgamate below.  
If the mind says so, it shall be so.  
But, if you once begin to doubt,  
The gastric juice will find it out.

This seems pretty good advice, provided you do not do all of your eating of Nature's rich provender at once. The important thing, to my mind, is to accept the proposition that eating and drinking are important parts of life, and to realise that they require plenty of study and application. There seems to be a tendency nowadays to pretend that we should not think about food and drink, but actually there is nothing we should think more about, and more constantly. I'll prove it. Human beings, on a nice calculation, eat for about an hour every day. This, in an average life of sixty years, works out at no less than 21,600 hours, which figure, more vulgarly reduced, makes 912 days and nights, or two and a-half full years of existence devoted exclusively to this activity. (John Moffett, "Eating and Drinking," 4YA, November 5.)

### Early Canterbury

I HAVE tried to show that by the time the Canterbury Association had reached its end, the Utopian plans of its founders had been modified, though not forsaken in every important particular. The land fund had never been sufficient to fulfil its chief functions, delays and continued fears that the scheme would collapse affected public confidence, and growing misunderstanding of the difficulties of a new colony put the aims of the association out of harmony with those of the settlers on the spot. These defects might have been avoided by better organisation, but there were two weaknesses which could not be overcome. First, the social order planned for Canterbury was already obsolete when it was being put into practice. The idea of transferring overseas a cross-section of English society—trappings and all—was contrary to colonial standards of equality. It was even opposed to the aggressively democratic ideas which were threatening the old order throughout Europe in the late '40's. Secondly, the economic order—a closely-knit agricultural community proved unworkable, especially as it was located in the most pastoral province in the country. And yet, the spirit of those who founded Canterbury did not die. Canterbury was the leading province in New Zealand's economic and political life for many years. (George Wilson, "The Story of Canterbury," 3YA, October 30.)