

CITIZEN INTO SOLDIER

(Continued from previous page)

dom was time to spare for the movies or time to spare for thinking we are now beginning to appreciate the fact that it was freedom. Now that we have no time for ourselves, no time for other people, no time to think or read, scarcely time even to attend thoroughly to personal hygiene — now we are beginning to believe that this war will be worth fighting over if we come out of it clear enough in our heads to make use of the advantages which victory will bring back to us. For some there will once again be the picture theatre and the well remembered telephone number. For others there will be something better or worse, according to the way you look at it. For all of us it will be something about which we knew little, possessing much of it, and about which we now understand a great deal, since we have none of it. It will be freedom, or I hope it will be.

We Must Keep Our Heads

Sometimes I am reassured that the private soldier in New Zealand's amateur army is keeping his head—that he is still able to resist this constant impingement of regulation under the happier disorder of his natural thoughts and ideas.

And then sometimes I wonder if even three months will not ultimately have the effect; if the soldier and his rifle, shooting at the word of command, will not become the civilian with his vote, giving it where he is told.

There was a good deal of regimentation before this war. Most of it was

called equality of some sort. But it meant more, and not such good things as equality of opportunity. It meant that the good were equal to the average, and not always that the bad came up to the average standard.

After the war there will be a good deal more regimentation. It will seem to be necessary. There will need to be discipline if big jobs are to be carried through efficiently. Some of us here in camp are concerned lest that discipline will also mean dullness.

Still Not Impressed

At this moment there is not one of us here who does not hate to discover that his thinking is the job of someone else. We dislike most heartily the thought that we are children again at school, occupied with something that scarcely becomes intelligent adults.

We still feel an occasional pang when we are lined up and marched to our meals, with our denims draped like sack on convicts. Now that we are in the army, and absolved of so many of the responsibilities of careful civilian life, we have time to appreciate such simple sensations without preoccupying worry about such distant things as war. And we still do not like it. For all its immensity, and omnipotency, and the vastness and accuracy of its organisation, and the wonder of its machines, and the un-failing precision of its thinking, the army still fails to impress us.

I hope we stay that way. This is an instrument for our using. I believe we can use it efficiently if we are given the chance to sort out all the small stupidities that haste and emergency have

brought into it. But we must not forget that it is only an instrument, and that the surgeon's knife must be put aside when the operation is over. It cannot go on cutting in the same place without killing the patient. Let's keep the patient alive in the end, whatever interest we might now perceive in the excision. After all, the patient is humanity itself, and although we as doctors are using a brutal instrument, there is no logical reason for becoming brutal ourselves.

If these small points are remembered I do not mind remembering as well as I can that the rifleman in the army reloads at the shoulder, and not on the ground, where the movement can be performed in comfort.

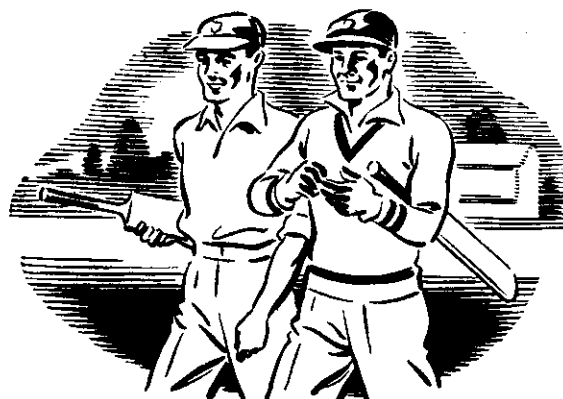
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TWO CELEBRITIES recently interviewed over 12B by Hilton Porter in his "Personalities of the Week" session were Oscar Natzke, New Zealand bass (left), and the Australian tenor Kenneth Neate, who are touring New Zealand together. Natzke described his early days at Matapata, near Te Awamutu, his discovery at the age of 18 that he could sing the lowest F on the piano, his studies in London, and his engagement to sing leading roles at Covent Garden. Kenneth Neate told listeners that he had originally intended to become a school teacher, but had joined the police force instead, and a police choir had given him his start as a singer. He has taken tenor roles in productions of "Carmen" and "Lohengrin" for the ABC, and after their present tour of New Zealand he and Natzke hope to go to America together. At the conclusion of their interviews, Natzke sang "There'll Always be an England," and Neate "The Lord's Prayer."