

# DID YOU HEAR THIS?

## Extracts From Recent Talks

### Hand-Woven Clothes

HAND-WEAVING, of course, is still popular in some parts of Britain. The peasants in both Scotland and Ireland still card and spin and weave their own wool. These hand-woven tweeds are thicker and coarser than the fine Bradford machine-made, worsteds. Usually they are bolder in pattern, with a fleck or dash of some brighter colour against the dark or natural background. A coat or costume



of one of these hand-woven Scottish or Irish tweeds will last and keep its shape for years and years and years. Often, when you are motoring through some little village, you may come across a cottage where these tweeds are woven, and can buy a length of material comparatively cheaply. I don't think any American visitor ever goes to Scotland or Ireland without taking home a few lengths of this hand-woven tweed. England also has its hand-weaving centres, and they turn out some very beautiful work. I have come across several little colonies of weavers when I have been travelling through England, tucked away in villages. They make rather beautiful scarves, too, as well as other materials. And in London, there were small shops which act as agents for these hand-weavers. But down in Cornish villages some of these hand weavers did a prosperous business with tourists and motorists, particularly as they were near popular resorts.—*"Shoes and Ships and Sealing-wax,"* by Nelle Scanlan, 2YA, April 22).

### Think—Or be Damned

[F you want a book which may succeed in making you thoroughly angry but at the same time should cause you to think furiously, then I can recommend *Think—Or be Damned*. Brian Penton says "Only when we have reduced to some objective basis all the national slogans, resounding abstractions, and poppycock encrusted catch-cries which we bandy to and fro whenever we put our heads together, will we have the remotest hope of travelling anywhere than in a big circle." He is, of course, talking primarily to Australians, but much of what he says is of considerable importance to New Zealanders. He points out that it is obvious that we have in the near future a large complex of economic and political problems to attend to. These problems consist briefly of our relation to the Empire, our relation to the world at large, our relation to the crowded Pacific basin and our internal economic and social set-up. And he asserts that before anything can be done, "a preliminary soul searching is called for. Our minds are at the moment befogged by words, slogans, maxims, catch-cries that are largely meaningless, by assumptions without justification and by cock-eyed judgments. As a result, we emphasise and set up as a standard the wrong kind of patriotism, the wrong kind of national pride, aims that only conflict with our desire to make the most of living in this desirable corner of the world." His booklet is an ill-mannered, vigorous attack on popular superstitions in Australia, superstitions which can be duplicated here in New Zealand. He examines what has been achieved by 153 years of Australian colonisation, what we mean by democracy, what we mean by saying that Australia has developed a national spirit of its own, what exactly is meant by references to high standards of living, what is meant by remarks such as Australia has the best education system in the world. The case that he puts is a case against humbug and cant, a case against respectable ostrichism which is practised in every part of the world as well as in Australia. His book is a plea for intelligent

### Manipulating Human Beings

PROPAGANDA has in modern times been lifted from its place as a minor factor in social life to a new position as a major social force. This growth has been made possible by the growth of the sciences of human relations such as psychology and sociology, providing new knowledge of how to manipulate human beings, by the tremendous development of communication facilities in modern times, including the telegraph, the oceanic cable, the telephone, the radio, the motion picture, facsimile transmission, teletype, rotary printing presses, the duplicators; by the highly efficient control and organisation of the propaganda machinery now possible. Particularly in the totalitarian states do we see propaganda agencies established as vital adjuncts of the government, on equal terms with other major departments of the state.—(Winter Course Talk: "The Psychology of the Crowd," by G. Hunter Boys, University of Otago, 4YA, April 29).

thinking so that we shall not continue in a self-satisfied manner; to accept the rhetoric and half-truths and abstract observations which usually pass for thinking. Brian Penton is right—unless we think and think well and rapidly we are like to be damned. But how many of us are really prepared to do a little soul searching, and examine forms of respectable ostrichism as practised in Australia or New Zealand? (Book Review by Winston Rhodes, 3YA, April 29).

### African Mysteries

A: It seems to me that most of these bold spirits were trying to do the same thing.

B: What, find gold or ivory or something?

A: No, although many of the explorers did come across ivory hunters. I've read where some of them made fairly long journeys in boats on the rivers and lakes where there was an ivory cargo aboard. It smelt like a freezing works in the busy season, only about a hundred times more concentrated.

B: Ugh! But what do you mean, they were all looking for the same thing?



A: They were trying to solve a mystery—in fact two mysteries. One was the mystery of the Nile and the other the mystery of the Congo. They were very curious to know where the sources of these two great rivers were. The Nile, especially. It had baffled generations of men through the centuries. Men in those days made long journeys along its course, but always its length reached out farther than their farthest journeys. It's 4000 miles long, you know!

B: No wonder it baffled them, then. And how long's the Congo?

A: About 3000 miles.—(Winter Course Talk "Lifting the Veil—Africa." 2YA, May 5).

### Parodies of Poems

An old favourite, "You are old, Father William," from "Alice in Wonderland" is a curiosity in that it is a parody which has outlived the original. That happens occasionally. For instance, there lived in the Victorian Era an enormously popular poet called Martin Tupper. He was a contemporary of Tennyson, and had as large a public—perhaps a

larger. To-day he is quite forgotten, except as a bad curiosity, a horrible example, and he lives most vividly in a burlesque by that prince of parody-writers, Charles Stuart Calverley. Well, Southey wrote the original "You are old, Father William"—a moral poem, which is hardly remembered now. Its original title is "The Old Man's Comforts, and How He Gained Them."—(Poetry Hour, 2YA, May 2).

### Creators of Parisian Style

THERE are some 50 dressmaking houses in Paris which may be considered as in the front rank. Madame Vionnet, goddess of the bias cut, and greatest of them all, is the little grey-haired woman who began her career as a pin-girl. She is a woman of obstinate artistic integrity, with small, vital hands, who was the first to throw whalebone and linings into the dust-bin. Madame Schiaparelli is a Roman, the most daringly modern of them all. She will go down



in history for her influence on fabrics—who but Schiaparelli would have made a dress of glass? Captain Molyneux is English-Irish—a captain in the last war, he was with Lucille, that is, Lady Duff-Gordon, before 1914, and started his own business after the Armistice. A quiet, reserved man, in dressmaking he makes a fetish of fine simplicity. Worth's are the Royal dress-makers of Europe. Their house is the oldest couture establishment of the present day. It was founded under the second empire by a Lincolnshire Englishman who became Court dressmaker to the Empress Eugenie. They have dressed 20 queens, the late Spanish and Russian Royal houses; they made the court trains with real emeralds and pearls for the murdered Tsarina. They dress some of the noble cousins of English Royalty. The present house is run by the third generation, and its lofty standard has never varied.—("Leadership in Dress Design: Paris—The Home of Dress Design," by Miss Bow-byes, 2YA, May 5).

### What Makes a Crowd?

A CROWD is first of all not just any group of people, but it is a group of people who have something in common, a grievance, a common suffering, or a common love of something. This common factor is necessary in order to bind the individuals together, to make them feel the link between themselves and the next man whom they probably do not know, whom they would possibly dislike if they met in the ordinary course of social life. The second necessity of a crowd is a leader who epitomises the common factor, and represents the ideal of the crowd on that particular point. It is impossible to get a group of individuals to act together in the way that a crowd does, unless they have these two factors present. If, for example, you had a meeting of one representative of every religion, they would be quite incapable of acting in any way together, because of the differences of ideas and opinions and their mutual antagonisms. Unless, of course, they were convinced that all their religions were in danger, when the common factor of religion might be sufficient to weld them into a unity for the common purpose of defending religion against its aggressors. To-day, it is not necessary that a crowd should be gathered together physically. The radio and the newspapers can be used so that even persons a considerable distance removed from the physical crowd can be made part of it. Nazi Germany is a classic example of this. There the radio and the press, particularly the radio, have been used to bridge the physical distance between persons and make them feel and act as if they were in the actual physical crowd. Nazi Germany is a crowd of this nature. The aim of every person or group who want a crowd to do anything is to bring to the front the common factor whether it be love, suffering or grievance.—(Winter Course Talk: "The Psychology of the Crowd," by G. Hunter Boys, University of Otago, 4YA, April 29).