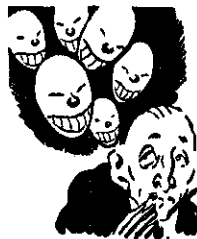


DID YOU HEAR THIS?

Extracts From Recent Talks

In a Japanese Hospital

MY strangest hospital experience was when I spent some weeks in a Japanese hospital in Osaka. I was the only foreigner in the building for the first two weeks and nobody could speak a word of English to me, and I couldn't speak a word of Japanese to them. It was quite a business making my wants understood, especially in the matter of food. The Japanese nurses who looked after me invariably greeted me with a giggle, and all I could do was to reply with another giggle. At last I conceived the idea of describing my wants in the way of food by drawing a picture of what I wanted. I never was a good drawer at the best of times, and as far as I could see the only article of food they recognised was an egg, and so my diet consisted of egg morning, noon and night. I went so far as to try and draw a fish once, but it was no good. I had asked for egg in the first place and egg it was to be until I was discharged. Since then I have hardly had the courage to look an egg in the face again. — ("Just on Being a Patient," Major F. H. Lampen, 2YA, June 5.)



Through the Homer Tunnel

THE walk through the tunnel was one of the highlights of my recent trip—that is, if you can call the blackout of a tunnel a highlight! When I tramped up to the Homer Hut in 1936, the new road was finished only as far as Marion Camp, six or seven miles distant, under the shadow of majestic Mount Marion. This time, I went to the very foot of the Homer Saddle, four thousand feet high, in a motor bus; unfortunately we couldn't get a true idea of the grandeur of the scenery, for we landed there in the thick of a snow storm. It was bitterly cold when the snow turned to sleety rain, and it seemed at first as though we'd have to stumble through the pitchy darkness of the tunnel by torchlight—not a very thrilling prospect—but after a while our cheery guide switched on the lights, and we got through in fine style, with the water rushing over our shoes, and icy cold winds whistling down our necks as we reached a very draughty doorway halfway through. Drilling and blasting are still going on in the tunnel, but only a few chains on the Homer side of the tunnel have been completed to full width and height, and a great many more tons of solid granite rock will have to come crashing down before motor cars will be able to pass through to Milford.—("Southland Again," by Elsie K. Morton, 2YA, July 2.)

Taken From Her Own Family

AS a chronicler of early colonisation in Australia few people have better qualifications than "G. B. Lancaster," whose real name is Edith Lyttleton. She knows her subject from the inside. Her paternal grandfather was one of those soldier-settlers in Tasmania, of the type so well portrayed in *Pageant*—men of birth and standing, accustomed to authority, who transplanted to the unaccustomed soil of Tasmania all the English habits of life—family prayers, a ceremonial evening meal, careful etiquette on every occasion. So it is from the experiences of her own family that G. B. Lancaster takes much of the material for *Pageant*. Her own father, the Hon. Westcote McNab Lyttleton, having married into a similar soldier family, came to New Zealand with his wife and young family, and settled on a station called "Rokeby," near Rakai. There were two daughters and two sons, and the eldest daughter, Edith Joan, is the writer known to us as G. B. Lancaster. The

life of the station and the country round about provided the young writer with her first subjects. They were meaty subjects written for the *Otago Daily Times* and the *Bulletin*, and collected under the title of *Sons o' Men*. — ("A Few Minutes with Women Novelists: 'G. B. Lancaster,'" by Margaret Johnston, 2YA, June 28.)

Beautiful Needlework

IT is in the Convents of France, that much of the beautiful hand-made lingerie is produced, which finds its way into the expensive trousseaux for the wealthy brides all over the world. Many brides, too, send their house linen, perhaps the finest that Belfast can produce, to France to have the monograms embroidered upon it. Every sheet and towel and pillowslip—everything is marked with the same device. This tradition of needlecraft still belongs to the French Convents, or to some of them, which specialise in such work, and they train girls to become skilled needlewomen. I remember once when I was staying in the country in England there was a sale of household goods at the local manor house. The twinner had died, and there



was no direct heir, so much of the furniture and equipment was being offered for sale. The friends I was staying with took me with them. I have never seen such beautiful linen, as fine and smooth as satin, and every piece had a coronet and monogram embroidered on it. There was a huge crowd there, and I found the keenest competition for the embroidered line. And rich Americans were among the most eager to buy, and they were paying very high prices for it... not by the dozen or half-dozen, but per piece. Many people were content to buy one pillowslip. It was almost like a high-priced souvenir hunt.—("Shoes and Ships and Sealing-wax," by Miss Nelle Scanlan, 1YA, June 24.)

Afrikaans Versus English

IN South Africa, more than 50 per cent. of the European community use that form of Dutch known as Afrikaans, and, inevitably and quite justifiably, Afrikaans has been recognised as an official language for the Dominion. More than half the schools and colleges use it as the medium of instruction; all government and municipal documents are printed in it as well as English; so are road signs, and the names of streets; and in the debates of provincial assemblies and the Union Parliament. It has now become a good deal commoner than English. You may be quite sure, for instance, that in the debates in the House of Assembly on General Hertzog's motion referring to the war, the bulk of the speeches for and against would be delivered in Afrikaans. The result of this bilingualism or two-language system are many—some good, some bad. European South Africans are apt to become extremely self-conscious about their home language, whichever it may be. They talk about it, argue about it, and even quarrel about it, many hours in the week.—("The South African Scene: Language as a Political Issue," by Professor J. Y. T. Greig, 1YA, June 29.)

Who Went To The "Proms"?

QUEEN'S HALL, which was bombed recently, was the resort of the same, ordinary people of whom Lincoln once said: "God must have loved the average man; he made so many of us." A witty woman journalist once watched the arrival of, and then mingled with, a Queen's Hall audience as it descended from buses, came up from the Underground, tink-

"Taking the Cure" at Vichy

TO many people Vichy means nothing but the name of the Petain Government. To many others it is but a name on a bottle of mineral water. But picture this small town in the heart of France, built down in a sun-filled valley on the bank of a river. All round it the hills rise—hills that are clad with vines and fruit trees. In the spring they are a mass of scents and blossoms. The mineral waters from the thermal springs have made the town famous and have attracted people from all over the world. So in the "season," from May to October, Vichy is full of people "taking the cure." They made the small town a health resort of wealth and fashion, and the life that sprang up round the "mineral waters trade" was a gay one. The centre of the town is occupied by a large park with the casino, with its ballroom and theatre at one end of it and the large drinking hall at the other. People who went to Vichy to "take the waters" danced and ate rare delicacies prepared by some of the best chefs in the world, went to the casino, to the theatre, to the races, to concerts in the park, and then went to wash away their indigestion, gout and liver complaints in the drinking hall and the baths.—("A Night in Vichy," by Mrs. Clare Prior, 2YA, June 30.)

tinked out of taxis, or approached at an earnest pace on shanks's ponies. There were people from the ends of the earth (including an occasional New Zealander or two), some were from the outskirts of London town, many carried suitcases, thereby revealing that their coming hadn't been a mere question of "strolling along and having a spot of music." Our journalist thinks every Prom audience consists of quite practical folk, who wouldn't give two hoots if Beethoven had never lived, and only one if he did. "Heavens," she asks, "are these the unmusical English?" Boiled shirts and lace dresses; plus-fours and tailor-mades; hair of every colour and length, natural and unnatural, on both men and women; flannels ditto, loud checks, pretty flowered cotton frocks; the gracious silver heads of English ladies; quantities of pretty girls, and a peculiar rarity of lipstick. Ours not to reason why. These lovers of music comprise many sorts and conditions of men.—("Queen's Hall—The Home of the 'Proms,'" 2YA, June 22.)

Churchill Played With Toy Soldiers

IT is strange that the man who is now leading our Empire to victory was a dunce at school. For one thing, he hated Latin, and in addition to making little headway with his lessons, he made none at all at games. He counted the days and hours to the end of every term, when he would be let out of what to him was a prison, to go home and play the game he enjoyed best of all. This was to spread out his 1,500 toy soldiers in line of battle on the nursery floor. His greatest pleasure in those days was reading, and his teachers at that badly-run private school were unable to understand a boy who was reading books beyond his years and yet was at the bottom of the form. Winston has told us himself that this state of affairs offended the teachers. But out of evil good was to come. Although Winston never could write a verse in Latin and knew no Greek except the alphabet, his boyhood reading played its part and was the foundation on which he built his great grasp of English. That was the beginning of his style that in his books and speeches has no superior anywhere to-day.—("This and That," from "Ebor's" Scrapbook, 2YA, June 23.)

