

DID YOU HEAR THIS?

Extracts From Recent Talks

Catching the Horse-tram

MENTION schooldays to me, and what does memory flash upon the screen of my mind? Not the unlovely old wooden building in Lower Symonds Street, not the narrow echoing corridors, nor the crowded classrooms, with their long forms and scarred desks—not Tooley, the stern school janitor, unapproachable and incorruptible, nor the grandly named Drawing Hall, reeking of heat and the human boy, where, for some mysterious reason, the girls' Sixth Form had to wrestle with English on sultry Friday afternoons. No, not any of these, but an old horse-tram plodding its weary way up the steep slope of Wellesley Street. For, you see, I was a tram-girl in the 'nineties, and lived at the furthest end of Epsom. If I didn't catch the tram that reached the top of Wellesley Street five minutes before school closed, I would have to wait half-an-hour for the next. So, as soon as, by standing up, I caught a glimpse of the leader's head appearing over the crest of the hill I had permission to collect my books, dash down a long corridor, jam on my hard straw hat, and get out in time to catch the tram when it stopped by St. Paul's to take the leading horse off. Time marches on! What girl of to-day would do without a comb and mirror, not to mention all the pattings and pullings—even possibly powderings, that now complicate the once simple operation of putting on a hat?—(*"A School-marm Looks Back,"* by Miss Cecil Hull, 2YA, December 20.)



Summer-time Economy

EVEN although hot weather appetites are much smaller than winter ones, it often happens that it costs as much to feed the family during the summer as during the winter, because so much food has had to be wasted because it wouldn't keep. But one really should be able to eat more cheaply in the summer than in the winter, for fruit, vegetables, eggs and milk are cheaper, and our appetites for meat and the fuel foods, are so much smaller. In fact, many a good manager finds that the cost of food for daily meals is so much less that she has a good deal of her weekly food money left over to spend on buying much of the extra fruit and sugar needed for preserves. But this takes good management and a constant guard against waste.—(*"Care of Food in Hot Weather,"* A.C.E. Talk, 4YA, December 17.)

The W.W.S.A.

AS President of the Women's War Service Auxiliary I am in touch with most women's organisations throughout the country, and I am aware that there are still a large number of women and girls—especially married women—who do not belong to organisations, and some who do—who with encouragement would be willing to accept full-time employment. The Auxiliary is doing its utmost to co-operate with the Government in this respect, and is endeavouring to assist in placing women in industrial employment so that men may be released for service with the Armed Forces. The Post and Telegraph Department have recently made plans for the employment of women as drivers of cars for delivery work and as mechanics in the Telephone Ex-

Getting The Better Of Wailing Winnie

AS to air raids, we have roof spotters night and day, of course, so when the local Wailing Winnie starts to wail, we don't bother at all, but just go on working. Indoor shelters have been erected all over the factory—huge things they are, too, of brick and concrete, with concrete roofs—and when we hear the three pips on the buzzer, which is the roof spotter's signal for "Immediate Danger," and usually means enemy 'planes right overhead, we drop everything and bolt for the shelters. We are all allocated to places in the shelters, and there we sit until we get the continuous buzz, which means "Immediate Danger Passed," and back we go to work again. With good roof spotters we waste very little time, and it's far better than in the first days of air raids, when we all had to troop out to the outdoor shelters on the first note of the siren, and patiently wait until the all clear went—what must have been lost in production in those days I can only imagine. Nowadays, unless there's a concentrated attack on our immediate neighbourhood, we usually lose only a few minutes at a time, even though we may have to make several dives for the shelters in one shift.—(*"Proud Service: The Factory Girl in Britain,"* by Monica, 2YA, December 3.)

changes. The Auxiliary is undertaking to obtain suitable women for this work for this Department.—(*National Service talk by Mrs. Janet Fraser, 2YA, December 14.*)

An Amazon on the Offing

SOME few weeks ago, I referred to a little girl who dropped in to see me sometimes. The object of her visit was to protest against the way in which I took her father out on Home Guard duties when she wanted to have him all to herself. I pacified my little friend—Jennifer is her name, by the way—by promising that I would let her come out and help me boil the billy on one of our outings. Since then I have redeemed my promise and we are now the best of friends. When I asked her how she had enjoyed herself, she replied that she liked it so much that when she grew up she, too, was going to be a soldier. I suggested that perhaps she meant a soldieress or something in the nature of the Women's Air Force Auxiliary or the like—but no, she wanted to be a real soldier with a real gun and all the various etceteras. Jennifer is a very smart little miss, for to give point to what she had been saying, she told me that Russian women had been taking their place in this war alongside their menfolk; and if the Russian women could do it, she saw no reason why British women couldn't do the same.—(*"Just Women in Wartime,"* by Major F. H. Lampen, 3YA, November 15.)



N.Z. Soldiers in Sydney

THE entertainment of New Zealand soldiers whenever the opportunity offers is a very important feature of the activities of the New Zealand War Unit. They are always warmly welcomed and are

made to feel at home as much as possible. Those members who have cars take them for trips around the various resorts near to hand, such as the famous Manly and Bondi beaches and the beautiful Sydney Zoo. Many grateful acknowledgments have been received of the hospitality they have experienced, and you may have read in the papers how a very handsome wireless receiver and amplifier has been presented to the New Zealand War Unit by the Lord Mayor of Sydney, in recognition of the work it has done.—(*"War Work of New Zealanders in Sydney,"* by Helen Zahara, 2YA, December 15.)

Ethel, Our Cull Ewe

WHENEVER people try to convince me that sheep are merely silly, I introduce them to Ethel—and they have to admit there's such a thing as low cunning in sheep as well as in human beings. Low cunning is really Ethel's long suit. She is, I think, one of the nastiest animals in many ways that I have ever known—and yet she is such an institution on our farm that I really dread the day when she will finally be removed from us. Not by sale; only a buyer wholly blind and imbecile would ever buy Ethel—even if we would sell her, which would be unthinkable—but removed by death—and surely that must be very near, since Ethel is now about nine years old. Even she cannot live for ever—though I am sure that she will have a very good try. Of course, we should never have kept her—not after her third lamb, anyway; a thoroughly stern and practical farmer would have sold her long ago—for Ethel really represents just about everything that the stock reports mean when they speak of "a cull ewe." Her wool, through extreme old age, is so light as to be scarcely worth removing—and she makes the process difficult enough by hiding every year at shearing time. She isn't even prolific; she has never had twins—and if she were now to produce them at her advanced age I fear it would be too much for her already wandering mind.—(*"Our Animal Friends: Are Sheep So Silly?"* by Mrs. Mary Scott, 1YA, November 14.)



A New Fertiliser

BY a fortunate coincidence it was just about two years ago that Mr. George Holford, then in the Department of Agriculture, drew attention to the possibilities of a new type of fertiliser—the product of a mixture of three parts of fresh superphosphate still hot in the works with one part of finely ground serpentine, a rock composed essentially of silicate of magnesium. This rock is found in abundance ready for quarrying in various parts of our own country, and the most immediately accessible deposits are in the Auckland Province. This preparation has several enormous advantages, and the most important are these two: first, the phosphate is made water-insoluble and thus less susceptible to loss in the soil, in other words more completely available to plants. I have had 25 years' experience of this particular problem, and I will say that plants will recover from four cwt. of serpentine superphosphate as much phosphate as from four cwt. of ordinary super—a saving in phosphate of 33 per cent, which is of enormous significance at present. The second proved advantage is that serpentine superphosphate after being stored for months maintains a perfectly free running condition. It does not set, as does ordinary super, it does not rot the containing bags, as does ordinary super. Bags remain quite sound. So here we have an opportunity of saving literally thousands of pounds per annum now lost by the rotting of imported bags in which super is carried. Every farmer knows all about that.—(*"The Fertiliser Position, and the National Interest,"* by L. J. Wild, 2YA, November 21.)