

DID YOU HEAR THIS?

Extracts From Recent Talks

School Dental Service

IN New Zealand we have the finest service in the world for caring for children's teeth—the School Dental Service. It is, of course, concerned mainly with the children in the primary schools from the age of five years on. Visit any school clinic. See how it is made bright and attractive with toys and pictures. Watch the nurses at work. Little operative work is attempted in the first few visits.



If pain is to be caused at any stage, it is introduced as carefully as possible, perhaps in conjunction with a story. Parents are told what to do; arrangements are made for a re-examination of the child two or three times a year until he is five; and by the time he is of school age he

takes the dental clinic as a matter of course, and, usually, quite happily. Instruction is complete right down to the last detail, and by the time the child passes out of the clinic he should be well aware of the importance of his teeth. At this point, however, a duty rests with the parents. It is for them to see that the child does not neglect his teeth. Six-monthly visits to the family dentist are the best and cheapest guarantee of good teeth. — ("Care of Children's Teeth," 1YA, January 6.)

All Eyes on Singapore

SINGAPORE is at once an island, a city, and a naval base. As an island, it is only another tropical outpost which, left to itself, would soon revert to jungle and malarial swamp. It lies at the southernmost tip of Asia, where the land narrows down to the Malay Peninsula, and is separated from the mainland by a channel which is only a mile wide at one point. Situated 78 miles from the Equator, the island is only 18 miles long by 15 miles wide. Singapore city is the epitome of an imperial outpost, one of the three or four outstandingly colourful cities of the world. Besides being the administrative centre of a rich and populous area, it is the hub of the Orient's trade and one of the world's great market places. Its streets are crowded with shops and bazaars, its port filled with ships, its warehouses jammed with goods. Commercially, it is the clearing-house for the East, and through its port passes the bulk of the world's rubber and tin. But it is upon the naval base of Singapore that all eyes are focussed to-day. Singapore Naval Base, with its Royal Air Force stations and Imperial Garrison, has now met the destiny for which Britain has been preparing it for 17 years. It bestrides the Indian and Pacific Oceans, and is on the through route for British trade to China and Australia. — ("Singapore and What It Guards," all National Stations, January 11.)

Dutch Colonisation

THE Dutch are wonderful colonisers. The word "Dutch" is almost synonymous with cleanliness and there is clear evidence of this passion for cleanliness and order in Java. I don't pretend that the Dutch have entirely transformed the native quarters, and imposed their own hygienic customs upon the Javanese. The natives still live in their own way, following their own ways of life. But wherever the Dutch officials take control you can see their work in this direction. I don't think that in any country in the world you will find better country roads, cleaner railway stations, and more orderly wharves and go-downs. The number of Dutch residents is very

small in comparison with the teeming native life, but their influence is very considerable. Naturally, with such a huge population the natives live very much from hand to mouth. They are always pawning things one week, and redeeming them the next. One of the most surprising institutions of the Dutch was the State pawn shop. This happy-go-lucky tendency on the part of the natives often led them into the hands of shrewd money-lenders who charged extortionate interest on loans. So to protect the simple Javanese from this exploitation the State took over the pawn-broking business, and made it a State monopoly. — ("Shoes and Ships and Sealing Wax," by Nelle Scanlan, 2YA, January 13.)

Cultivation of Flax

THE cultivation of flax in Asia belongs to prehistoric times. It was extensively grown in Syria and Palestine. The story of Rahab hiding the spies on the roof of her house in Jericho shows us one of the means used for drying and bleaching the flax. Probably most of the weaving, like that of Egypt,



was done by men, but we read of women as spinners and makers of fine linen. In Hebrew history there are references to whole families being engaged in the flax weaving industry. Scraps of linen of very ancient date have been found at Susa, the capital of Elam. The Babylonians and Assyrians wore linen in everyday life, but not to the same extent as wool. The ancient use

of linen in ritual by the Hebrews is recorded in the account of the building of the tabernacle, and in later years, of the temple at Jerusalem. Among the craftsmen sent to Solomon by Hiram, king of Tyre, for the great work of building the temple, was a man skilled in the making of fine linen, whose mother was of the tribe of Dan. At that time, Tyre and Berytus were the Phoenician cities especially famous for linen. Their traders carried the knowledge into Southern Europe along the shores of the Mediterranean, until it reached Britain. The Greeks may have got their knowledge of linen from Asia by other means than through the Phoenicians, but the fine weaving of the Phoenician women was just as well known to the Greeks as the seafaring skill of the men. — ("Needlework Through the Ages," by Mrs. Stamp-Taylor, 2YA, January 14.)

Firemen to the Rescue.

THE fire emergency brigade is well written up. Miss Allingham says "The delightful thing about the fire emergency brigade is that it is really the district funeral parlour in a newer and gayer guise. The personnel is the same and this chameleon changing from black to red, from snail's pace to glorious speed, had a most satisfying quality of poetic justice about it. We have seen them so often advancing sadly down the narrow street; Dick Houlding in front, large and impressive, in top hat, black gloves and long frock coat, the little bier behind him covered with posies, the bearers walking on either side and Mr. Maskell himself, plump, fatherly, and firmly kind, in charge of it all. And so see them now, speeding round the Thatcher's Corner in a crimson box, their red steel helmets glowing in the sun, their leather belts and shining equipment glistening, their faces confident and jovial, an odd but inspiring appearance. They won the shield for the whole district and

Japan Needs Oil

TWO-THIRDS of Japan's oil requirements were supplied by the United States. Most of the remainder was supplied by the Dutch East Indies. The total embargo on oil which the United States applied to Japan a few months ago, made the Dutch oilfields a necessity to Japan. She must have oil. She could get it nowhere else. But athwart Japan's southward drive for oil lies Singapore. With 2,500 miles of ocean separating Tokio and Singapore, the Japanese Navy used not seriously to threaten Singapore. But, during the last few years, Japan has acquired intermediate bases. First, Hainan Island, off the extreme southern coast of China, was taken. Later, came the seizure of the Spratley group of small coral islands, almost dead in the centre of the South China Sea. France claimed these islands, but her protest was ignored by Japan. At one bound Japan had jumped to within 700 miles of Singapore, and had secured a potential submarine and seaplane base only a few hours away. — (National Service Talk from all National Stations, January 11.)

were heroes in the blitz." — ("The Oaken Heart," by Margery Allingham. Reviewed by Miss G. M. Glanville, 3YA, January 8.)

Wonderland of the North

ONE of the most thrilling and interesting of my experiences in Queensland was a trip out over the reef in a glass-bottomed boat to see the world beneath the sea. We were able to catch a glimpse of many wonderful coral gardens growing in glorious profusion. There seemed to be an unearthly and ethereal glow about the whole scene which it is not possible to convey by mere words, and swimming in and out of the clumps of coral were many varieties of multi-coloured fish of every size and shape. It was certainly a picture never to be forgotten. As well as the Great Barrier Reef, Queensland has many other wonderful creations of nature, such as lofty bush-covered mountains, beautiful surf beaches and winding rivers. Also it is a rich producing country and has vast tracts of sheep and cattle land, as well as the sugar cane fields, peanut farms, cotton fields, tropical fruit farms, and so on. All these combine to make it truly fit the title given to it of "Wonderland of the North." — ("A Visit to Queensland," by Helen Zahara, 2YA, January 19.)

On the Matrimonial Main

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, setting out without much idea of where or why he was going, is equivalent to the average young couple pushing off into the uncharted seas of matrimony. And it is really remarkable that, in spite of occasionally getting on the rocks, of trying to raise the wind, of battling with cross-currents and adverse tides, so few matrimonial mariners are completely sunk. They suffer the usual minor damage, of course, such as leaks in the budget, slightly strained relations, occasional disputes as to who is entitled to man the wheel and whose job it is to shorten sail, but, considering the number of craft continually at sea, the marital Lloyds report remarkably



few total losses; and this in spite of the fact that these inexperienced voyagers sail merrily away without compass or chart, in happy disregard of the advice of crusty old shellbacks who sit in the inglenook and tell hair-raising tales of disaster on the Matrimonial Main. And so you sight them, after they have sailed awhile, some with a full crew, others obviously not fully manned, but nearly all bowling proudly along with all spars dressed and their best bunting streaming from the foretop. — ("Definitely Domestic," by Ken Alexander, 2YA, January 10.)