

DID YOU HEAR THIS?

Extracts From Recent Talks

... And a Glass of Milk

A FEW months ago a man of nearly fifty found that he could receive no further promotion with his firm unless he improved himself in English, Arithmetic and Book-keeping. This man was naturally ambitious and felt that an increase in salary would be very acceptable, especially in these hard times. He consulted the supervisor of one of our Evening Schools and explained exactly what he needed. The supervisor had no difficulty in mapping out a suitable course and the man seemed satisfied. "Now how much will this cost me?" was our friend's next question.

"Well, how do you stand for a free place?" asked the supervisor.

"Oh, don't be funny," said the man, "I'm 49 years of age and I left school way back in 1906."

But the supervisor was still not convinced and proceeded to ask his prospective student what secondary school education he had received on a free place.

"Well, I had just two and a-half years at District High School," replied the man.

"And nothing at all since then?" asked the supervisor.

"Nothing at all!"

"Well then, you have another two years of free education due to you in any Government school in New Zealand," replied the supervisor. "You can even go back to day school if you like."

Since preparing this talk I have been discussing this story with a friend of mine, and he has a tale to match it. "Do you know," he said, "I have a relation aged seventy who is receiving free education at one of our well-known Art schools, and gets a glass of milk per day as well." — (*"Free Education After Leaving School."* A. A. Kirk, 2YA, February 5.)

Food And Oil in Burma

THERE is still another factor which makes Burma important. It is a great producer country. Most of the Burmese are engaged in agriculture and the chief crop is rice. Burma is the world's largest exporter of rice, and nearly three million tons went overseas in 1939. The rice is of excellent quality, and is grown chiefly in the fertile Irawadi valley. Another valuable export which comes from the Irawadi valley is oil. Pipe lines run from the wells to the refineries at Syriam, and the production in 1939 was 275,000,000 gallons. There is also in Burma a considerable amount of tin, as well as lead, zinc, tungsten, and silver. Burma is therefore a very valuable asset. It produces food for the fighting man, and petrol for the war machines. . . . The air above the golden Shway-Dahgon Pagoda now hums with the sound of fighting 'planes. And the valleys of the Shan Mountains resound to the roar of heavy trucks, as they carry an unceasing train of supplies to the Chinese armies of Chiang Kai-Shek. — (*National Service Talk.* 2YA, February 9.)

Just a Modern Pirate

THE voyage which comes to my mind at the moment was a trip from Japan to New Zealand in a very old tramp steamer. The outstanding per-

sonality on board was the old skipper—he always struck me as having been born too late. Had he been born earlier he would doubtless have commanded a pirate ship. Nearing New Zealand a mysterious fire broke out in one of the holds, but this was soon put out. He made the most of this incident and had a wonderful story to tell about a great collection of Japanese antiques which he had collected from time to time during his many visits to Japan. He was so broken-hearted over the loss of some of his treasures that he had decided to sell the remainder. The news spread like wildfire and the sale was a great success. It wasn't until the buyers left the ship that they realised that they had also to pay customs duties on many of their purchases. The day before he left I went down to see him off and asked him if the sale had been up to his expectations. His reply rather astonished me as he reckoned that it was very much better than a similar sale he had had in another part of the world two years before. All he wanted to complete his make-up of a pirate was a red handkerchief on his head and a skull and crossbones emblazoned on his jersey. — (*"Just Shipmates O' Mine."* Major F. H. Lampen. 1YA, February 7.)

Not a Fish Story

ON a brilliant March morning in the year 1860, a graceful sailing ship rounded the North Head, and dropped anchor in the Waitemata. It was the good ship Blue Jacket. Like her sister-ship, the Red Jacket, she had been a famous China tea clipper, and had many fast passages to her credit, but on



this run she had been becalmed in the Doldrums and the voyage from Liverpool had taken 111 days. As the Blue Jacket rounded the North Head dozens of canoes swarmed out to meet her. No doubt, the Maoris brought many other things to sell, but to a hungry schoolboy, after months without fresh fruit, it was the luscious peaches that remained uppermost in my father's memory. Peaches were peaches in the good old days. No brown rot, black spot, or red dot troubled the grower then. That small boy never forgot the Maori kitful he bought that day for a shilling. He tipped them out on his bunk and counted them — 120 blushing beauties! Some kit and some story, sceptics will say. But the number never varied in the telling. Perhaps peach stories took the place of fish stories then, but I'm sure not one peach got away. — (*"Colonial Odyssey,"* Miss Cecil Hull, 1YA, February 2.)

A Visit to Java

THE Tanjong Priok is the port of Batavia. It is a very busy port, and very hot. There is a railway from the Tanjong Priok to Batavia and there are trees on both sides of the railway, and the story goes that only black monkeys live on one side and only grey monkeys on the other. It is said that neither will ever cross the railway line, and so these two colonies live quite apart, looking across at each other and gibbering and chattering as monkeys do. At one point on our journey we were told we would visit a colony of monkeys, who were most friendly. It was late afternoon when we entered a grove of thick trees. The car stopped and the guide made a series of strange noises probably meant to be monkey talk.

Women's World Day Of Prayer

THE day begins in New Zealand, where a sunrise service is held, group after group of women join in the service as the day advances, and for forty hours prayer never ceases, till the day closes amid the snow and zero temperature in Gambell on St. Lawrence Island, where the programme arrived in October and where, through the frozen condition of the island, another mail will not be received until next May. Here May Banau, an English woman, and some Esquimaux women, will join in the closing service. The day may end there, but the voice of prayer goes on to the Throne of God.

Last year our thank offering of £100 was sent to the women and children in devastated countries for food and medicine, through the International Red Cross. This year the voluntary offering will be sent to aid the orphaned Christian missions in Africa, the near East, India, Japan, Manchuria, China, Netherland Indies, South America and the Islands of the Pacific. — (*"The Women's World Day of Prayer."* 2YA, February 20.)

In an instant the trees were alive with monkeys; they swarmed down the branches, and climbed on to the car. They were most persistent little beggars, demanding food. An enterprising native was selling nuts, which we bought and gave to them. And in their greed they fought and squabbled over the nuts. It was very amusing to see the almost human methods they applied. I saw a grim-faced old father monkey grab an agile youngster which had stolen his nuts, turn it over and gave it one, two, three, as if it were a naughty small boy. I saw mothers box the ears of their young. There were so many of them, the trees overhead and the ground around our feet and all over the car seemed to be swarming with them. — (*"Shoes and Ships and Sealing Wax."* Nello Scanlan. 2YA, January 20.)

Take Thy Phisike

HERE is a letter from Henrietta Maria, wife of Charles I. of England, to her eldest son Charles, later Charles II. The little boy, at the time this letter was written, was about eight years old, at which age he had just been made a Knight of the Garter, and given, if you please, a household of his own at Richmond, with the Earl of Newcastle as his Governor. He was evidently developing a will of his own, and refusing to take his medicine, which children in those days liked no better than now, although, admittedly, they had a smaller range to choose from than we have. Even if her small son had a household of his own, Henrietta Maria was going to have no nonsense.



"Charles j am sore that I most begin my first Letter with chiding you because j heere that you will not take phisike. I hope it was only for this day and that to morrowe you will doe it, or yf you will not j must come to you, and make you take it, for it is for your healths. I have given orders to mylord Newcastlell to send mi worde to night whether you will or not, there j hope you will give mi the paines to goe and so j rest

Your affectionat mother,
Henriette Marie, R.

To my deare
Sone the Prince."

— (*"Letters from Queens."* Prepared by Dorothy Neal, 2YA, February 2.)