

DID YOU HEAR THIS?

Extracts From Recent Talks

All on the Level

CEREMONY and old customs were swept aside and we were one big family. No one would have believed in pre-war days that the time would come when all sections of the staff would live communally. "Pinkies," wardmaids, kitchenmaids, nurses, technicians, doctors, the matron and the superintendent, all mealed together in the one dining room. I must mention more about the "Pinkies." They are the cleaning women, and are affectionately known throughout the hospital by this name. Of the many hospitals I know in England, this is the only one which has a traditional regard for its cleaners. They wear a long pink dress with a white cap and apron, and most of them are



Cockneys with the typical wit and humour of their race. One morning after a blitz when there was no heat for the morning cup of tea my Pinkie arrived with an apple which she insisted on giving to me. I protested, and said, "No, you have it Stevie, I've got an orange somewhere." But she persisted and finally said, "Aw no, you 'ave it, miss, I've got false teeth and can't domesticate apples." — ("A Great London Hospital Under Fire." Mrs. Andrew Fuller, 2YA, February 13.)

Early Trading

AFTER a short time in Auckland the family trekked northward, taking up land in a district rich in kauri gum, if in nothing else. So my grandfather was seized with the bright idea of doing some trading in gum as a profitable sideline to the precarious farming of those early days. All went swimmingly for a while. The Maoris brought quantities of gum, and the nucleus of a promising business seemed to be established. But alas for all human endeavour! The gum store possessed two doors. The back door was not strongly bolted, if indeed it was bolted at all, and it was finally discovered that the untutored natives were deftly removing the gum from the back and re-selling it in front. What chance was there of amassing a fortune for people who were not only guilty of such contributory negligence, but who could also retail the story years afterwards amid gales of appreciative enjoyment of the way in which they had been outwitted by the simple savages? — ("Colonial Odyssey." Miss Cecil Hull, 1YA, February 2.)

Warning to Letter-Writers

A FEW weeks ago the Censorship authorities in one New Zealand city intercepted a letter from a girl to a soldier in the Middle East. It was the usual chatty sort of letter that a girl might be expected to write to a soldier overseas, but part of the chatty correspondence was distinctly dangerous. One page contained a detailed and fairly accurate account of recent movements by ships of the Royal New Zealand Navy. And then, in the very next sentence, the girl informed her soldier friend: "We are having a 'Don't Talk' Campaign over here." We have quoted this case because it is typical of the thoughtlessness and irresponsibility of hundreds of New Zealanders. They are decent, respectable, loyal people, and they would be extremely indignant if you were to accuse them of being Fifth Columnists. Yet, unconsciously, that is exactly what they are. — ("Don't Write: A Warning to Correspondents," 2YA, February 16.)

Our Part In The Blackout

ONE way to deal with any job is to break it up into bits. Each bit is then a small task. Don't sit down and look at the whole house or factory or shop and bemoan that it can't be done, that there is no material, no one to do it, no way of doing it easily. Think of Mr. Churchill's job, General Wavell's job. To help them, our tiny little piece of their job must be done "the best we know how." Look at the blinds and the windows and the lamps as your part of the big uphill climb we all have before us—a climb no one can do for you. Look at them as a wee fraction of the blood and sweat and tears that we have been warned we must share. — (Christchurch E.P.S. Broadcast, 3YA, February 16.)

Memorable For Medicine

SEPTEMBER, 1894, is a memorable date, not only in Roux's personal history, but also in the history of medicine. It was at the Congress of Hygiene in Budapest in the autumn of that year that Roux announced the results he had obtained, in co-operation with Louis Martin, in immunising by serum or antitoxin, laboratory animals which, without this treatment, would have succumbed to diphtheria. Earlier in the same year, Roux had given his serum to 300 patients suffering from diphtheria in a hospital in Paris. Patients in another Parisian hospital were not thus treated and could therefore serve as control. The death-rate among them was 60 per cent, whereas it was only 24 per cent, among the patients given diphtheria antitoxin. — (New Zealand Red Cross Society Broadcast, 2YA, February 17.)

Not in the Guide Book

THEY are a kind of roving people in Canterbury. They live on mutton and bicycles. And, of course, Christchurch has the Avon. Shakespeare named his river after it. Christchurch's Avon hasn't got a bard yet. But they're holding a competition for designs and they're going to have a bigger bard than Shakespeare's. Christchurch, of course, was discovered when they put the tunnel through from Lyttelton. And then there's Nelson where there are so many apples that doctors simply can't stay. They are kept away, the whole time. But the hops are very encouraging. And then one hops over to Wellington which is very cosmopolitan. In fact, people



blow in and blow out the whole time. Wellington really is the Mae West of New Zealand, really. It says: "Blow in and see me some time." Wellington, in common with Auckland, of course, has the best harbour in New Zealand. Then up the road a bit, on the left is Mount Egmont with Taranaki kind of zipped on round its base. There, over the road, is Hawke's Bay—rightly called the armchair of New Zealand. I mean, there are so many squatters. Not that they squat the whole time, Hawke's Bay is very busy really—what with people running about selling motor cars, and other people running about buying them. That is, after the wool sales. In between sales they just spend their time—well, wool-gathering. — ("Isn't Nature Wonderful!" Ken Alexander, 2YA, February 7.)

Rolleston the Classical Scholar

THE author has been to great pains to tell us what manner of man this was who came from a home of plenty and culture in Yorkshire, and from the ties of close friendship with the great scholars of Cambridge, to enter a new land as a colonist, willing and anxious to learn. In 1861 he acquired property of his own and the book has many interesting things to tell of this period. "It is of historical interest," says the author, "to learn that Rolleston gave classical names to his surroundings, and these still persist. He called the wooded hill, at the foot of which his hut was built, Mt. Algidus, from a line by Horace, his favourite Latin poet. "Algidus rich in dark foliage"; and other names, Hydra, and Mt. Ida, and names of small rivers which run into the Rakaiia, and streams of Lake Coleridge, bring his classical background to our remembrance. It was said that he swore at his bullocks in Greek and could be met jolting along the country roads in an old spring cart reading his Horace as he went. — ("William Rolleston," by W. Downie Stewart. Reviewed by Miss G. M. Glanville, 3YA, February 10.)



Among the Thrillers

THE Detection Club is composed of what I think it would be appropriate to call the thin red line of detective novelists—a very select group. Dorothy Sayers, John Rhode, Anthony Gilbert, and Freeman Wills Croft are the prime movers. Here goes for a description of them: Miss Dorothy Sayers is tall, robust, round and rubicund. A cross between a guardsman and a female don with a jolly face (garnished with pince-nez), short grey curls, and a gruff voice. She writes her novels in penny exercise books and is, as perhaps not everybody knows, an ardent Anglo-Catholic. John Rhode is also large and rubicund. His real name is Street—Major Street—and I was told that he has been a very useful man in a service that does not issue a list of its officers. He has great charm, an engaging simplicity of manner, and very bright blue eyes. Freeman Wills Croft is not a family solicitor but he looks very like one. Anthony Gilbert is an extremely decorative woman. E. C. Bentley, the author of the classic *Trent's Last Case*, is, or has been a pressman. He is short, stocky, and quiet. Agatha Christie was not at the party but I met her for a moment afterwards, and the creator of Hercule Poirot is a delightful person, and the wife of a distinguished archaeologist. — ("The Queerest Party: A Meeting of the Detection Club." Ngaio Marsh, 4YA, February 17.)

Rosita Forbes in Libya

[T is now twenty years since Rosita Forbes made her great journey from north to south across Libya, but the desert is unchanging land, despite the mechanised armies that scar its surface for a little time, and we may be sure that the people and places she saw then are not different from those encountered by moving units of the Army of the Nile to-day. In her book *The Secret of the Sahara*, we meet place-names that war has made familiar to us all—Benghazi, Jedabia, Jarabub, Siwa. The purpose of Mrs. Forbes's expedition south from Jedabia was to visit and find the exact situation of Kufara, the sacred place of the Sahara, the headquarters of the ascetic and fanatical Senussi faith. Hating Christians, the Senussi had long guarded their holy of holies from Christian travellers. . . . Few Europeans had ever approached the Kufara oasis. Despite sandstorms, bad water, sick camels, and unsatisfactory servants, Rosita Forbes succeeded. She was the first European woman to enter the oasis of Kufara, and its holy cities of Taj and Jof. — ("Some Adventurous Women." Margaret Johnston, 2YA, February 28.)