

# OUR SOLDIERS: BLESS 'EM ALL!

(Continued from previous page)

on the matter, and bold enough to attempt to strike a blow for free speech against the silly censorship imposed by King's Regulations. First preference, say I, for the old school tie. But when we come to consider second preferences, we must begin by noticing the deficiencies of the Old Etonian."

Old Etonians, he insists, know little about science, and less about business. They have ceased to be on feudal terms with working men. They are incorruptible and stupid:

"An Old Etonian has been taught to live true to type and to conform to his code: to do the things which are done (like passing the port to the left); to leave undone those things which are left undone (like the bottom waistcoat button). Such a man, brought up in a ritualistic gentlemanly conception of life—and of war—has no chance of coping with a rough, untutored house-painter like Hitler and the other social upstarts whom Hitler has made his generals.

"Remember, Hitler did not repeat the Kaiser's mistake, when he gave von Moltke command of his armies in 1914 because von Moltke's father won the war of 1870. Hitler ignored the hereditary principle and chose his generals from clever go-getters. Our Old Etonian brasshats were as helpless before these German generals in the fields of battle as our Old Etonian diplomats were before a thorough-going crook like Ribbentrop in the fields of diplomacy. For these Germans didn't play the game. They broke the rules taught on the playing fields of Eton. They used tommy-guns, gangsters' weapons, and the Old Etonians had none. They used their brains and the Old Etonians had none."

"There'll Always Be An England . . ."

Still he would give them their commissions. They look the part and they



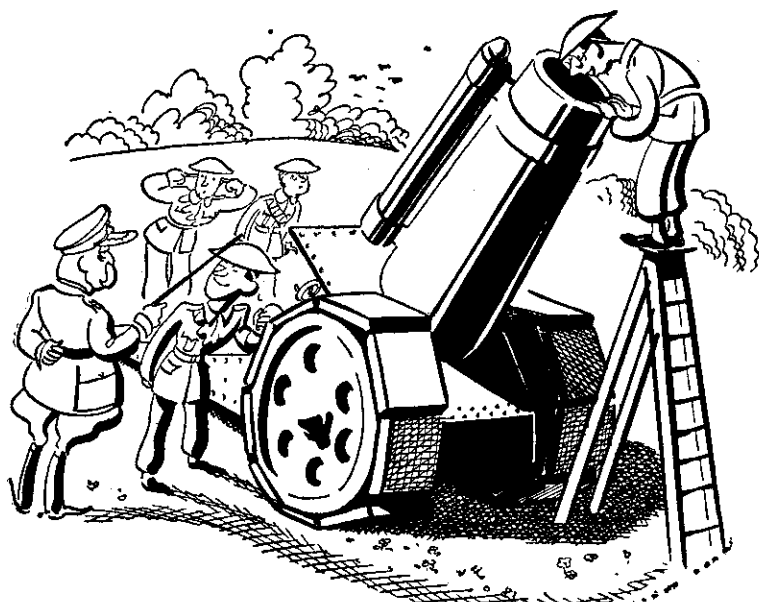
"The colonel . . . who regrets that cavalry should give way to tanks"

can die. But their numbers are limited. It is necessary to open the door wider:

"The English aristocracy has always been open to outsiders. One source of such upstarts has been the rest of the British Islands and the British Empire. There will always be an England so long as it is governed by Jews like Disraeli, Scotsmen like Gladstone, Welshmen like Lloyd George, South Africans like Smuts, Canadians like Bonar Law and Beaverbrook, Australians like Brendan Bracken, and Anglo-Americans like Winston Churchill."

And by this time he is almost ready to speak seriously:

"The future historian, reading the disastrous tale of Britain's retreat and defeat before Hitler, will scratch his head and ask feebly: 'What can the British people have been thinking of, to allow all this to happen, when a single firm stand against Hitler would have stopped him years earlier without war?' The answer is that they were thinking of doles, football pools, the cinema, and sex."



"Old Etonians know little about science"

We are getting very near to his real purpose in this passage:

"Well, you take all these young men as they were in September, 1939— young men whose youth had been rotted by unemployment, young men who had spent their time filling in football coupons while the Hitler jugend were filling in every spare minute with soldiering, young men who had been dosed and doped with a perverted pacifism, young men whose faiths had grown weary and whose hopes had turned sour. You put them all into uniform, and what do you get? A crusading, all-conquering army? Nonsense."

And then suddenly you have this:

"A vision, aiming high—that is the only thing which can lift the British Army from the ruck, the slavish round of routine, the tangles of red tape. It needs boldness. It needs courage. It needs iconoclasm. It needs recklessness."

Pretty blunt stuff, as Frank Owen points out in a foreword; very cheeky, but desperately serious. So let Owen end the list of quotations:

"When Colonel Bingham got into trouble for saying that the new secondary school officers were not as good as the public school type he was ninety per cent. right. The Hoxtonians had, and have, many of the failings and few of the qualities of the Etonians. Where the Colonel stopped short of real service to us was in not urging that we should create a new *esprit de corps*, based on modern weapons and their strategy, and informed by a fresh concept of society, in which the fine sense of personal loyalty and obligation which adorned the old order should blend with the new idea of a broad national comradeship in the cause of our common humanity."

## Czech Concert

ON July 22, beginning at 8 p.m.

Station 2YC will relay from the Wellington Town Hall the first half of a concert arranged by the Czechoslovakian Club, Wellington. The purpose of the concert is to raise money for both the New Zealand Patriotic Fund and for the Czechoslovakian Red Cross, but apart from this it will give the public a chance of hearing Czech music played by the string quartet which has been brought together by Greta Ostova, herself a Czech. The major item which listeners may hear from 2YC is Smetana's string quartet "From My Life". In the second part of the programme the string quartet will play Dvorak's "Nigger Quartet" (Op. 96).

The players in the string quartet are Vincent Aspey (first violin), Harry Ellwood (2nd violin), Freda Meier (viola), and Greta Ostova (cello).

## "Tell me, doctor

. . . Here's the antiseptic you told me to get. Surely it's the same as they used when I was in hospital—when baby was born! Tell me, would it be?"



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