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Saturday Afternoon and Evening

Saturday Afternoon and Evening

April 24th

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Opera produced by Stan. Lawson

Musical Director: Frank Poore

Box plans will be opened at Lewis Eady's on Monday, April 19th. Applications for preferential preliminary bookings will be received at Lewis Eady's immediately, and they will be dealt with in the order in which they arrive. Prices: D.C. and R.S. 6/- (plus 1d booking fee); Unreserved seats, 4/-, 2/- and 1/6.

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N.Z.L.-A43

A New Zealand Poet

TWO New Zealand poets were quoted at the unveiling of the Savage Memorial—Eileen Duggan and Robert Solway. Everybody knows who Eileen Duggan is, but not so many have heard of Robert Solway.

Well, here is his photograph. The badge on his coat shows that he has been serving recently in the Merchant Marine, which he joined when he was discharged from the Army. At present—until he gets another ship—he is a Public Servant.

The passages quoted in Auckland were from "A Memory of the late Prime Minister," a poem of about 120 lines, issued recently in Wellington by Stewart, Lawrence and Co. Ltd. To enable our readers to judge its quality in print, we give the opening lines:

*WE gather here to-day in silence
And remembrance for him who is
Dead. He left us, three years ago,
And passed into his last, long sleep.*

*HE was big-hearted and his love
For his fellowmen went beyond
The guards of the human heart. His
Love for children and the old and
Weak have won him a place in
The Hall of Fame as one of humanity's
Benefactors . . .*



ROBERT SOLWAY

*NOW that he sleeps, his work is
Still lighting up the paths of men . . .
While over his grave—a hallowed spot—
Lonely seabirds fly crying out again
That a giant spirit lives.*

*SO bow your heads not in sorrow
But rather in joy, for his life was
Spent in the service of his fellowmen.
And what greater memorial could there
Be than written on his tomb these few
Humble words, "He loved his fellowmen."*

BEHIND THE LINES

(Continued from previous page)

the difficulty, and provision of new air-fields is now really under way, though it is useless to expect instantaneous results.

Another standing job of the sappers is discovering and rendering harmless enemy mines and booby-traps, which they are using freely in certain sectors.

Throughout this campaign, I have never heard a word of anything but warmest praise for the work of the Royal Engineers, without whom even the partial success so far achieved would have been impossible.

Now that the danger is over, there is no harm in saying that some weeks ago, some of our troops in the Tunisian forward areas were down to their last day's supply of rations and nearly "as low in ammunition. The result of our extremely and unexpectedly rapid advance in the early stages was that, as a staff officer put it to me, "G. was three weeks ahead of Q."—meaning that operations had outrun supply.

It was considered policy to run that risk in the hope of taking Tunis in one rush, and history will show how nearly that rush succeeded. But it did not succeed, and our troops were left out in front with the supply services labouring to catch up with them. It was due to the most skilful and devoted efforts of all ancillary services that after a very few days the danger had disappeared and the troops had and still have ample supplies.

Work of Police and Drivers

At regular intervals all the way from here to Algiers, even in country so desolate that it reminded me of the Chilean nitrate desert, there are traffic control points and petrol dumps with notices at every point to tell drivers how far ahead the next one is. There are military police all along the route, and they have marked with notices every dangerous hill or bend for five hundred miles

—and there are plenty. Everything possible to make driving easy and safe has been done.

In the early days of the campaign one convoy of 300 vehicles, fifteen miles long, moved 380 miles in twenty-nine hours. In the forward areas they have often had to move through the night without lights. But the ammunition has continued to come up and so have the magnificent "compo" rations, which are surely the best ever supplied to any army.

And Now the Signals

No account of the fine work done by the ancillary services is complete without a reference to the Signals. They found the national system of communications in a state of utter neglect and the telephone system in any case inadequate. In effect they have put a new national telephone service into North Africa. Their line sections have had to test every bit of the existing installations. For instance, they have had to replace many hundreds of cracked insulators which were letting in the rain and causing faults. They have set up over 400 miles of overhead wires and uncounted hundreds of miles of ground lines.

The local French telephone and telegraph service has given whole-hearted and invaluable help, but no maintenance has been done for nearly three years, and the job is enormous. When a fault occurs the signallers have to go out perhaps over the mountains in rain and darkness to trace and correct it.

By sheer hard and continuous work they are gaining ground and improving telephone communications steadily. It is their pride that telegraphic and wireless communications have never failed throughout the campaign, but in the early stages staff officers had to spend half their nights on motor-cycles riding through possible hostile country to find out what was happening in different parts of their sectors. Thanks to the indefatigable work of the Signals those nights are becoming rarer.

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