

from the train, listened to him every night in Brisbane, and here in Gladstone he wakes me long before daylight. Sometimes his voice is shrill, and I know then that he is from Leghorn or Minorca or Hamburg. Sometimes it is rumbling and low, and I don't have to wait for the light to show me an Australorp or a Rhode Island Red. But it is often short, broken, cheeky and breathless, and I know then that I am listening to a bantam and a gawky cockerel, and feel very much at home.

I WAS not long in Australia before I found myself looking at the post-and-rail fences and wondering how much longer they would stand. Already many of them must be a hundred years old, or older, since they date roughly from the discovery of gold and the desertion of the stockmen and shepherds. It is a long stretch of time in the country of white ants, since even hardwood does not last forever. Some of these fences are, of course, derelict, few are quite sound; and some are mere ruins buried in scrub. But I would give a good deal to have one of the better preserved stretches running round by own boundary.

The history of fencing is everywhere obscure. When we consider what enclosures have done in the new world as well as in the old, the social upheavals they have precipitated and the blood they have often started flowing, it is surprising that we have so easily forgotten their origins. I have only to look back 60 years to see farmers turning out at daybreak to cut a fence and coming to blows with other farmers assembled on the line to prevent them. It has happened a hundred times in New Zealand, and must have happened a thousand times on these post-and-rail barriers in Australia. But the records have been lost and forgotten. It was a student of the Middle Ages who put life for me into the stone fences of Yorkshire. I would like to meet an Australian who could throw as much light on posts and rails.

(To be continued)

Amazing New Zealander

FOREIGN editor of *The Times* and confidant of statesmen and ambassadors, Harold Williams was one of the most amazing men New Zealand has produced. Master of 58 languages, he could make himself understood not only in every part of Europe, which was his principal stamping-ground as a journalist, but also in most other parts of the globe. In St. Petersburg — now Leningrad — he was once called on to settle a difference arising between a Russian agency and a group of Papuan performers. The New Zealander was one of the few people who spoke both Russian and Papuan. The career of this extraordinary journalist, linguist and political counsellor, is outlined in *The Amazing Harold Williams*, a dramatic documentary programme to be broadcast by 2YA at 9.30 a.m. on Sunday, July 4, and by 2XN at 9.30 p.m. on Thursday, July 8. The programme was written by O. A. Gillespie, the author or adaptor of many NZBS productions.

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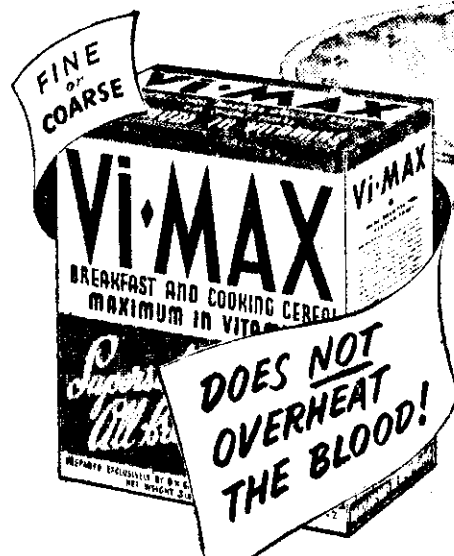
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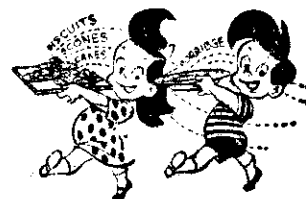
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