

Old Soldiers Never Die

HERE are four dimensions in the normal world, but outside it there is. Heaven be praised, the world of faery. Folk tales and fables spring from the very roots of our existence and have an unalterable truth about them. In Russia, for instance, they have told for centuries past the legend of *The Nosebag*.

It seems that there was once a poor discharged soldier wandering the roads



LOUIS MacNEICE
"Masterly command of the microphone"

From Basin to Bourbon Street

IT'S a sad fact that Mrs. Dorothea Joblin reports to jazz-men everywhere. It seems that Basin Street, New Orleans, is no longer the seat of the mighty in jazz. Of course, the alto sax still wails out into the blue, blue night there, the trumpets lick up and down the twelve-tone scale and the bull-fiddle boop-a-doops as of yore, but the real, hot stuff has packed up its traps and moved to Bourbon Street. It sounds suspiciously as though jazz has become respectable. However, in many respects New Orleans is still as it always was—with Canal Street the dividing line between Creole and modern American civilisations, the fascinating architecture with its lingering aura of old Spanish gallantry, the Bohemian foregatherings of artists in their untidy studios, the hot, steamy climate — and the streetcar named Desire.

Her visit to New Orleans, though, is just a part of Mrs. Joblin's trip, which may be described as not simply round-the-world, but tacking-here-and-there. In her series of talks *I Stayed There*, to be heard in ZB Women's Hour and from 1XH starting October 8, Mrs. Joblin tells of the charming simplicity of living in Tokyo which was accompanied by a highly-conventionalised code of manners. Then she will take listeners to Zanzibar, describe for them life in an African household, in Agra and in the Solomon Islands.

"I'VE been killed in my last nine pictures, strangled by Ronald Colman, drowned by Montgomery Clift, and shot by Barrie Sullivan, John Payne and Joseph Cotten. James Stewart failed to prevent me being scalped. William Powell pushed me off a cliff, and I was run over in a car by Alan Ladd. You might almost call me a cat with nine lives."—Shelley Winters, an American film actress, from the BBC.

N.Z. LISTENER, OCTOBER 8, 1954.

with nothing but three biscuits as a reward for twenty-five years' service. He meets three beggars to whom he gives his biscuits. In return he is given a pack of cards which will win for him each time he plays and a nosebag into which he can command to jump "any bird, beast or fowl." The soldier begins to make his way by spending a night in a devil-haunted palace of the Tsar, and chastising the demonic inhabitants very thoroughly. Fortune and the soldier's own native cunning combine to get him the position of physician to the Tsar and enable him to abolish Death. Eventually, however, he and the ever-ageing populace grow weary of life and, in a mood of Slavic despondency, the soldier decides to seek punishment in Hell for his interference with the natural order of things. But the devils will not take him. He proposes to try Heaven and carries off with him a good-riddance

present from the devils in the form of two hundred and fifty lost souls. The spirits are welcomed, but again there is no place in Heaven for a live man. He must return to Mother Russia to be her man-at-arms for ever.

Louis MacNeice, the English poet, has adapted the folk tale for radio. Classical scholar, lyric poet, radio dramatist and lecturer, MacNeice has won an outstanding place among modern writers by his masterly and imaginative command of the microphone. An acknowledged leader of the rebel intellectual poets of the thirties, since 1940 he has written some fine work for the BBC, notably *The Dark Tower*, with music by Benjamin Britten, and an adaptation in verse of Goethe's *Faust*.

The NZBS production of Louis MacNeice's *The Nosebag* has been directed by William Austin, with Roy Leywood as the Soldier. Station 1YC will broadcast *The Nosebag* on Saturday, October 16, at 9.30 p.m., and it will be heard later from other National stations.



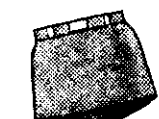
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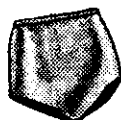
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