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SIX FEET SIX IN HIS SOCKS

He's a good bloke, even though he's a fair dinkum Aussie, and not a pig-islander like you and me. As he nattered in his hotel room he stretched across the bed, the whole six feet six inches of him in his socks, which were tan-coloured. He couldn't have taken his shoes off to keep the quilt clean because his plates hung down on to the floor almost, so maybe he just liked it that way. maybe he just didn't like being all toggled up in his "gropky mocker," because he had his coat off and his tie off, too. He rolled his smokes, one after another, with thick tissues.

"IN the course of my long and somewhat chequered career," said Chips Rafferty, "I've had forty-two jobs. I've been a signwriter, a goldminer, name any job on a cattle or sheep station and I've done it; I've been a sailor on a trading schooner up the Islands. I've worked on the radio, the films, the stage, T.V., I've been sucker-bashin' and I've . . ."

"You've been what?" we asked, thinking maybe a sucker-basher was a sort of bluegum coshboy.

"Not that kind of sucker," he said. "Sometimes trees start growing little suckers down near the bottom. Now that's not a good thing for a tree to start doing, growing suckers near the bottom. So you bash the suckers off and ringbark the diseased trees, which up and die."

"Then on Darling Downs once I had the job of keeping sheep away from a

well during a drought. The owner was getting eaten off by rabbits and he poisoned the well so that when the rabbits came down to drink, which they don't usually, but only in droughts, they died. Whew! You never smelt anything like it."

He got off the bed, ambled across to the window and stood watching the traffic going up and down the street six stories below. "That's quite a drop," he said.

"What were you doing on the trading schooner—were you a deckhand?"

He looked disgusted. "Me! No. I was the owner's offside. I did a bit of navigation. Where did we trade? Up the Arafura."

"The Arafura?"

He looked even more disgusted. "The Arafura Sea is through the Torres Straits and between New Guinea and Australia—I hope you know where that is."

"We've heard tell," we said, "but how did you get into films?"

"Now that's the craziest story you ever heard of," he said. "I lit out from my hometown in Broken Hill when I was 17 and knocked around for ten years. Finally I made Sydney, meaning to buy me a boat and sail on right round the world. But I didn't have the dough. So instead I bought me a share in a small wine selling business."

"Now, we had a Greek for a customer and he owned a restaurant. Then one day when I was thinking of going bush again, this Greek introduced me to the assistant casting director for the film *Ants in Your Pants*. They wanted some-

one long, like me, so I got the job. Cobber, that part was so small if you blinked you missed me. After that came *Forty Thousand Horsemen*. I had all sorts of plans, but war broke out and for my sins I did four and a half years in the Air Force."

He took time off from working out his sins to play in *The Rats of Tobruk*, and then came *The Overlanders*, which really put Chips Rafferty in the public eye. He played in several other films in Australia, England and the United States, and is now making films of his own. Right now, he is touring New Zealand with his second, *King of the Coral Sea*. Three of his radio features, the BBC programme *Australian Bush Ballads*, and the Australian productions, *The Sundowner* and *Chips*, have been broadcast here.

We talked about New Guinea ("If I was younger I'd go there and make a million"), his next film ("A group of people who go through incredible adventures in New Guinea before they get what they want—and I'm not telling you what that is"), the cost of making films ("Cobber, you need hay!"), and going to the films ("I don't go for pleasure—I keep saying to myself, 'Now that's a good shot,' or 'I wouldn't have cut there,' and when it's all over I come out and wonder what it was all about").

As we were leaving he told us about his shirts. "The laundry in Sydney didn't get them to me in time and now I've got to write the wife telling her where to send them—woe is Chipsey."

It seemed that even film stars have their troubles.

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The Orchestra

COMING UP FOR AIR

THE Proms are over and by all accounts a good time was had by all. This has been some of the brightest playing we have had from the Orchestra in its summer seasons. Not the least happy aspects of the concerts were the wide and enjoyable array of soloists and the innovation of guest conductors in three of the four cities, receiving the Orchestra, as it were, on their home grounds. It is this sort of thing that makes one remember again that the Orchestra is not only National but local. It belongs in heart and mind to the place in which it is playing.

This week, however, the Orchestra is girding up its heart and mind, tightening its belts and bows and getting a fresh wind for the big round of concerts ahead of it—subscription concerts, visits to the provincial towns, school concerts, studio broadcasts. Between now and November the Orchestra will visit 15 places for some 67 concerts, playing an imposing repertoire of works. This is to say nothing of the studio broadcasts which it manages to fit in throughout the year. As you can see, however enjoyable it may seem to spend one's time tripping along musically from bar to bar, an orchestral player's life is by no means all beer and skittles.

Next week the Orchestra will be taking time off from rehearsal of concert programmes to do a studio broadcast under the baton of W. H. Walden-Mills (March 15, 2YC and 4YC). A newcomer to New Zealand, Mr. Walden-Mills

was appointed—last year, if I remember rightly—director of music at King Edward Technical College, Dunedin, following in the footsteps of Dr. Vernon Griffiths and Frank Calloway. Having been through Kneller Hall, the British Army college of music, Mr. Walden-Mills knows his instruments well. The Kneller Hall man is not just a bandman but a musician who has had to undertake a comprehensive study of practical musicianship. I had the pleasure of attending one of the evening symphony rehearsals at the King Edward Technical College. It was obvious that W. H. Walden-Mills knew what he wanted from the music and how to get it from the players.

His programme with the Orchestra will include Dvorak's *Carneval Overture*, Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings*, Beethoven's *Symphony No. 7*, and the prelude to *The Mastersingers*. We must have a look at the Dvorak and the symphony next week, but, glancing at the Barber *Adagio*, prompts the reflection that so many composers, almost all those of distinction, no matter how many works they write which turn out masterpieces, always seem to produce one that catches the popular fancy. Barber's *Adagio* is, I should think,

easily his most played composition. Well, after all, Sibelius, after looking at the manuscript, remarked: "I am glad to say that I consider this music excellent. It is good art, and especially I like its simplicity."

—Owen Jensen



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