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which rivalled the sun for brightness, came over the hill and descended to the terminus. It was more than the colour, though, that caught the eye, for the car was decorated with wreaths of holly and mistletoe and hung with fragile globes of glass. The residents stared, wide-eyed, waiting for it to come to a halt.

Instead of coming to a stop, the tram proceeded off the ends of the rails and continued slowly down the street, its trolley-pole connected with the improvised wires above, and its wheels cutting deep furrows in the asphalt. Led by Mr. Lysander, the assembled people cheered hilariously, Llewellyn's foot tapped a merry tune on the bell, and Arthur flourished his tickets from the rear.

"How exhilarating is their appreciation," said Llewellyn to himself. "I confess that I am almost intoxicated with pleasure."

He looked ahead, where, it seemed, thousands stood waiting for them. Their cries drowned the chiming of the bell, and some threw streamers and confetti of such hues that even Arthur's pad of tickets appeared pale. Llewellyn smiled as he thought of the streets lined with happy people that they would traverse before they came to the other terminus. Soon they would turn the corner and fresh multitudes would come into view.

Soon they would turn the corner! His breast filled with horror at the thought. They could not turn the corner! Speedily he applied the airbrake, and the tram subsided, hissing impotently into the asphalt.

For a moment the cheering ceased. In the lull Arthur called, "Llewellyn, Llewellyn, what has happened?" He came swinging swiftly down the footboard, the pennies jingling in his pouch.

"Arthur!" cried Llewellyn, "look, a corner. We must go back."

In an instant Arthur understood. He paled for a moment. Then, as the cheering broke out afresh, his natural good

humour prevailed. "Those before cry forward, and those behind cry back," he misquoted, jestingly.

But the tram would not go back. In spite of all Llewellyn's efforts it was adamant. Neither would it go forward. At last, Llewellyn cried, despairingly, "It is of no avail. Alas, Arthur, that our ambition should come to this."

"It is sad indeed," said Arthur, "but we must not lose hope. Perhaps the Despatcher, apprised of our planks, will send assistance to us."

"Perhaps," said Llewellyn, deep in gloom, "though I doubt the possibility. In fact, Arthur, I fear for our careers."

BUT all was well. The authorities were lenient. At a special board meeting called to discuss the matter, the chairman, Colonel Vern-Starnish, said: "In view of their intentions, I cannot find it in my heart to condemn these men. However, we cannot take the risk of further occurrences of this sort—we have already had a communication from the City Council on the matter of unauthorised power-lines—so I propose that the distracting tramcar concerned should be removed from the service and donated to a museum."

Immediately there were indignant cries of "Shame!" "Oh, cruel!" "What of the men?"

Colonel Vern-Starnish raised his hand. "For the men," he said, "for the men we can take only one step in mitigation. We can offer only the poor substitute of an Inspectorship."

And so it was. Arthur and Llewellyn now pass from tramcar to tramcar, chatting with motormen and exchanging light badinage with the passengers. Despite their position and their gay uniforms, they are still extremely popular. Yet, for all that, they find their happiest moments when, relieved of their duties, they can don their threadbare blue serge again and spend a quiet hour or two in the transport section of the museum.

—PIC

## "Islands of an Island Kingdom"

SO much history gets itself made on the continents and larger land masses that we forget, at times, that anything happens on islands at all (excepting, of course, motion pictures).

Islands are so insular! Things do happen, though, and if we care to look closely enough at what goes on on any small piece of land isolated by water we're likely to see that there's just as much happening there as there is anywhere else. In a new programme for Saturdays at 7.30 p.m., beginning from 12B and 22B on December 29, 32B and 42B on January 12, and 22A on January 26, Bryan O'Brien will tell Frank Simpson's stories of the islands off the coast of New Zealand. Each episode of *Islands of an Island Kingdom* will be self-contained, and the series should be a fine opportunity for New Zealanders to catch up on what goes on around home.



FRANK SIMPSON

BRYAN O'BRIEN

N.Z. LISTENER, DECEMBER 21, 1951.

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