

There's Still Gold in These Rivers

OUR newspaper headlines had begun to look quite disturbing. As far as one could gather there wasn't a sizeable loan to be got anywhere, with the wrong approach you might even have trouble getting an unsizeable one, and if Mr. Horne had stepped off the boat just then—well! In the midst of it all a packet of scripts from the 3YA Talks Officer reached *The Listener* office. This was really a case of stealing a march on listeners at large. With a sotto voce "Eureka!" we chalked up a lunch-hour visit to the hardware merchants as item one in Orders of the Day. The fact is that in four short talks on *Gold Prospecting for Beginners*, which 3YA will broadcast during the next few weeks, W. F. Heinz will not only give an expert's advice on how to win gold—he'll give a pretty good tip, too, on *where* to find it.

Not that Mr. Heinz promises a quick fortune, mind you: "I'm not going to tell you there's easy money in it," he says, "or that you're certain to strike a nugget the size of your fist the first day." But he does say in all seriousness that there are still many areas in Otago and Westland where anyone who's keen and tough can go in his holidays or on his university vacation. And if he takes a pan, a shovel, a miner's pick and what Mr. Heinz calls "a good big stock of assistance and enthusiasm," it won't be hard to find limited areas which it will pay to work.

The gold prospector had his hey-day a hundred years ago, and the story of the great gold rushes which Mr. Heinz sketches in before getting down to business in his first talk is of something like a chain reaction running across the world. It was a prospector from the California rush of 1849—one of the old "forty-niners," as they were called—who noticed when he was in Australia in 1852 that the gravel near Ballarat looked remarkably like the gold-bearing gravel of California. And it was another of the forty-niners—he had tried both California and Ballarat—who, with nothing but his pans and a butcher's knife, picked out seven ounces of gold

in the Waitahuna River area of Otago and started the New Zealand rushes.

But interesting as the past is, Mr. Heinz doesn't linger there, and is soon talking in a very down to earth fashion about what might still be done today in the way of small scale prospecting and claim working. He talks about the three qualities of gold that every prospector has to know and gives for a start a very general picture—just enough to whet the appetite—of the kind of place in which gold is likely to be found.

Methods engage his attention after that—the simplest kind first. The old pan is still used for prospecting all over the world; "that's the way the old timers did it," says Mr. Heinz, "and if I had to travel light in the back country tomorrow to do a bit of prospecting that's the way I'd do it." But once you've found gold in the pan in paying quantities you'd want to use something better than that—a cradle or a "Long Tom," or one of "Tom's" variations, ground-sluicing and paddocking. You'll get your instructions with a word thrown in about black sanding, in the second talk.

"Where you'll find it" is the next topic. With a map in front of you you can draw the "golden line" through the most likely areas of Westland. Soon you'll be as much at home as any sourdough with "colour" and "blue bottom," and with Mr. Heinz you will be walking up creek beds and picking as eagerly as any geologist into the banks.

Last of all will come the question of staking a claim—your "miner's right," water rights and the rest of it, which you won't really need to worry about till you've struck something promising. But there's something else you'll want to hear in that last talk before you make your big decision. Mr. Heinz has already made certain things clear. The processes of getting gold are simple, no very expensive or elaborate equipment is needed, you don't need a lot of skill, which will come with practice. But you've been waiting for a straight answer to the question: Can I make a good living at it? That comes right at the end.

Mr. Heinz has always been interested in mineralogy and geology, particularly in the back country of Canterbury and Westland, where he



N.P.S. photograph
★ GOLD is where you find it—but you have to look for it first, as the old fossicker above is doing.
★ AT RIGHT: W. F. Heinz, whose talks on prospecting as a pastime will be heard from 3YA



PAY DIRT

N.P.S. photograph

★ Recollections of Three Brilliant Women ★



THREE famous women of the recent past will be spot-lighted in the BBC three-talk series *As I Knew Her*, to be heard from 2YA in the 11.0 a.m. *Women's Session* on Fridays, April 18, May 2 and 9. That admirable raconteur, Compton Mackenzie, speaks of Ellen Terry (above, right), recalling the performance of the great actress in such plays as *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Vicar of Wakefield* and *King Arthur*. The memory of Marie Lloyd, England's queen of the music hall during its golden era (above left), is honoured by W. Macqueen-Pope, present historian of the London stage. In the third talk in this series, Harold Nicolson speaks of Virginia Woolf (centre), detailing some of the events in her career and throwing new light on the circumstances which caused her to end her life. On April 28 2YC will begin broadcasting a parallel BBC series, *As I Knew Him*, to be heard each Monday evening.

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