

formed invaluable service under trying conditions for months on end in escorting important convoys of troop-transports and supply ships.

In January, 1942, H.M.N.Z.S. "Monowai" engaged an enemy submarine in Fijian waters. The former opened fire, which was returned by the enemy. No hits were made by either side, and six minutes later the submarine broke off the action and submerged. This was the first and only occasion on which the "Monowai" was in action. Her ratings included many young hands, all of whom showed great steadiness under fire.

During the operations which resulted in the capture of New Georgia and adjacent islands in the Solomon Islands, "Leander," operating in a United States Task Group, took part in several highly successful night actions against Japanese destroyers. The work of the New Zealand ships in the South Pacific area was highly praised by the United States Navy authorities. Admiral C. W. Nimitz, Commander-in-Chief United States Pacific Forces, expressed to "Leander" and "Achilles" his appreciation of the "splendid manner in which every task assigned has been carried through to a successful conclusion. Well done!"

Notable in the recent major expansion of the Royal New Zealand Navy was the commissioning of H.M.N.Z.S. "Gambia," a modern light cruiser, which is at present operating under the control of Admiralty. A number of New-Zealand-built anti-submarine minesweepers have been added to the flotillas in recent months. Since September, 1939, there has been a seven-fold increase in the personnel of the R.N.Z.N. But whereas, at the beginning of the war, officers and ratings lent from the Royal Navy made up 40 per cent. of the total number, their proportion at the end of March 1944 had declined to 6 per cent. Of the total personnel at the latter

date approximately 28 per cent. were serving with the Royal Navy.

This narrative is necessarily, but a restricted and wholly inadequate survey of the outstanding performances of the ships of the Royal New Zealand Navy. As has been shown, their services have ranged from the South Pacific to the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean and across the wide expanses of the South Atlantic. The "Achilles" circum-navigated the Continent of South America during her first memorable war cruise.

It remains only to mention briefly the world-wide service of those New-Zealanders—numbering to-day not far short of 3,000—doing duty in ships of the Royal Navy. They are serving in battle-ships, aircraft-carriers, cruisers, destroyers, submarines—in fact, in warships of every type and in every sea throughout the world where the enemy is likely to be found. There are nearly 700 New-Zealanders in the Fleet Air Arm and, as was recently revealed, a number of them took a considerable part in the successful bombing of the German battleship "Tirpitz."

New-Zealanders, too, were serving in several ships which played a prominent part in the hunting-down and destruction of the German battleship "Bismarck" in the North Atlantic in May, 1941, and the "Scharnhorst" in the far north Barentz Sea on December 26, 1943.

New Zealand officers and ratings have served and are still serving in ships that have taken part in numerous other actions and in escorting Atlantic, Mediterranean, and North Russia convoys. The naval forces of Great Britain and the Dominion have been the main support and safeguard of the nation's prodigious war effort since December, 1939, and to that end the Royal New Zealand Navy has contributed in full measure.

