

time, he had to work the lines. The family was too poor, their standard of living too low, to eat the fish they caught. The only alternative to fishing was work on the heavily cultivated farms. Here the hours were as long, the work as tedious, the returns as poor, the prospects as gloomy. Marianna's brothers emigrated to the United States, and left him and the parents behind. By the time Marianna was old enough to be allowed a permit to join them, the emigration laws had been tightened as hard as Marianna's belt. So he caught the next ship to New Zealand. He's been here for twenty years now and he's grown to love this country and to appreciate its ways of living. He wants to visit his parents on a six months' holiday, but he will never return permanently to his native land. He has no wish to. Marianna's history is typical of many of the fishing men at Island Bay.

An afternoon of sailing through still waters; it was possible we would run into a shoal of that precious bait and be able to fill the dozens of crates before dusk. Behind us the dinghy flopped and jiggled through our wash, straining at its tow rope, always following. In it the fine-meshed net was stacked ready for use. No time would be lost if sardines were seen. Two o'clock, three o'clock, four o'clock . . . the crew lounged on the deck, eyes on the water, in the sky, watching either for a continuing ripple

or for gannets working. Either would show the presence of sardines.

But we had no luck. We sailed in and out of the many bays, large and small, all beautiful, that make Queen Charlotte Sound, round islands, past spits and promontories. There would be a house, then a few miles on another house, and then another, all tucked snugly and peacefully into those bays like cats asleep on coloured cushions. Behind them the hills, rising high and steeply, are covered mostly with thick impenetrable bush. Where they are not there is bare rock, sliding boulders, little grass.

We arrived in Fishburn Bay an hour after we had intended because of misdirection by one of those sheep-farmers. The helmsman of a launch towing a barge full of furniture put us right. Sardines were in the water as we sidled in. Away flashed the dinghy, net into the water, launch standing by: but it was too late. The shoal had moved on, it was the last of it we had seen. We cursed the farmer for the hour that he had made us waste.

"Just black with sardines, a moving mass. You could have walked over them," said the Fishburn Bay farmer when he pulled out for a chat, a cup of tea, and some tobacco. This "black moving mass" that was here a few hours ago, the night before, all the week up to now, was a story we were to hear a dozen times in a dozen bays. In the end it was a joke. We would stop our



*Lines are baited for a proper run.*