

Yugoslavs, and escaped prisoners of war from every Allied nation, together with a fair sprinkling of German deserters. In order to understand Italy's present and future problems it is necessary fully to grasp the fact that, politically, Italy

is chaotic, that at the moment there are few, even amongst Italians, who understand the tasks which face them in their new Risorgimento. The truth is that at least twenty years have demoralized Italy.



NEW ZEALAND TREES

CABBAGE TREE

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EMINENTLY CHARACTERISTIC of New Zealand scenery other than the densely forested areas is the ti, or cabbage-tree. This tree and its invariable associate in damp places, the New Zealand flax, forms a background that at once stamps the scene as belonging to this country. Its straight trunk or trunks, large heads of grass-like leaves, and clusters of small flowers give it an appearance not unlike the dragons' blood tree of West African Islands. The cabbage-tree has a striking and pleasing appearance, and hence is extensively used for ornamental purposes. It is to be seen in shrubberies, in gardens adjacent to dwellings, and in streets. It has been introduced to other parts of the world, and thrives in climates similar to that of New Zealand. For example, it is common in the south of England and in California. In San Francisco is a street named Palm Avenue, the "palms" being our familiar cabbage-trees.

The name "cabbage" tree seems to have been applied to the ti because the leaf buds provided for the early settlers a substance that could be cooked and eaten in the place of green vegetables. It is hardly a suitable name; but "cabbage-palm" would be worse because it is misleading, the ti not being a palm but a member of the lily family.

In the stem of a cabbage-tree there is no wood in the ordinary sense because one of the characteristics of the monocotyledons or plants with single-seed leaves, to which the lily family belongs, is that the wood cells are arranged in separate bundles in a pith-like tissue. For the Maori this pith provided an important starchy food and the leaves a useful fibre.

