

The harness-room, with a peg for everything, is neat, the leather shining and supple. On the stall floors the straw is thick and yellow in its freshness. A first-class stable is run to routine, seven days a week, under unquestioned discipline. It has to be. Horses are valuable animals, worth thousands of pounds; and the closer they are to perfect fitness the easier it is for something to go wrong with them. Every care has to be taken. And one of the first cares is cleanliness. In the sunshine of the doorway the stable cat sits for a moment licking herself—she's heard about this cleanliness business. Then she hurries away to her kittens: she has to lick them, too.

This racing stable day starts in the night—at 4 a.m. A cup of tea, clean out the boxes, prepare the horses; there's no time to be lost when the boys have got to be at the course before 6 o'clock with four of the horses. No breakfast for either animals or men until after the schooling. After the meal the horses already exercised are turned out in the grass, the other three taken to the course. At midday there is oats and chaff (always thoroughly sieved), after which all the

horses are turned out until 2.30. There follows now the grooming (or dressing)—an hour a day for each horse: they're brushed, stropped, and massaged; feet are attended, manes and tails combed and brushed. At 4 o'clock is the afternoon tea snack of cut grass and hay, followed at 5 with a main meal of oats and chaff, after which the horses are watered and clothed in their night rugs. A long day finishes with inspection and more water at 8 o'clock. Once a month there is a visit to or from the blacksmith; and at least twice a year a horse dentist makes a call. In addition, there is road exercise work; care of harness; upkeep of stables and property; and time off, if you're lucky, to read the paper.

The afternoon sun was warm. Across the miles of the Wairarapa Plains the Tararuas were as blue as smoke from a musterer's billy fire. Ted was showing us over the five acres and nine paddocks of the stable property. What wonderful feed. Ted left us to hoe his onions in the vegetable patch. But he knows more than his onions. In the morning he was taking Royal Victor to the races. We were going along, too. Rufus browsed quietly across the fence.

PIPE-LINE TO BATTLE

Supplying Water to a Desert Army

By Major PETER RAINIER in *The Listener*, England, July 27, 1944

IN 1940 the British General Staff was faced with the necessity of maintaining an army in the waterless areas of the Egyptian western desert. The water-supply was the greatest problem: water, the one essential without which no army could exist. One gallon of water for each man's daily ration, and half a gallon daily for the radiator of each vehicle. At that time the Army of the Nile numbered only a few thousands of men and was being supplied with water from the City of Alexandria in tank cars along the single-track desert railway. But, to hold the vital Middle East, that little army must be expanded many-fold and the desert railway would be completely incapable

of supplying the great convoys of reinforcements which were already converging on Egypt from Great Britain and the Dominions. So the Staff decided to build a pipe-line from the Nile Delta out into the desert and pump their water up to the battle-line. I was selected to build this water system, and for almost three years I was in charge of the water-supply.

I moved out into the desert with two subalterns and a dozen sappers. I had no intention of undertaking the laying of 100 miles of pipe with such a small force. They were only my staff: labour was what I needed now. The pipe must be buried—that meant 100 miles of ditch. The pipe must be distributed