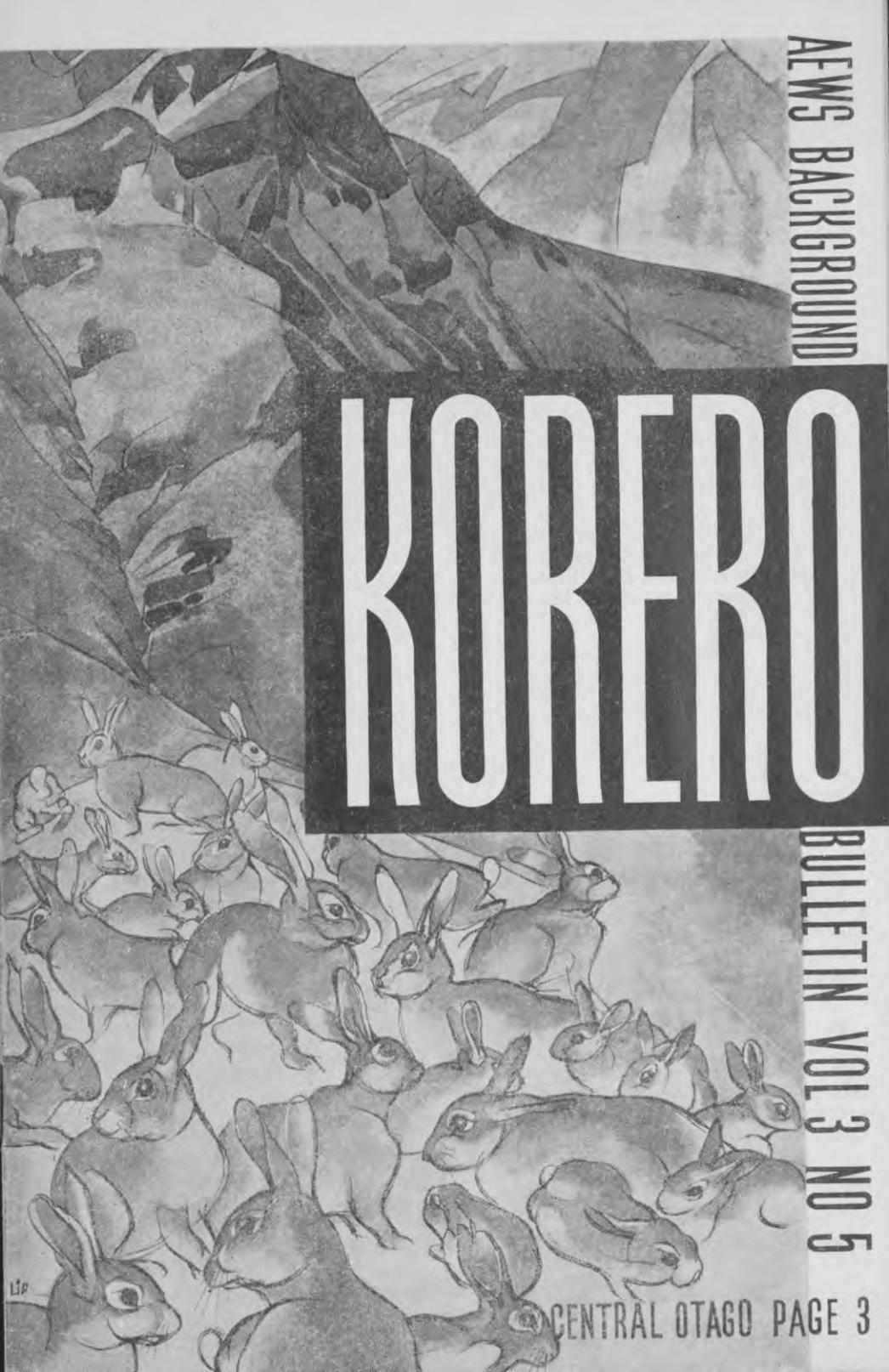


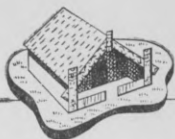


AEWS BACKGROUND

KORERO

BULLETIN VOL 3 NO 5

CENTRAL OTAGO PAGE 3



KORERO

IN THIS ISSUE

	PAGE		PAGE
CENTRAL OTAGO: The first of a group of three articles in the series on New Zealand to-day ..	3	QUESTION AND ANSWER: Some rehabilitation information..	19
CHINA—TWO POINTS OF VIEW: This article, to be followed by a second, is by Professor G. W. Keeton, formerly Reader in Law and Politics at Hong Kong University	9	BOOK REVIEW: "Gunner Inglorious" by J. H. Henderson ..	21
EAST, WEST, WHAT'S BEST: Wine-making in Italy..	15	THE RAFT: A short story by Kendrick Smithyman ..	22
		THE MERCHANT NAVY: By Sydney D. Waters ..	26
		THE FATHERLAND: This story, by Jim Henderson, won first prize in <i>Korero's</i> recent competition	30

Contributions to Korero

You are reminded that a maximum sum of £3, payable in canteen orders where there are canteens under New Zealand control and in cash where there are not, will be divided among contributors in each issue. It is necessary, therefore, that all contributors should send us number, name, and full address. Remember, too, that articles are not the only contributions we are looking for. We would like to see also short paragraphs, black and white drawings, and verse. There is space, too, for your comments and inquiries, provided you keep them short. The address is: "D.A.E.W.S., Army H.Q., Wellington." Mark your envelopes *Korero* in the corner.





COLD MORNING dew, which had settled in beads on the man's whiskers as he waited on the deserted platform, glistened in the yellow flickering of the guard's hurricane lamp; an Australian rum-bottle (empty) was in his hand, another (still sealed) craned from his hip pocket, but his face was pale and pinched with the cold. Without speaking, without, it seemed, even looking, he slouched awkwardly into the light, starting us with the unexpectedness and the quietness of his arrival and, too, by his dishevelled appearance: his clothes were crumpled and loosely hanging, the leather laces of his boots trailed untied, his sleeve was torn, and into the brim of the hat low over his eyes were jammed—of all things—three two-section trip tram tickets (they were unclipped, and, in the middle of Otago Central, likely to remain so). We were running an hour late: he must have had a long wait on that platform, unlighted, deserted, and forlorn of shelter except for the break to the chill wind made by comfortless cream-cans and heaped sacks of potatoes.

Good-day, he said, although it was half-way through the night, and he said it cheerfully, although he looked any-

thing but that. For three days, the stranger continued (although no explanation was needed: it was obvious enough) he had been on the spree; his shearing finished, he had taken the chance to leave his 1,000-acre sheep-run at the back of Drybread for a trip to Ranfurly. His visit, unfortunately (and this with a grin), had extended from one to two, to three days; now his return was urgent—he had to untie his dogs. Waiting for the usual passenger transport meant more wasted time: would there be any objection to his sitting in a spare corner of the van of this night goods as far as Omakau? There wouldn't, said the guard. Our stranger slumped down, he took a swig; soon he was asleep.

We, too, not wanting to wait for the passenger train (which runs three times a week only), had travelled on the night goods, not realizing before we were aboard that the 155 miles from Dunedin to Cromwell, the terminus, took eleven hours, to which must be added, usually, at least another hour for time lost on the way. We steamed from Dunedin Station at 9 p.m., we chugged into Cromwell at 9.30 the next morning; we had stopped, it seemed, at every tenth fence-post (and

often that was all apparently there). The temperature through the night would have made a frog shiver; the floor of the van where we lay with a mail-bag for a pillow was as hard as boards. That night, as we travelled, the South Island seemed to stretch its width until it was as broad as it was long.

A hard floor and cold night air were no more comfortable to the stranger than they were to us. He began to talk and we to listen. His stories were of the sixty years he had lived in Otago Central as a rabbit-trapper, blacksmith, farmer, and soldier (for two weeks he'd been a soldier. Then *they* found he had a bad leg. He couldn't do the quick march, they said. Back to Otago Central he was sent to trap rabbits. It was something he had been sorry about ever since). For grazing, in some parts for cropping too, Otago Central country, with enough rain, was as good as any in New Zealand; usually, however, with the rainfall averaging about 15 in. a year only (and in some parts less) it was too dry. The result was a "country made for rabbits." Daylight was to show us the truth of what he said; our travels in the next week were to prove it beyond doubt. Otago Central is the rabbits' own country; in some back country blocks they share it with nothing, not a person, a sheep, or, it seems, a blade of grass.

This farmer, an old man now with a face like a contour map, who after three days was returning to his run to untie his dogs, was like many other of the "old identities" we were to meet all through Otago Central. They are in every township, not now as active as in their younger days, but more talkative; often they are older than the houses in which they live; sometimes they have been in the district longer than the township; one had planted the tree under which he was sitting, and its shade covered the street. In the van of the train that raw morning the old man told us of madly excited mining days, when gold was often in greater supply than flour, of coaches and bushrangers and sweeping floods, of cooking on a sheep-station when the menu was solely and uninterruptedly mutton, tea (without milk), and sour bread—twenty-one times a week, not

counting morning tea, afternoon tea, and supper, which was tea (without milk) and bread sometimes for a treat cooked, still sour, with currants.

But his concern was not only with the past. If we were thinking of taking up farming in Central his advice was, "Clear out the rabbits and get a good wife. Both were essential. It's no good else—I know, because I did neither. But it's grand country, and Bob Semple has a great head on him for irrigation; that's the thing." He left us in the early morning light to saddle his horse for the journey to his run behind Drybread. "I hate the snow," he said, "and winter's coming on. I'd like to move into a pub for winter quarters; I could take the dogs, a neighbour would have the horses, but what about the sheep?" He growled off.

Morning slammed the sun over the top of high hills. All through a night as black as a musterer's billy we had seen nothing but, occasionally, the black form of black hills, the suggestion of height, the line of flatter country; we had heard the rush of rivers and pounded over bridges. Miles had passed without a light. Between stations, at times, the distance had seemed never-ending. Without seeing, we had groped through the districts of which Middlemarch, Hyde, Ranfurly, Wedderburn, and Ida Valley are the main centres.

With daylight came transformation. We were in a new world. In no other part of New Zealand is there anything similar; and what we saw was typical of Otago Central except in and round the towns and where irrigation, bringing the softer colour of live trees and green growth, had relieved this unrelenting ferocity of Nature.

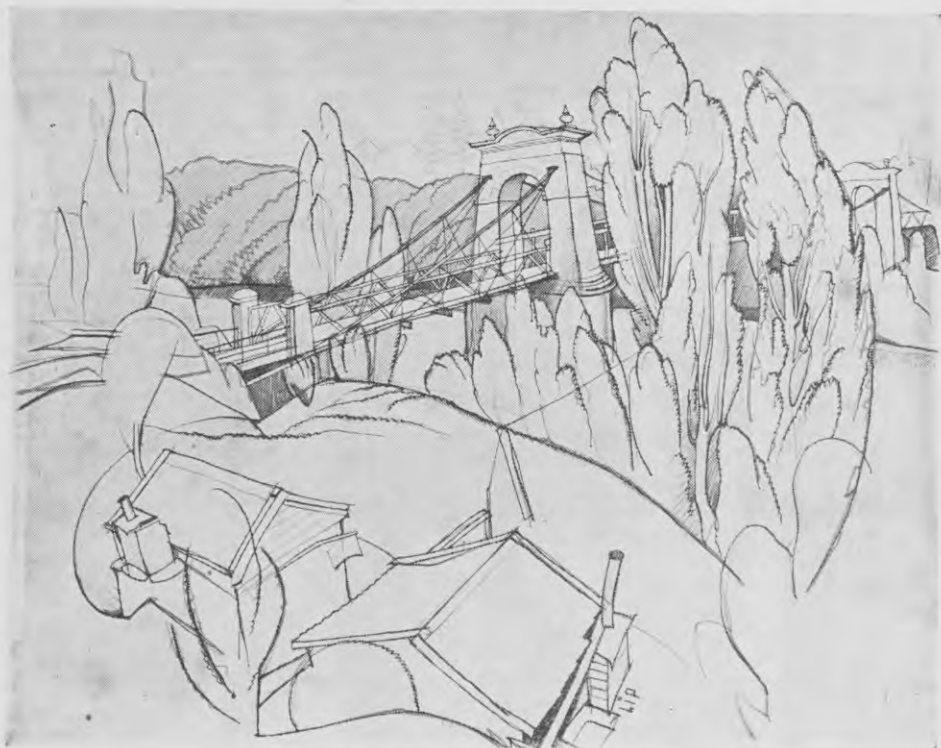
On all sides huge ugly blocks of hills and mountains jagged into a sky that seemed to have drawn back fearfully. Giant crocodiles or prehistoric monsters with armour-plated backs, they lay not stirring, waiting, it seemed, for their victims; the smashed gulches and torn-out valleys were the eyes, the high-flung razor ridges the teeth. None of the majesty of New Zealand mountain scenery was to be seen that morning, but the effects were certainly no less striking;

there was no smooth roundness, these ranges pierced upwards and outwards with huge bites and unsymmetrical leaps of rock. Between the peaks and stretching from the foot of one range to the foot of another lay flat dry plains.

The strength and power of the scene brings you to a stop. Looking from even a short distance away there is no sign of vegetation, no tussock or grass, not even gorse or blackberry, nothing more than a solitary stunted tree—it seems to be petrified and lifeless. Through fire-bars of early morning clouds the sun strikes down into a clear hard atmosphere on to rock which is bleached, flayed raw and bare with the heat. In the sunshine this expanse has a blinding brilliance in which there is no leavening of colour, no reds, yellows, or blues : the only relief is from the deep splashes of black shadow where the sun has not yet risen high enough to reach. As far as we can see, for miles,

there is no relenting in the scene, no change or difference : there are no houses or buildings nor sign of human life, and the steel railway track with its bridges and cuttings and embankments, with this heavily puffing engine and long line of trucks and vans, has no significance in this country. It's a land for giants and dragons, not toy clockwork trains.

But close at hand there is life to be seen, especially near the thinly flowing deep-cut rivers and creeks. We were riding in the engine now, and after twisting sharply through steep turns we would run into a straight to find the gullies of the hillsides on either side of us moving and shimmering like the leaves of a tree in a slight breeze. Sloping banks seemed to slide as the rumbling engine came abreast. But the movement was neither wind nor leaves ; it was the scampering of rabbits. At times a whole hillside would slither upwards and over its own crown. Even



On the road from Roxburgh to Alexandria.

in a small area they were beyond counting; if you were not accustomed to Otago Central, they were beyond believing. They were there thicker almost than rice in a pudding, thicker than stars in the sky; beyond counting, but there could be no doubt of their millions; whole hillsides of rabbits. Cheekily, knowing no fear, they sat on their tails and flicked their ears as we rattled past. Once when the driver, amused at our wonder, pulled on the whistle violently as we turned a bend, the hillside flashed; a second later it looked like a table from which a coloured rug had been quickly jerked. "They're so cheeky; that's what gets me," said the fireman, and he threw a lump of coal at two large eyes between two large ears; the buck hardly shifted position.

But it's not possible; what do they eat? Each other? How do they live? we asked. A few miles on we stopped at a siding for a faster fruit train from Alexandra to pass; we climbed over the fence and up the side of a hill to find it not as completely bare as it looked. It wasn't grass, but it wasn't exactly not grass; it was like a thin, shabby, loose hair, a bit here, a bit there. The hills there support about one timorous sheep and one million fearless rabbits to each 10 acres.

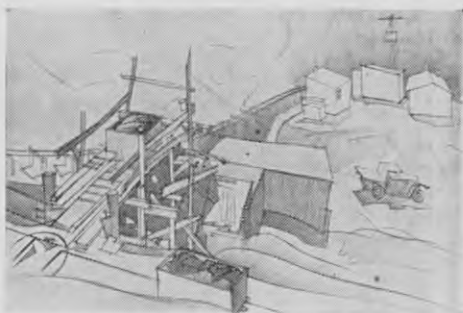
This is a strange part of New Zealand, we thought, feeling the way of Robinson Crusoe after he had seen a footprint on the beach one Friday morning.

*

Early colonization of New Zealand was first to the North Island in spite of fewer Maoris in the South and treeless country already clear for ploughing; it was not until after the trouble caused by Busby's lack of power, the confusion rising from the arrival of Wakefield's first settlers in Wellington and the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, the Wairau massacre, the weak governorship of Fitzroy, and the First Maori War that the South was thought of seriously. Colonists landed at Port Chalmers in 1848, at Lyttelton a year later. However, several years passed before exploration was carried far inland from the coast; until 1856 when a survey party journeyed fifty miles from the edge of the then-settled country nothing was

known of the interior except from stories by Maoris of wide stretches of open country and lakes at the head of the Molyneux River. Settlement began soon after the information gained was made known, and after regulations, legalized at that time, allowed land outside the original Otago Block to be bought for grazing-runs at a low cost. (Runholders were allowed 80 acres for the homestead block with 10 acres for each out-station.) Pasture (before the introduction of rabbits—they were first liberated to provide sport and distraction from hard work) was good; by 1861 the greater part of Otago Central had been sliced into huge blocks for sheep-runs. Slowly pastoral runs improved; the building of homesteads increased. For a time runholders enjoyed prosperity.

After 1856 efforts to attract colonists to Otago were made; and to encourage emigrants to the south of the "Middle Island" rather than to the north or the North Island pamphlets were printed and made available throughout the British Isles. With some of them the information was obscure and the wording quaint. How much was known of the interior of the province where settlers were asked to voyage across the sea to make their homes is obvious. "Lakes (one of the pamphlets says)—there are three lakes in the interior, but their existence, and position on the map, rest solely on Native testimony. Indeed, there is but one Native who has actually seen them . . . (their) proportions, and the surrounding country, are at present shrouded in mystery." "About the



The mine-head at Bannockburn.

atmosphere," the pamphlet continues, "there is a purity and lightness of which persons newly landed are quite sensible, producing a buoyancy and elevation of spirits which they never before experienced. All children landed or born here convey to the mind of the physiologist the most satisfactory evidence of the salubrity of the climate. The child of the poor man never knows what it is to want wholesome food." Many of the scenes are so striking or magnificent that they "may indeed be looked upon, but cannot be described."

Under the heading of Natives (not once is the word Maori used) the pamphlet says the country had but recently been adapted to people of agricultural and pastoral pursuits—"Of this there are many evidences, the most wonderful of which is the sudden decrease of the aborigines during the last half-century." The aborigines (or aboriginals, as later they are called) are reported to profess Christianity, "many of them understanding its leading truths, and all of them manifesting the greatest veneration for the Sabbath . . . The settler of the Middle Island has nothing to fear from man, beast, or reptile."

The picture painted by the pamphlet must have been particularly attractive to women. "And ladies," it says, "who are willing to fill the place for which Nature originally intended them, will find unfailing sources of amusement in the dairy, the kitchen, the fruit and flower garden, or, if this fail, in watching tenderly over the young olive plants of a well-filled nursery; for while children are a source of wealth and happiness in Otago, they are not infrequently one of anxiety and fear in Britain." Advice is given to the male emigrant that he "should provide himself with a *really useful* woman for his wife . . ." And, "But ladies are very scarce, and those who are now shooting up to womanhood can always select a good husband out of four or five applicants; for the Statistics of 1856 show that there is a discrepancy in the sexes of five hundred, and the only way of remedying this unfortunate defect is for the parents to give us of their daughters, as the Israelites once did to the tribe of Benjamin . . .", and so on.



On Lawrence's Main Street.

A contract organized by the local Government and a firm in the colony enabled emigrants to be landed on the jetty at Dunedin with a cost for the voyage of only £16 for adults and £8 for children. "The Scale of Dietary" (framed on the most liberal principles), as the allowance of rations was called, with its salt beef and pork, biscuit, preserved potatoes and carrots, lime-juice, and a restricted quantity of water, in these days of luxury liners, modern refrigeration, and six-course meals, is interesting rather than attractive.

After the discovery between 1858 and 1861 of small quantities of gold, miners and prospectors began to drift into Otago Central. Gabriel Read's discovery in 1861, and the rich find of Hartley and Reilly the next year swept the drift into a flood that covered the country with men, and some women; a few were practical miners with experience of the Australian and Californian fields, the many had never before seen even the colour of natural gold, but all were eager and determined to make an easy fortune. Inexperience, shortage of food, unaccustomed severity of climate, and tough almost trackless country caused, at first, all but unendurable hardship, widespread suffering, and many deaths. Many returned in despair. But their places were quickly taken; more valuable fields were found; gold poured in.

Gold worth more than £7,000,000 was packed from the district in the four years after 1861. The greatest number of miners on the fields, in 1864, has been estimated at more than fifteen thousand

(and the population of Dunedin was about six thousand). As the pamphlet would have stated, "ladies were even more scarce, and those who are now shooting up to womanhood can always select a good husband out of four or five hundred applicants." Of the huge population, less than two hundred, at one time, were women. By 1865 the days of the rushes were over. Several thousand diggers left for other fields. Those remaining built themselves homes, settling to a more comfortable if less exciting way of living; often they divided their time and labour between sluicing and farming the land they had bought; some returned to the trades they had forsaken for the early rushes. Gold, however, continued to pour into the banks. An era of dredging, which started in the "seventies" and reached full force about 1900 and which has still not ended, replaced sluicing. From 1857 to 1927 gold valued at nearly £31,000,000 was exported from Otago fields.

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Venison and wild pork were on the menu for dinner at the pub at which we stayed in Cromwell. In the bar were a refrigerator and a fuel stove from which pipes had been led round the wall for steam heating. They were an indication of the extremes of summer heat and winter cold, of the variation in temperature of from more than 100°F. down, at times, to nearly zero. On the walls were the Lawson Woods cartoon of a group of policemen; a picture of a rooster and two fowls with the caption "Ginger Breasted Old English Reds," a modernistic study, done with an

airbrush, of a gazelle; and several stock-firm advertisements. Beer—and the practice in the district seemed to be general—was sold in medium-sized glasses for 6d.; there were no handles. Upstairs in the lounge was a case of strangely assorted books, including Isadora Duncan's autobiography (in the back of which was the annual report and balance-sheet for 1935 of the New Zealand Croquet Association), "How to Win at Cards," the second volume of Tolstoy's "War and Peace," James M. Cain's "The Postman Always Rings Twice" (without a cover), and three copies of "Love in Chains."

Cromwell, pleasantly situated at the conflux of the Molyneux and Kawarau Rivers, is rather like that collection of books. In the districts round the township are heaps of tailings which have laid waste to the land, deserted mining shafts, orchards with the latest available in frost-fighting equipment, lignite-coal mines, a gold-dredge which is described as the largest in the Southern Hemisphere and which uses one-third of the entire output of a power-station, a cemetery close to the town in which the old-timers were buried and in which the average age of death for both men and women is probably under thirty years, a swimming-bath, and a war memorial. There is the old and the new, the usual and the unusual. Surrounding it all is that countryside with its appearance of fierce heat and the gullies towards the hill tops even in the middle of summer packed tight with snow. "Boy, it's just like home," a soldier on leave said one morning, and he stood looking. He was a United States Marine, and he came from Colorado.



CHINA: TWO POINTS OF VIEW.—I

By G. W. KEETON, in *The Fortnightly*, January, 1945

Professor Keeton was formerly Reader in Law and Politics at Hong Kong University, and his books include "The Development of Extra Territoriality in China" (1928) and "China, the Far East and the Future" (1942). The second article, by Jack Chen, will be published in our next issue.

THE TERMINATION of General Stilwell's command, and the ensuing statements in the United States and China, have emphasized that all is not well with Chinese Nationalism. After seven and a half years of war, fought under every imaginable difficulty, it would be miraculous if everything was going smoothly. The fact that China is still maintaining some kind of resistance to Japan is in itself, in the circumstances, a notable achievement, yet the recent difficulties have led to a disturbing crop of rumours that the Nationalists are finished, that no considerable effort is being made to resist the Japanese, and that Chinese Nationalism is really Fascism in disguise. Such wild exaggerations are essentially mischievous, and they are a poor tribute to the political sagacity of Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt, both of whom have persistently addressed General Chiang Kai-shek as the leader of a world Power.

For all that, it is clear that China is to-day facing a major crisis which requires prolonged study and bold treatment. For that reason, it is unfortunate that our news from Chungking is necessarily scanty and that it only filters to us through the medium of two censorships and in such a form that its significance is in danger of being lost in transit. In spite of these difficulties, however, it is essential to reach some conclusion upon such questions as: Is China a democracy? Is she a world Power? Is she really one State, or two States, or a collection of autonomous regions?—if for no other reason than that China's continued and increasingly effective collaboration in the Far Eastern war is a necessary condition of an allied victory within a reasonable space of time.

The end of one important era in Chinese history came with the outbreak of the Revolution in 1911, for it was at that date that the rule of the Manchus dissolved. Since then, China has been struggling to re-establish unity and stability. Judged by Chinese standards, thirty-three years is not a long time for such a struggle to continue. When dynasties have collapsed in the past, the ensuing disintegration has often continued for half a century, and sometimes for as long as nearly two. Yet always in the past, unity has been eventually regained. Failure to recover it would have involved not only China, but much of the Far East, in chaos, for until the nineteenth century China was the centre of an international system which lasted for many centuries, a system for which Japan is now crudely attempting to substitute her own "co-prosperity sphere," thus defying at once geography and history. One of the main sources of political instability in the Far East during the past century has been the steady decay of Chinese strength, thereby exposing wide contiguous areas to foreign domination. For that reason, the best hope of prolonged peace in the Far East after the defeat of Japan is to be found in a China which is once more prosperous and unified.

Unfortunately, it is now plain that China is going to need a good deal of foreign assistance before she can hope to be either. Have we, then, perhaps been a little premature in saluting Nationalist China as one of the "Big Four"? When asked the question some time ago, President Roosevelt replied that China was undoubtedly potentially a great Power, as well as being a major factor in any Far Eastern peace system, and this is the exact truth.

Unlike Japan, China has very considerable mineral resources, as well as oil ; she grows practically all the valuable crops, especially cotton, rice, and tea ; and she has a population which is second to none in its capacity for endurance and hard work. Yet none of these things is of considerable value unless political stability returns and until sufficient capital is forthcoming to build factories and mills, open new mines, and, above all, to construct a vast network of roads and railways, for lack of which China even to-day hardly feels herself to be a nation at all.

As in a number of other Asiatic areas, there is a serious population problem, but it is not one which requires the drastic remedy of large-scale migration, and, even if it did, there are wide areas of China which are sparsely populated. On the other hand, industrialization and improved methods of agriculture will remove the population stresses which China is feeling to-day.

There is, however, a major agrarian problem which inevitably affects political developments, including the conduct of the war. The pressure of China's farming population upon the soil is unparalleled elsewhere in the world. For centuries a vast population has been extracting every available ounce of foodstuffs from it, so that to-day the soil is impoverished. The situation has been made worse by the destruction of forests over wide areas to supply fuel. New methods of farming, preferably on a larger scale than are generally practised, are required, but so long as things remain as they are the impoverished peasantry must continue to till their 2, 3, or 4 acres with archaic implements. In some parts of China the small farmer owns his farm, but more commonly he is only a tenant, and the landlord and the money-lender between them exact such a heavy toll from his scanty earnings that it is difficult for him to support his family even in settled times, whilst as a purchaser of manufactured goods he scarcely exists.

It is upon the agrarian question that the Chinese Nationalists have been most sharply criticized, both in China and abroad. In the decade between their accession to power and the outbreak of

the present war with Japan a serious attempt was made to grapple with it by way of loans, limitation of interest-rates, and other means ; but even at that time they were regarded as inadequate measures by many, and recently the effort to improve things for the farmer appears to have been abandoned altogether.

On the contrary, he suffers under a load of wartime taxation, often collected in kind, with periodic requisitions for labour service and allied evils. Apart from the fact that the difficulties of pursuing agrarian reform when a substantial part of the country is in Japanese occupation are obvious, it is nevertheless true that the Chinese Nationalist Party (the Kuomintang) includes practically the whole of the landlord class within its ranks, and these have gained in power as a result of the loss of the ports and the dissipation of much of the wealth of those who engaged in the foreign trade. In Chungking the importance of the farmer class is much more evident than it ever was in Nanking.

Contrasted with this irresolution, the policy of the Chinese Communists is vigorous and easily understood. Before the present war they were insistent that the peasantry should enjoy the ownership of their holdings. This would involve the expropriation of the landlords, virtually without compensation. It may possibly be that they will revert to this policy when the war is over, but at present, in the areas under their control, they are content to reduce rents and taxes and to put an end to the depredations of the money-lenders. This policy has won them the enthusiastic support of the peasantry, without alienating the more progressive landlords, as a correspondent recently pointed out in two special articles in *The Times*. Bearing this in mind, therefore, it is not difficult to see how Chinese Nationalism may be losing ground with the rank-and-file, or why the term "reactionary" is being increasingly used to describe some of its leaders. That may be a justified criticism, but it does not in itself warrant the use of fiercer descriptions, any more than the influence of big business in the American Republican party or in our own Conservative party does. The basic assumption of

eventually the Communists were compelled to undertake their famous march to Shensi, where they have been established ever since.

Fighting between the two wings of the Chinese Revolution continued intermittently until 1937, when the imminence of war with Japan led to a truce, and collaboration for national defence.

After seven and a half years of war, however, enthusiasm for collaboration is wearing thin on both sides, and neither party has so far abated its pretensions to be the sole architect of China's future. This is more than a matter of prestige. It is the direct consequence of the doctrines to which each party adheres. It is important that Western critics should appreciate this. The issue is not, as it was in Great Britain in 1940, whether the Left Wing party will join the Government, but which of two rival



philosophies is to prevail, with the accompanying possibility of a complete exclusion of the other from China.

Even the limited collaboration for prosecution of the war against Japan has created new problems. The Communists are based upon Yenan, but most of their activities are prosecuted by guerrilla warfare far behind the Japanese lines. The Nationalists complain that in these activities the Communists have excluded Nationalist influence, so that as China is progressively liberated increasing areas will come under Communist control. The Communists retort that Nationalist China has not paid their armies the promised subsidies, has withheld practically all supplies, and maintains a large and well-equipped army on the borders of Communist territory for the purpose not of fighting the Japanese, but of observing and checking the Communists. This is an explosive situation which has more than once led to outbreaks of warfare. It has further implications, also. If the Communists were responsible for the liberation of Chahar, Jehol, and Manchuria, they would possess wide and productive territories adjoining those of the Soviet and of Soviet-controlled Outer Mongolia. All parties are conscious of the possibilities of this situation. In the past the attitude of the Soviet to Nationalist China has been a helpful one. It was to the Nationalists that supplies were formerly sent overland. It does not necessarily follow, however, that the Soviet will be as friendly to the Nationalists in the future as she has been in the past.

What can be said of the structure and political outlook of the Kuomintang? It is not the least of the ironies of recent history that a party which, in the early days of its development, was regarded in the West as dangerously Left in its orientation (even after the departure of the Soviet advisers) should now be suspect for asserted Right Wing, or even Fascist, tendencies. Of course, it may be that the party has shifted to this extent during the last sixteen years, but the probabilities are against it, having regard to the fact that the party's programme is based on Dr. Sun Yat-sen's Three People's Principles.

In the first place, it is worth while remembering that so far China has not experienced anything remotely resembling Western democratic government. When the early reformers attempted to establish such a Government after the collapse of the Empire, it dissolved almost without trace. When the Kuomintang came to power, therefore, it declared that democracy (social as well as political) would be achieved in three stages. The first was a purely temporary party dictatorship, which ended almost immediately after the close of the Civil War. The second period was described as the period of political tutelage, during which the State would be governed by a single party—the Kuomintang—and during which certain essential reforms would be achieved, and the people would be progressively prepared and educated for democratic government. It would close with the promulgation of a complete and democratic constitution.

It should be observed (1) that Kuomintang doctrine itself has always freely conceded that the achievement of democracy is one of its main aims, following which the Kuomintang will abdicate its monopolist position and become simply one of several parties operating the constitution; and (2) that a Draft Constitution had been prepared and would in all probability have been put into operation in 1937 but for the war with Japan.

This constitution itself has been criticized as an undemocratic document. It divides government into five sections—legislative, judicial, executive, examination, and control. By the latter term the Chinese understands supervision of other Departments of government, including the duties of audit and impeachment. It is contemplated that the organs discharging each of these functions should be staffed by experts. Above them all will be a People's Political Congress of 2,000 representatives which will meet for about a month every three years.

It is true that this does not look overwhelmingly democratic, but China's experience since 1911 has been a bitter one, and it is worth while comparing that constitutional draft with, say, the present government of India. It can scarcely be

challenged that under this draft real power would be with the executive, but so it is to-day in most democracies; and it is at least arguable that increasing experience would induce the Chinese to extend the sessions of their People's Congress, and possibly also to institute a smaller standing committee meeting at frequent intervals.

Other criticisms, however, attack the Nationalists not for their Draft Constitution, but for the dictatorial regime which now exists. It is perfectly true that to-day the executive, closely allied with the army, wields dictatorial powers. It is perhaps not unexpected, in view of the length of the war and the fact that the Japanese are still advancing. In our own emergency in 1940 we conceded to the Government powers as absolute as those enjoyed by General Chiang Kai-shek's Government, and we are only cautiously withdrawing them. The test is not how much is necessary for the successful conduct of the war, but what may be expected to remain when the war is over. The Draft Constitution furnishes some evidence upon the latter point, and if it contains some provisions strange to the Western eye, China is to be congratulated that she has at last ceased to construct faithful replicas of Western constitutions quite unsuited to Chinese habits of thought. Some of these abortive Chinese constitutions may be found within the pages of scientific journals.

A different, and weightier, criticism is that the Chinese Government does not always use its powers effectively. It is said that corruption, inflation, and military inefficiency abound, and the attitude to foreign officials has become unco-operative. The latter charge is serious, and was directly alleged in the United States at the time of General Stilwell's withdrawal. It is plain evidence that isolation, brought about by Japanese successes, is doing a good deal of harm. Japanese propaganda has fanned racial prejudice and revived the old sense of Chinese superiority, about which the foreigner complained so bitterly last century. Both have been accentuated by the humiliating defeats which Great Britain and the United States suffered in their early encounters with Japan. More re-

cently there has been irritation at the slow progress of operations in Burma, and magnitude of Anglo-American successes, both in Europe and the Far East, has not yet been assessed. When the Western expert talks of Chinese inefficiency and corruption, his Chinese colleague is apt to retort that these are not completely unknown in the west either; although argument of this kind is profitless to either side, and will change nothing in the Sino-Japanese War until supplies are pouring into Chungking either through a port or by a land route. That will at one and the same time allow China for the first time to fight on more equal terms and dissipate the pessimism and discontent which has recently been growing.

China is to-day as much the testing-point of the diplomacy of Great Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union as Poland is. Divergent policies would lead to internal disorder, an irreparable weakness in the Far Eastern security system, and almost certainly another Pacific war. Conversely, an agreed policy in respect of China cannot assist China to compose her own feuds, and to resume her struggle for prosperity, which was interrupted in 1937, but will make it possible to regard China as the pivot of any Far Eastern security system. Conducting an internal political and social revolution, as well as a long-drawn-out war against an invader, has put a strain even upon China's capacity to endure and remain cheerful, and some of the recent pronouncements of her spokesmen show some evidence of frayed tempers. Can anything be done to improve the position.

The only thing which is likely to be decisive is an extension of the recent successes in the Pacific to the Chinese mainland and the opening-up of direct communications with Chungking. The next would be the preparation and initiation of large-scale measures of industrial development with the very greatest speed. In such a framework there would be far better chances of composing the differences between Nationalists and Communists than there are to-day. However much other allied nations may suggest, only the Chinese can compose their differences, and it might be possible for them to do so if the Draft Constitution

with some amendments in favour of additional powers for the People's Congress, could be put into force as soon as China is cleared of the Japanese. It is very doubtful to-day whether Nationalists and Communists can be brought to collaborate more enthusiastically in the political field, but it is not entirely beyond the bounds of possibility to think of China governed by a coalition of groups, some of the elements in which changed from time to time. But no Government which is not prepared to initiate a programme of far-reaching agrarian reforms can hope to command public confidence very long in China when the war is brought to a successful finish.

Meanwhile, even independently of the political and military changes which have followed the termination of General Stilwell's command, Chinese opinion has expressed itself consistently upon the need for considerable political and military progress. Even under the present political system there exists a People's Political Council which, though possessing only limited functions, nevertheless expresses the main currents of Chinese opinion.

This Council has consistently declared the necessity of finding means of achieving closer collaboration with the Chinese Communists. Moreover, the Political Council which is now on the eve of meeting will comprise 290 members, an increase of 50 as compared with previous Councils, and, of the new members, 35 will be elected by the Provisional People's Assemblies of twenty-nine provinces and municipalities. Further, the new Council will exercise the power of scrutiny over the Budget.

These are cautious but encouraging steps forward, and they are evidence of the ultimate intentions of the Kuomintang. Additional measures in the direction of devolution of responsibility could well be taken as the Japanese are driven back. But an analysis of China's present position reveals very clearly that China needs, even more than political democracy, far-reaching measures of economic recovery and development before her major discontents can be removed; and it is here that both Great Britain and the United States can render an enduring service not only to China, but to a lasting peace in the Pacific.

First Patrol, by S/Sgt. L. J. Ferguson, N.Z.T.S. This drawing won second prize in the recent Korero competition.



EAST WEST

What's Best?

By Capt. M. J. MASON M.C.

CAREFULLY PLACING the bunch of grapes on the fruit-dish, my wife remarked: "Aren't they beauties, and so cheap, too? Only 4s. a pound!" Her face wore the pleased look of the thrifty housewife who has had good value for her money.

Obediently I looked at the bowl: they did not look so good to me. Only Barese Sultanas—a common type, of insipid taste. Now, if they had been those luscious Reginas, large as a passion-fruit, shiny as a thoroughbred, and nearly bursting with juice: then there would be something to it. But Barese Sultanas; no, I just was not interested.

The expression on my face must have piqued her. "Yes, I know they're not as good as those you used to get in Italy. But they're jolly nice, and if you won't eat them, Susie and I will."

She and Susie ate then, all right, but they were neither of them as practised as I was. Probably they got about a half between them. You see, they spat out the seeds and skins, and an expert never does that.

It was about eighteen months ago that I learned how the experts ate grapes. Straight after the Armistice with Italy, in September, 1943, in fact. The grape harvesting was in full swing then, and throughout the country labour was scarce. Even grandpa and grandma, usually exempt from work in the fields, had to lend a hand, while the modest contribution of toddlers of four and five was gladly accepted. So when Jim and I arrived at a farm and asked for food and shelter, offering in return to help with the work where we could, we were made very welcome.

Jim Stone and I were escaped prisoners of war. After the collapse of Italy, the Germans had swiftly taken over the various prison camps and had transported the unfortunate inmates to Germany. But Jim and I had had a lucky break *en route*, and some forty miles south of the Austrian border we had managed to jump the train and get away safely. So we were working our way down the peninsula to meet the Allies, and in return for the essentials of life we lent assistance where we could.

When we had offered to help out with the work we had rather visualized doing odd jobs and chores round the farm. We had not bargained on being roped in for the regular work of the place or on putting in the same hours as the regular hands. There is no such thing as the forty-hour week in Italy, or even a half-holiday Saturday: the peasants work from sunrise to sunset, and there is no slacking, either. Rather lucky for us, really, that the day only lasted for about twelve hours. Why, we might have been there in mid-summer, with its sixteen hours of daylight.

But, taken all round, grape-picking is not a bad game at all. There are no thorns or prickles to worry you, and you do not have to pick away for about ten minutes to produce anything worthwhile. And there is a spice of danger to it, too: you never know when you are going to upset a colony of wasps that have chosen a certain bunch as their private larder for the week, and are grimly determined to defend their rations. And, of course, there are compensations, like those for the boy who has been left to mind the sweet-shop for the day.



In actual fact, I must confess, the compensations were about everything to me. Snip! would go the scissors, and a nice, heavy, well-formed bunch would settle comfortably into my hand. Carefully, critically, lovingly, I would examine it, turning it from side to side. There would be the smaller grapes at the bottom of the bunch, and the greener ones at the top. But half-way down was the place. Just there would protrude the best of them all, two or three large, rotund, perfectly ripe, bulging with nectar. Then comes the glorious moment. A quick, practised bite—they are gone, and the luscious fruits go pop! in my mouth, and flood it with sweetness, while with a quick toss I lob the newly ravished bunch into the basket. The flavour lies full and satisfying on my tongue, the juice slips easily down my throat, and is followed a moment later by the seeds and skin.

All this is the accepted thing while picking grapes. Everywhere are to be seen harvesters following the same routine. Snip, inspect, bite, swallow, and toss the bunch in the basket. Not even the children spit out the pips and skins—that is what the amateurs and townspeople do.

But, of course, it is not always as pleasant as that. With types like the

Barese Sultanas, there is little but snipping and tossing. Such kinds have little appeal to the palate of the expert. They are grown primarily for making the common, everyday wines; not for them the honour of being eaten at table or being made into the prize Vermouth for the rich man's cellar.

The people of Italy drink wine almost as we drink tea, and this huge supply is prepared by peasants in countless little farms all over the country, and by broadly the same methods. First off, the grapes are collected and dumped into huge wooden vats about the size of an average country water-tank. When this is full the bottom is carefully plugged, and the crushing commences. Two men, with trousers rolled up above the knees, jump on top of the pile and commence to tread out the juice with their bare feet. Mention of this last fact invariably provokes the query, "Do they wash their feet first?" I am afraid I must disappoint the reader: the answer is, "Yes." But I should add that the water-tap is usually some distance away and they do not as a rule put their boots on for the return trip!

To tell the truth, I was very anxious to settle this vexed question for myself, and watched the preliminaries to the operation with keen interest. I so far forgot my manners, too, as to observe on one occasion, "I suppose the wine would



The juice is trodden out in large wooden vats.

be tainted if you didn't wash your feet beforehand." I received an unexpected reply: "Oh, it wouldn't make any difference at all, the fermentation destroys all impurities." I sincerely hope this is correct, because there seemed to be plenty on them. The grapes themselves are generally dusty and grimy, birds perch on and peck at them, whilst stray bees and wasps feasting on the sweet juice are often trapped amid the berries and finally squashed up with them.

The zealous trampers, their legs stained a bright purple, resume their task, and in due course all the "mosto" is drawn off. The heaviest of the job is now over, and both men thankfully clamber out of the vat and take their rest. Little drops of juice fall from the hairs of their legs to the ground as they savour their leisure and slowly drink the real wine—"a man's drink"—which has been brought specially to refresh them at this particular moment.



The bunches of grapes are taken to the vats in panniers.

After an hour or so of trampling, when about half the vatful of grapes has been trodden over, the first draw-off of juice takes place. The plug at the bottom is carefully removed, and a rather dull, dirty looking liquid flows out. This is called "mosto" and to me is among the most delectable of drinks. It is nothing but pure grape-juice (plus a proportion of impurities!), and is delightfully sweet and palatable. But it does not appeal to the Italians, who, accustomed to drinking the matured article, scornfully refuse it. "Too sweet and no kick," they say. Jim and I always used to come back for a second and a third time. "Ach, these crazy English," they mutter disdainfully, regarding us with a wondering eye, "How can they stomach it? Why, plain water is far better."

There is now little left to do. The stalks and skins, the seeds and pulp, now bereft of the all-important juice, are due for a further crushing: this time a mechanical one. They are carefully scraped into a wine-press, a sort of cylinder the size of a 20-gallon keg and squeezed and compressed until every last drop of liquid is extracted. This is not, as I first imagined, due to the inherent thriftiness of the peasant, but because the sap of these stalks and the juice inside the skins themselves both provide the best ferments or "starters," and the more of it that can be obtained the better the brew will "boil." Finally the press is dismantled, revealing a solid cake of what is called the "resti" (remains). These, one would think, would represent the final "unusables," except perhaps as manure, but

their role is not over yet. They, too, help the fermentation. In due course, therefore, they are evenly spread over the top of the "mosto," which a few hours earlier formed a part of them, and which now reposes lidless in a vat in a dark corner of the cellar.

The following day I draw off some of the "mosto." It is not so dull or dirty now, it has a purer colour, and it has a "bite" to the taste, a slight fizzy feel to the tongue. I am becoming quite intrigued with this stuff. I decide I will follow its development, so a day later still I try another sample. The "bite" is still more pronounced, the fizzy feel more marked. In some ways it resembles a first-grade apple cider. I feel I could go for it in a big way. But perhaps tomorrow will be better still.

*

It is. To me it is perfect. Less cloying, a real tang about it, rather like a sweet champagne. I try a somewhat larger sample, and then another. Yes, it is the goods all right. That kick is the kick of alcohol. I could put up with this in large quantities. I wonder if one could stop the process at this stage. This brew just *cannot* be bettered.

Unfortunately the fermentation cannot be halted. Every day from now on the "mosto" becomes less and less sweet, less and less fizzy, more and more alcoholic. And then comes the time, approximately a week from the beginning, when the "padrone" in charge says, "Right, it's wine now."

Wine in a week! It can't be. Why, wine takes years to mature, even the old Agriculture Department stuff back home. There must be some mistake. But there is not. It is wine now, the "padrone" says so.

So that is how it is in Italy. I had always thought their stuff was world-famous because it was so old, so mature. The "padrone" explains: "It is wine now because the fermentation is finished.



It will certainly improve with age, if it gets a chance. But it will not get that chance. These thirsty men of mine will clean it all up before the next grape harvest . . . And now here is some wine from the same vines, but this is ten years old. Do you notice a difference? "

I do. It is more mellow, less sharp, and yet drier somehow. There is a suggestion of the same flavour, and it is milder, more palatable. But to me it still does not touch that three-day-old "mosto," that "liquid perfection."

"That's because your taste isn't educated," he says. "I see you don't smoke, therefore you will prefer the sweeter things. Smokers like their drinks more on the savoury side. But when once you are accustomed to wine as we are, you, too, will never look at 'mosto.' "

"I doubt it," I reply. That taste lingers with me, somehow. I rather imagine three-day "mosto" must be one of the high-ranking drinks in Paradise.

*

Now I am home in New Zealand, and I have been back about a year. We three ex-prisoners of war are having a drink before dinner in front of a fire.

"Yes," says Frank, who feels he is an expert, "Vermouth is the stuff, you can't beat it. There's not a nicer wine to be had."

"I'm for Chianti myself," says Bill. "Now, there's a drink for you. Nice and dry, and plenty of kick. Where can you find a better drink than that? "

They turn to me. "What do you think? "they ask. "Vermouth, or Chianti, or what? "

I ponder a moment. Thoughts and tastes of that three-day "mosto" pass through my mind . . . But some-

how, somehow . . .

"There is no question about it," I reply. "Not a shadow of doubt. The best of them all, anywhere, anytime, is—BEER."

QUESTION AND ANSWER

SOME REHABILITATION INFORMATION

WE PRINT below some questions on rehabilitation, submitted through *Korero's* information service, and the answers to them. They are printed for the guidance of other servicemen in New Zealand and the Pacific who may have similar problems.

Question 1.—To what extent are home servicemen eligible for rehabilitation benefits? For instance, what assistance can be expected in the purchase or erection of (a) a home, (b) a business. For either of these? What is the position if the applicant has (a) a certain amount of capital, (b) a comparatively large amount of capital?

Answer: Men who have served in New Zealand only are eligible to make application for all forms of rehabilitation assistance, but, speaking generally, assistance will be granted only on proof of hardship suffered as a direct result of service or after long continuous service.

It is important to remember that rehabilitation assistance is not available as of right, and that the intention of the legislation is to place ex-servicemen in a position not less advantageous than that occupied before service.

Each application will receive consideration on its merits, and all relative factors will be taken into account.

Question 2.—What assistance, if any, in the purchase or erection of a home could be expected by an applicant still serving and likely to be so for a considerable time?

Answer: The Rehabilitation Act, 1941, imposes on the Department the duty of rendering assistance to "discharged servicemen." There is no authority to grant assistance to serving personnel unless they have returned from overseas after serving a minimum of two years, and have been retained for instruction and duty or are on compassionate leave, &c. There is, of course, no reason why application should not be made to any lending organization, but the application would be dealt with as being from a civilian.

Question 3.—Does rehabilitation for home servicemen still serving in the Army take over existing mortgages on houses, and, if so, at what rate of interest? My wife owns the house, and we are paying 5 per cent. on the first mortgage and 6 per cent. on the second.

Answer: This question is answered by 2 above.

The Rehabilitation Board has decided as a policy to re-finance existing mortgages with rehabilitation rates of interest (2 per cent. for the first year, thereafter 3 per cent.) and interest concessions, in the following cases:—

- (a) Ex-servicemen who, because of war service, have had their earning-capacity so affected as the result of disabilities, &c., as to prevent them from meeting commitments entered into prior to joining the forces.
- (b) Ex-servicemen who have had their continuity of work or their financial position so affected by their war service that their income on return to civil life has been materially reduced.
- (c) Ex-servicemen who have entered into arrangements to purchase properties while in the Forces, and who, had they been discharged, would have been eligible for immediate financial assistance by way of a rehabilitation loan.

All cases will be considered on their respective merits.

Question 4.—I work on the electrical side of things on the ship, and am very interested to find out how much this would count for this trade in civilian life.

Answer: The Rehabilitation Board's "B" scheme would probably apply in this case, provided that the applicant has some appreciable practical experience behind him. Under this scheme the applicant is apprenticed to an employer, the Rehabilitation Board subsidizing his wages according to a graduated scale so that he has at least a living-wage.

Normally the employee commences at the rate of £5 5s. per week, to which both the employer and the Rehabilitation Board contribute, and thereafter the employer's share increases as the employee gains skill, and the Board's subsidy decreases. At the same time the trainee's total wage increases until he is drawing the award wage, generally at the end of three years' training, or at such time as he is regarded as a fully qualified journeyman.

Broadly, all ex-servicemen are eligible for training under this scheme, but preference will be given to men who have had overseas service. The approval of the Rehabilitation Board will not be given to such a contract as the above in electrical work unless the applicant has had a reasonable amount of experience in one of the electrical trades, either in the Forces or before service. For practical purposes a reasonable amount of work is interpreted as being equivalent to a year's full-time apprenticeship.

Under arrangements with the Electrical Wiremen's Registration Board, service experience in electrical work may be credited towards apprenticeship time, the amount of time which may be so credited depending on the type and extent of work done. However, this Board has been generous in this respect, and ex-servicemen who have had trade experience in the Forces are thus enabled to qualify more rapidly for tradesmen's rates of pay.

Where further theoretical knowledge is required, the Rehabilitation Board will assist in approved cases by payment of fees, cost of books, &c., in addition to the above scheme. Similarly, ex-service trainees may attend technical colleges or other such institutions free of charge.

Question 5.—What are the necessary qualifications to enable servicemen to obtain a business rehabilitation loan? I have had five years' experience as a grocer and did know the trade as well as any. Is this deemed sufficient, providing, of course, that my previous employer furnished further details. The business in mind is a cash grocery, which would minimize the trouble of keeping books. However, to make sure that no difficulty is experienced in

this part of the business I have been taking a course with a well-known correspondence school, and am securing certificates as the course progresses. Details of service: Three and a half years' Navy with one year's Fiji service.

Answer: Ex-naval personnel who have served in a sea-going capacity outside territorial waters for six months or more, or who have served in territorial waters in such occupations as minesweeping, which may be regarded as equally hazardous as active service, are eligible for assistance immediately on grounds of service alone. Personnel engaged on shore duties or otherwise not included in the groups mentioned above are not immediately eligible on grounds of service, but may be considered eligible if it can be shown that due to their service they have suffered substantial economic loss or loss of opportunity, so that their careers are prejudiced by reason of their having served.

For business loans it is necessary first that the ex-serviceman should have been discharged.

Business loans are in general confined to businesses of an essential nature or to those which provide services of importance in the national economy. No ex-serviceman will be financed into a business which does not show a reasonable chance of becoming successful.

It is generally considered preferable that the serviceman should have had practical experience in the business concerned before a loan is granted, and should this not be the case, the Rehabilitation Board may require the applicant to undergo a course of training before he is established in a business.

It is also necessary that he have the personality and other qualifications necessary to make a success of the business in question. Successful previous experience may indicate this.

Such loans are in general limited to £500, with such terms and security as may seem convenient to the parties concerned.

With specific regard to the above query the applicant's experience and qualifications seem satisfactory, and provided

continued at foot of page 21.



Book Review

By 3301

**"Gunner Inglorious" by J. H. Henderson;
Harry H. Tombs, Ltd., Wellington; 10/6 net.**

THE SOLDIER is not overwhelmed with admiration for the spate of war books cascading from the printing presses; he does not bother with them much at all. If in his reading he comes across details of tactical disposition and movement he is apt to reflect that not even an Eighth Army General has a clear picture of what happened to any brigade between the Libyan border and Tobruk; when he has sufficient interest to read through a war correspondent's book he is likely to find little there to enlist his sympathy, for the correspondent has not been on patrol between Sidi Rezegh and Bel Hamed nor watched the approach of a Mark 4 tank over the sights of a 25-pounder gun.

But in "Gunner Inglorious" the soldier will find on each of the two hundred pages a picture he will recognize and a sentiment he has known. The experience and reactions of the author, J. H. Henderson, are typical, as far as the experiences and reactions of an individual can be typical of a

group, of hundreds of New-Zealanders who fought, were wounded, and captured in the second Libyan campaign. Henderson has, with the exception of a few stories which themselves are acceptable as typical, narrowly confined himself to what he felt and saw; his memory is accurate and vivid; his expression is the exact idiom of the Second New Zealand Division; his outlook is the circumscribed one of the gunner, the private, the sapper, the trooper—his book is a record of war as those men know it.

How vivid is his memory is revealed in many unstudied details. One quotation will show it: The crew of Henderson's gun has already suffered heavily from German mortars and machine guns when Webbo has his face smashed in by a shell splinter:—

Toppie and I lift Webbo aside. His mouth is half-open and I see bits of green where he's been careless at cleaning his teeth . . .

We've thrown Webbo aside. He's not in the way now.

The precision of that memory and its matter-of-fact comment will stir the recollections of many a man who has noticed similar details without emotion when his cobber fell beside him.

Henderson has written without sentimentality; but as he has written truthfully, and as he is a New-Zealander, his story reflects the emotion and irrational sentiment which the New

continued from page 20.

that from the personal aspect he is of the type who may be expected to operate his own business successfully, his eligibility for a loan hinges upon his service qualifications and/or hardship or loss of

opportunity as mentioned above. It must be understood that without more detailed information, particularly as regards service, this question must be answered very generally, and it is difficult to judge what view the Rehabilitation Board would take of the application.

Zealand soldier claims he is without, and which he reveals but rarely, usually after a night in the unit canteen. Although the canteen is often the place of revelation, the place of genesis is elsewhere, amid the exacting demands of the battlefield, the hopelessness of the prisoner of war camp, in the sharp, peasant-like agony for home, in the new-found knowledge of what men can do in the face of mutilation and death. These things find expression in Henderson's pages in a way which may spell a little more than sentiment to the uninitiated; but his story truly shows the manner in which the New Zealand soldier's emotion floods the narrow channels in which he tries to contain it.

There are other feelings which find expression in the pages; the incredible courage of wounded prisoners of war; the agony of pain which only those who have experienced it can comment upon; the rough humour which can be indicated but not expounded in print; and there is another feeling, based deeply, more calmly and rare—the sudden, swift sympathy with the hapless man in grey, a few hundred yards away across the desert. This story was told to Henderson by a South African.

After an unsuccessful German attack, outside the South African lines, in the twilight, a Red Cross flag went up:—

"Tommy," shouted a voice—they thought we were Imperial troops—"Tommy, can we come out and collect our wounded?" (He pronounced the word "wound" as we would in "wound a clock.")

We gave them permission. Out came a small party of stretcher-bearers. They went about their task. Then the same voice:—

"Tommy, we still have more wounded."

"Okay. Finish your work."

Out they came again. The last few casualties were gathered up. The figures began to file away. Then one stopped. Came the same voice, this time with a rather pathetic, lost note about it, we thought:—

"Tommy, we have all our wounded"

"Okay."

"Tommy—good-night."

We paused. We looked at one another. Then:—

"Good-night, Jerry," we said.

It is a feeling which transcends the bounds of nationalism and immediate duty; the men who faced one another in the desert long more than any others for understanding with their enemies.

"Gunner Inglorious" is not the ripe work of a practised writer; but it is sincere, vivid, and sympathetic. It should help a lot of people to understand what is unknown to them at present.

THE RAFT

By KENDRICK SMITHYMAN

THE THING comes so easily after a while, but the first time it's different. You get used to it; but the first time you haven't any experience to look back to. You hear other blokes talk about it, blokes that have been on service in Britain when the same business was common enough; and there's plenty out here now that have seen the same thing up top—I've seen it myself, and more than once. But that first time, the way I was saying, that's different. I saw crack-ups when I was going through

the school, and the first time you see one of them you can't help thinking it could be easy for you. I reckon every one thinks it, but you get used to that, and, any way, it's all in the game. You know that when you start flying, and soon you don't bother about it. Then maybe one of the boys goes, some one you knocked round with, and for a day or two you keep remembering. You get over it. But the business was different the first time. I had to watch a kite in the sea. Which isn't quite right, because we

didn't see the kite—only the blokes on the raft and the sea all round and bad weather coming.

We were finishing on Huddys then, flying from one of the South Island stations. Near the end of the course it happened, and of anything that has happened to me that affair is the one I remember most. There we were, hanging round and doing nothing, and there they were below us, and the sea and the night coming and we couldn't do anything for them.

We were out on a cross-country on a day when there probably weren't more than three aircraft up at the same time. We were heading for home with the light failing and not long to go before sunset. I was flying the kite and Steve was navigating, and Lin Morrey, from Matamata, was playing with the radio when the station called us and gave us the story. One of the Huddys was down in the drink and we were the nearest kite to her. We had been following the coast keeping low. Steve had relations with a farm right on the shore and we were going to beat the place up on the way home. But we got the position and went out to sea. The wind was hard on us and there was dirty weather ahead. Steve got busy working drift and things like that to pick the boys up, though we didn't really know whether they got clear of the kite or not. It turned out that they had, so we were right. The Huddy was gone when we found the spot, and a couple of minutes later we saw the raft drifting off to the south and in towards the shore, though the coastline was out of sight. Visibility wasn't good and I had to take the kite down. There was a heavy swell and the sea was chopping and every so often the water swept over them. And there wasn't anything round but the sea. It was lonely and harsh then. I used to be mad on the sea and sailing, but since then, I've hated it.

One of the crew was missing. We counted the boys on the raft, and one of them waved to us as we went over. One hand gone already. He may have gone off the raft or he may not have got to it when the kite went down. It doesn't make any difference, but knowing that didn't make us feel any



too good. Lin called up the station and gave them the position of the raft, and then they recalled us. Our gas was getting low and we couldn't have stayed round any longer.

That was the first time I saw anything like that, the few boys and all round that damnably big and empty sea. On the way back I must have been flying without thinking of what I was doing. The only thing I thought about was the way the raft drifted and the chap on it waving to us and wondering how long he would be waving before the last sea got them.

Going back, I seemed to think they were done already and that whatever any one did would be useless. I went over all the things that could be done, and they didn't add up. The reasons were good. But I still knew that those boys were as good as gone, sent down with a firing party even, and that is pretty final. I don't know if it was hysteria. It didn't seem like it then. I was just thinking as we flew back. We knew where they were and the station knew, and all the business was on the way to bring them back and put them in the air, but I could have walked into the offices of the heads that were arranging things and said, "Look, don't bother, because they won't be there again and you can't do anything about it." I knew it. At the same time, I was all set to go back and have a shot at it. Any one would have done the same.

We got in and reported. They asked us questions and we gave them answers, and somehow I sensed that Steve and Lin felt just as I did. When we stepped outside, the hangars were all under that calm light you get before a storm, a light



very warm and dangerous and lovely, and you can expect hell to break loose. Another kite was warming up outside the hangar. We strolled over to her. The C.F.I. was going to take rations out to be dropped for the boys, and as we got close to her I felt suddenly that I had to go out again and see the raft and the one bloke on it who waved to us. There wasn't any fuss about getting on board; when the Huddy rolled up the runway I was on her, and I sat staring at the plains and then at the sea till the raft was sighted and we went over again.

The sea was running savagely. The raft came up on the crests and slid and went down into them and came up again and hurled on again and back and down and up. I sat and watched them. The rations were dropped, but there was no show of the boys getting them. The tide swept them away, and we watched them go. The bloke below waved wearily. He must have been very tired then and probably still hoping. It was very personal to him, where for me it had become almost a problem that had to be argued out and an answer found, just the way a theorem has to be proved. You take a statement or an axiom and there are certain conditions and you consider certain factors, and then at the end there is a new conclusion. In this case, certain lives or deaths that actually didn't mean much in the mass of strategy but did mean a hell of a lot to particular people.

And we are people, not mechanics and numbers.

So we couldn't do anything that mattered immediately. The kite went over them and we looked down at them, and maybe they looked up at us, and the distance between them and between us was greater than any distance had ever been. It was the distance of the sea, which is impersonal though moody and powerful. After a time we went away.

The sunset that night was nothing more than an angry flash on cloud. Going down to the mess in the last of the evening I saw the bare branches of the trees swirling

forward and striking back from the wind. The air was cold then and much colder later. Rain fell, and close on midnight the gale slammed straight across the field to the barracks. The mess was quiet that night. The chaps went off to bed early. Few of them wanted to talk, and those who stayed sat quietly. Steve and I played a game of billiards and Lin stood round, and then we finished off for the night.

We were out again early the next morning. The wind had dropped, so the kite could be sent out. All the night I had dreamed of the running sea and the loneliness of that raft and the great curl of breakers that used to come in on the coast where I was a kid. After the gale no one expected to see those boys, but the plane went out to make sure that they had gone. But the raft was still floating and the boys were still on it.

The boats in the nearest port couldn't get out to them. The sea was sweeping straight into the bay and there was nothing at the wharf of any size big enough to risk the weather. The surf pounds heavily on some of those parts and the boats couldn't get to them. The only coastal ship was too far away to get near them. Those boys had everything stacked against them.

The only chance left was pretty thin, but arrangements were made during the night in case the raft was spotted in the morning. Five or six fellows with life-

saving experience in a surf club were flown down and arrived at the drome just after the report came in from the first plane. The raft was close in-shore, drifting towards the mouth of the Mackay River. The river has three bars, and when the weather is in the quarter the sea piles up on the bars and there's not much show of anything lasting. Either side of the river mouth the beach is flat. Aircraft can land on the sand. One of the light D.H.s took the life-saving crowd and a portable radio. They made the beach, and Steve and Lin and I had the Huddy out to sea spotting the raft. The men on the beach waited. That was all we could do, hang about and wait till the sea took the raft into shore.

That morning conditions weren't so bad as they had been the night before. The sea was still running hard on the raft, and as we watched it would go out of sight, then come up again while the water played with it. The four boys lay still. As the raft swept they moved a little. But there was no sign from them that they had seen us. There was nothing to show that we mattered any more.

As the raft drifted in, gulls fell round it and beat at the air above the boys. You saw the flicker of their wings and the specks of their bodies like torn paper blown over the raft and the chop of the waves. The life-saving crew moved along the beach. We flew inland for a bit and then back out to sea. Off the river mouth the long lines of the surf were dirty with mud from the bars.

At nine o'clock it was all over. The raft was close to the beach. It passed the outer line of the bar breakers and washed down towards the second. The sea was too rough for the swimmers. The raft danced up and on the crest. It seemed to stop there a fraction longer than it had stayed on any earlier crest. Then it turned, and as it turned it tipped and the boys went listlessly from it and there was only the glistening raft and the total emptiness of the sea. The breakers swept on. We banked over and the sun came out and the shadow of the kite dropped on the raft and the beach and the swimmers were behind and we headed back to the field.

That was the first time I saw anything like that, and it's the one I remember because there wasn't anything we could do. Maybe we were playing against the sea and didn't understand it. Maybe anything. The only thing that was certain to me, and there weren't any reasons to make you sure of that, was the fact that when we went to look for those boys they were already gone and the one boy left awake was waving to us. But was he really waving to us, or was he already waving us away, knowing then, though he couldn't really have known, that we were no use, that we were helpless as he was helpless, and the only thing at all important was the great aching space of the sea, the wind from the east and the open ocean, and the cloud that hid us when we turned away from them and went back to the field?





BY SYDNEY D WATERS

A Talk Broadcast from Main New Zealand Stations

DURING THE long period of peace after the conclusion of the Napoleonic War in 1815 the British Merchant Navy came to be generally regarded as a trading organization—that and nothing more. It was largely forgotten by the British people that the Merchant Navy actually had a war history dating back to a period anterior to the founding of the Royal Navy—that it was, in fact, the parent of the Royal Navy. Few recalled the great part that merchant seamen had borne in former wars or remembered that in earlier periods of British history the merchant sailor had stood between his country and the would-be invader when little or no progress had been made in the organization of a fighting Navy as a State institution. The Merchant Navy was thought to be an organization without traditions and with little remaining romance, owing to the advent of steam, which had replaced sail-power. That was a narrow and mistaken view, as events were to show.

During the Great War of 1914-18, British merchant seamen quickly came to be recognized as no ordinary men engaged merely in facilitating the barter and exchange of a commercial community, but as belonging to the great brotherhood of fighting men, instinct with sturdy patriotism and proud of the traditions of the Merchant Navy dating back over centuries to the early years of British history. Its officers and men quickly set up a record of daring, resource, and fine seamanship so conspicuous that it was necessary to amend the statutes and make new regulations to enable suitable recognition of their gallantry to be given them. The mer-

chant seaman, unassuming and modest, took his stand, with the full recognition of an aroused and grateful public opinion, beside the men of the purely fighting services. It was the master of a New Zealand trading ship, the "Otaki," who was awarded posthumously the Victoria Cross for his valorous and nearly successful action with a single gun against a heavily armed German raider.

His Majesty King George V, himself a sailor, in a message of appreciation of the services of the British merchant seaman in 1915, referred to "his Merchant Navy." After the war he appointed the Prince of Wales Master of the Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleets. The then Prime Minister, Mr. Lloyd George, accurately described the Merchant Navy as "the jugular vein of the nation."

Nearly 15,000 British Merchant Seamen gave their lives in the war of 1914-18; nearly 2,500 British merchant ships, totalling 7,750,000 tons, were lost through enemy action; nearly 2,000 ships, totalling 8,000,000 tons, were damaged or molested by the enemy. There was a black period in 1917 when it looked as if the enemy's ruthless submarine warfare against the Merchant Navy would paralyse Britain's war effort. The adoption of sailings in convoy saved the situation. The British merchant seamen reverted to the traditional methods of his forbears and thus assisted the Royal Navy to provide security for "such as pass on the seas upon their lawful occasions."

The story of the Merchant Navy during the twenty-one years between 1918 and 1939 is not a happy one, but if many

British people tended to forget that the Merchant Navy was the jugular vein of our nation, not so the Germans. Mindful of the near thing in 1917, the Nazis' war plans embodied an immediate all-out onslaught against British and Allied merchant ships and seamen. Commerce raiders and U-boats were already at sea when Great Britain and France declared war against Germany on September 3, 1939. Barely eight hours later U-boats claimed their first victim—the British liner "Athenia"—which was torpedoed without warning and sunk off the coast of Ireland with a loss of 127 lives. During the first four weeks U-boats sank thirty-four ships totalling 138,000 tons, the "Admiral Graf Spee" of inglorious memory sank another off the coast of Brazil, and enemy mines accounted for three more in British waters.

That was the beginning of Nazi Germany's total war at sea by means of which Hitler hoped to sever the jugular vein of the nation. U-boats, surface raiders, long-range bombers, contact mines, magnetic mines, acoustic mines, all were employed in ever-increasing numbers against the merchant ships of Great Britain, her Allies, and the few neutrals—the Merchant Navies which President Roosevelt, in another apt metaphor, described as the "life-line of democracy." Over and over again Mr. Churchill reminded us that we must regard the struggle at sea as the foundation of all efforts of the United Nations, and that if we lost that, all else would be denied to us. And it was Mr. Churchill who definitely assessed the depredations of the U-boats as a far graver menace to the British war effort than the great German air blitz on London and other British cities.

But nothing daunted the merchant seaman. None failed to sign on and take the ships to sea for fear of any devilish weapon the enemy would use against them. Again and again to the stormy North Atlantic, again and again to the wild ice-strewn routes of the North Russia convoys, again and again through "bomb alley" on the way to Malta, again and again on any voyage called for, he went unflinching. If there was any fear in his heart, it was not on his

own account, but dread of what Nazi bombers might do to his people at home. The veteran master of one New Zealand liner who was counting his last voyage before retirement under the age limit arrived out here to be greeted with a cable message telling him that his wife had been killed when their home was wrecked by a Nazi bomb. An engineer in another ship arrived in Wellington to learn that his wife and two children, his mother and father and two sisters had been killed during a German air raid.

From the beginning of this war to the end of 1943 the proportion of seamen hailing from the British Isles alone who have been lost at sea on their vital duty has been about one-fifth of the average number engaged in this service. The casualties suffered by the Merchant Navy in this war are more than double the number of the war of 1914-18. Up to August 31 of this year 29,629 British merchant seamen had lost their lives at sea through enemy action and 4,173 had been taken as prisoners. Thousands more sustained injuries of many kinds, and hundreds suffered from exposure and hunger and thirst while adrift in boats or on rafts. There is no available record of casualties suffered by the brave American, Norwegian, Danish, Polish, French, and Belgian merchant seamen who threw in their lot with us, but they number in thousands.

The number of British merchant ships lost from all causes to the end of 1943 totalled 2,921, Allied merchant vessels 1,937, and neutral ships some 900,



representing a total of 22,161,000 gross tons, which is nearly double the tonnage lost in 1914-18.

Never before in the history of human conflict has sea power played so great a part as in the present world struggle, and in global war merchant shipping is the ultimate key to all strategy. Indeed, sea power has only now truly come into its own. Yet the decisive importance of controlling the great medium of mass transportation in global warfare and the

port. One such tanker, reconstructed, was recently in Wellington.

Many of the big ships trading to New Zealand can tell brave stories. There is the "Sussex," which four years ago was attacked by a German aircraft 650 miles west of Ireland. One bomb exploded in the funnel wrecking the whole of the superstructure, including the navigating bridge and chart-room, and smashing the compasses. A second bomb exploded in a forward hold and started a bad fire in



projection of the traditional advantages of sea power on to a world-wide scale do not yet suffice to explain the extraordinary increase in the significance of sea power in the present conflict. Sea power has been promoted to a function of direct, decisive intervention in the most crucial strategic issues themselves.

The Merchant Navy, supplier-in-chief to the Royal Navy, the Air Force, and the Army, has been the foundation on which the United Nations have been enabled to plan and build for ultimate victory. The enemy realized that from the beginning—hence his all-out efforts against our merchant ships and seamen.

Those of you who saw that great film, "San Demetrio," will have learned why the enemy's effort to defeat the Merchant Navy has failed. The boat's crew who reboarded their burning petrol-laden tanker and navigated her to port without chart or compass were typical British merchant seamen.

More than once when a tanker has been torpedoed by a U-boat and broken in two, the fore-part sinking, the ship's people have navigated the after-half into

the cargo close to a compartment holding 40 tons of cordite. Steering by a boat compass, the ship arrived in harbour.

Said the master in his report: "I should particularly like to recommend F. Trundley, assistant steward, aged twenty-three, whose devotion to duty in fighting the fire which burned part of the cordite was outstanding. I should also like to mention Ordinary Seaman Croxford, a lad of eighteen, who, though badly burned and wounded by machine-gun bullets, refused to leave his station at the gun. The whole crew behaved splendidly, and their only regret was at not being able to bring down the enemy." Trundley was awarded the George Medal and Croxford the British Empire Medal, and both were awarded Lloyd's War Medal for bravery at sea.

Then, there was the case of the "Hororata," homeward-bound with a large cargo of meat and dairy-produce. She was torpedoed 200 miles from Flores, in the Azores, the explosion blowing a great hole 45 ft. by 32 ft. in her side. The ship, which was in imminent danger of capsizing, reached Flores, but no

repairs were possible there, so she went on to Horta. There the decision was made to put a timber patch over the huge hole. Trees were felled and sawn into lengths, odd lengths of railway iron being used as stiffeners. The ship's engineers cut bolts to secure the timber and iron in place. After three months the patch was completed and more than 300 tons of concrete poured into boxing to ensure strength and watertightness. The "Hororata" then proceeded and completed her voyage, saved by the unbeatable courage and resourcefulness of her people.

Five aircraft attacks were made on the convoy in which the well-known motor-ship, "Port Fairy," was sailing. A bomb struck her stern and set her on fire. The crew manned the hoses and fought the flames, and a naval escort ship went alongside and pumped water into the vessel. As the fire was still spreading after five hours and encircling the ammunition magazine on the lower deck, the chief officer, Mr. A. J. Knell, D.S.C., was lowered over the side. He climbed through the hole made by the explosion and, surrounded by flames and smoke and standing on the hot deck, played a hose on the fire. He was relieved by five other members of the crew in succession, including the electrician and chief steward, and eventually they put the fire out. Captain J. G. Lewis, master of the "Port Fairy," was then faced with the task of getting his ship to port, 500 miles away. His steering-gear was completely wrecked, but steering by the engines he kept up an average speed of $14\frac{1}{2}$ knots, so close was the

co-operation between the engineers below and the officers on the bridge.

There are many stories I could tell of the sufferings and unbeatable courage of merchant seamen adrift on rafts or in boats after their ships had sunk. The most amazing of them all is that of Poon Lim, the Chinese second steward of the "Ben Lomond," which was torpedoed and sunk six days' steam from her destination, a South American port. It was on November 23 when the ship was sunk, and Poon Lim found himself the sole survivor, on a raft. He found water and food stored which lasted him for 50 days. Then he managed to dig a nail out of a plank with his teeth, and with the same tools he bent it to form a fish-hook. He unravelled the lifeline round the raft and made a fishing-line, baited the hook with some biscuit, and caught a fish. This he used as bait and caught others. Rain-water had to suffice for drink, and he was only five days without water. He was stark naked all the time and his skin burned to a deep black-brown. He drifted for 130 days and was picked up by Brazilian fishermen on April 2. Almost at once after his rescue he expressed his keen desire to return to duty.

There are many instances of seamen picked up after days adrift in boats only to have the rescuing ship torpedoed and sunk under them a few days later. There are thousands of merchant seamen who have been bombed and strafed by aircraft and torpedoed two, three, four, and five times in ship after ship. But they still go back to sea and carry on. They are a gallant and unbeatable brotherhood.

The Sunlight League of New Zealand is conducting some literary competitions for servicemen and women in New Zealand and the Pacific. Soldiers, sailors, and airmen and WAACS, WAAFS, and WRENS are invited to write 500 words as "essay, verse, parable, newspaper article, or skit" on (1) "What the World Needs," or (2) "What New Zealand Needs." If an entry takes the form of a written radio talk or dialogue, the limit on length is 1,500 words. Prizes offered are £10, £6, £5, £4, £3, £2, and £1. Date of closing is August 31, 1945. Fuller details may be obtained from Miss Cora Wilding, Hon. Secretary, Sunlight League of New Zealand, 113 St. Martin's Road, Christchurch S.E. 2.



(From facts known to Ivan Tong, Kiwi prisoner of war in Germany)

By JIM HENDERSON

This story won the first prize in *Korero's* recent competition.

THE FOUR had been hiding out in Greece a long time, now. The days, the weeks, the months, and the years had slipped by, but in spite of the misery and hardship and vileness of a vagabond life, they had stuck it out; together, four cobbers, four refugees.

They had lived in caves: damp, dismal dripping caves.

They had lived in deserted huts: lousy, swarming with parasites from goats and sheep.

They had lived in isolated little villages: then on again, out and away, as rumour whispered of approaching danger.

They had lived in the open: in bivouacs built between boulders, under trees, in hollows gouged from shingle-beds when fierce torrents had sprung to short, angry life in the season of melting snows.

The wilder and rougher the region, the safer the four refugee soldiers felt. For the strutting Italians still smarted from the humiliating defeats the Greeks had inflicted upon their lumbering armies in the Pindus mountains. That was why the Italians took their job of Army of Occupation in Greece so very seriously. Now and again Jerry patrols would be out, but generally the Germans didn't worry very much about enemy soldiers up in the hills. So long as they didn't show themselves or give trouble, the Jerries preferred to forget about them,

for, when all is said and done, they were pretty harmless, and a prisoner has to be fed, and clothed, and housed, and guarded.

Food. And smokes. That was the problem. That was the great need which time and again had driven them, in desperation, to the point of discussing surrender. But whenever they got round to talking about chucking the whole thing in, two of the four refugee soldiers always had pleaded so fearfully, undeniable terror in their voices, that the other two relented and decided to stick it out, for their sake.

*

The four had met up in strange circumstances. Two New Zealand soldiers found themselves cut off from their section during a rearguard action near Thebes late in April, 1941. Lost, determined to evade capture, failing, by some strange stroke of ill-fortune, to link up with other New-Zealanders still at large, these two Kiwis were on the point of death through exhaustion and exposure when they stumbled into a cave occupied by two other refugee-soldiers.

It was a strange meeting; it never should have taken place; everything was against these four men living together in friendship and harmony. But there are odd happenings in wartime, and men still can love one another, even though the whole world is steeped in hatred.

So the four refugee-soldiers grew to understand one another, as brothers, and they lived in these wild hills in Greece, as I have told you.

*

Times were when an undeniable craving for lights and music and the bustle of city streets and the liveness and laughter of women—a terrible loneliness drove them down from the hills, along the flat land and into Athens. Armed, uniformed Jerries and Eyeties always were about, in every street and cafe, of course. But they had to risk capture because of the great loneliness, you understand.

The four would stroll along the pavements, arms linked, the two on the outside twirling watch-chains, as is a Greek custom. Their hair was long and carefully oiled, their borrowed clothes were appropriate—that was all right—and the constant sun and the mountain winds had darkened their complexions.

Sometimes a visit to the picture-theatres, where the flickering fairy stories of our twentieth century gave a little peace.

They, the four refugee-soldiers, would pass from one Greek family to another—a day here, three days under a recommended roof four tram sections away, on again. And although food was becoming more and more scarce and the hand of famine was upon the land, somehow, oh somehow, these little people would scrape together sufficient bread and scraps and olives and boiled weeds to fill their guests' bellies.

And after the evening meal the four comrades would lie down upon the floor, and a little wine would be produced, and the mandolin and guitar would make music for them. And so they found the lights and sounds and love they had craved when far away in their mountain retreat.

Sometimes a cordon of German soldiers, heavily armed, ordered to shoot and kill upon suspicion, would be thrown round a block of Athens, and from house to house patrols would crash searching for concealed enemy soldiers or agents, and Greeks suspected of pro-British sympathies or hoarding. And every time the four managed to escape, fleeing from roof-top to roof-top, hiding under floors,

in attics, in cesspits and wells. The Jerries were cruel and hard and exacting in the cities. Oh yes.

Then the strain of the prison city would begin to tell upon them (especially upon two particular members of the little party), and the restlessness and fear was upon them again, and they would depart from Athens, and, walking by night, return once more to the solitude and security of the hills and little hamlets they knew.

*

And, as the months and then the years went by, the four men learned of the guerrillas gathering in the hills, and of the Forces of the occupied nations rising against the German conquerors. Yet, somehow, between the four soldiers was a great friendship, a great understanding, a love beyond words, and they lived on together, as before, yet deep down within them feeling that the time of their comradeship was drawing to a close.

And back from the Russian Front winged Junkers 52—long black transport planes bearing hundreds, then thousands, of German wounded, smashed by bullet, shell, grenade, or mine, or crippled and in the agony of severe frostbite. They



had seen the Junkers coming low over the snow-white hills and flying down the long frozen valleys, Athens-bound.

And they knew, too, of other planes, British planes, in deadly swarms by night over the cities of Germany.

And the armies of the Third Reich fell back, battered and bloody, but grim and resolute, still fighting ferociously as the Reds swept in from the east; the Allies invaded Italy; England and America struck at the beaches of France, then on, grinding on, to the very frontiers of Deutschland.

And the two New-Zealanders were genuinely joyous (without arrogance), for they knew soon the hour of their liberation would be at hand. But an unexpected change came over their two companions. Daily, they grew increasingly sadder. And times were when the two would draw apart, and talk softly, far into the night, while the New-Zealanders slept.

And one day an R.A.F. fighter suddenly shot out of the morning sky, and pamphlets were seen descending, like agitated sea-birds, upon a little village in the valley beneath. And the New-Zealanders went out, and in the evening returned, bearing with them a copy of the information from the sky.

And it told the invasion of Greece had begun, and the death of Germany was nigh.

*

There was much discussion amongst the four soldiers. Of what they said, in those last hours together, I know not. But the last three precious bottles of cogniac were brought out by the four comrades, and, in their mountain retreat, they drank to each other, to their friendship which would last to eternity, and to the hard long days which were dead now, forever.

And, as the light of a new day came into the sky, two men rose up and gathered their few pitiful possessions together, and they awakened the two New-Zealanders and told them of the story they had prepared. How they would say they had been held captives in Middle East prison camps, how at last they had managed to escape. They intended to join the last fleeing German column from Greece, where, in the confusion of withdrawal, their story, in all probability, would be accepted. And they would be given arms again, and the uniform of the Wehrmacht.

And once again they would take their places beside their own folk—their own folk they had deserted at Thermopylae in April, 1941. They would take their stand in Hungary, then Czechoslovakia, then back, back as they knew fate had decreed, back until the last stand in the last battle within Germany itself.

Then they, too, would die in the death of their Fatherland.

