

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.