



A typical character line-up.

English comics are scarce these days. Booksellers have little, if any, opportunity for selection, and mostly they just have to take what they can get. That's how a good market sprang up for quickly produced, illustrated trash. But throughout New Zealand, as throughout the United States, a growing number of men and women, parents, and educationists is voicing resentment against poorly printed comics packed with violence.

"This is awful tripe and trash. There is nothing but murders, highway robberies, and shooting, which must be unsettling to young minds," declared G. A. Maddison, taking strong exception to one comic magazine sold throughout New Zealand. He was speaking at a meeting of the Hawke's Bay Education Board. One shop in Waipawa sold 216 copies of this and similar magazines every week. They should be stopped from entering New Zealand, it was suggested.

Every month thousands of copies of "yellow" comics such as *Danger Comics* ("Adventure," "Thrills," "Mystery,"

"Humour, 6d.") are distributed throughout New Zealand. Adventure, presumably, is the lot of Barty Malone, taxi-driver ("cab-driver" on the cover), and Karl Klaus, of the Secret Radio. Barty, by madly driving a blood-stained secret service man to a mined bridge, saves a troop train, while Karl, canoeing down a river, broadcasts: "People of Poland. This is the secret radio calling you once again. Rise at once and throw off the yoke of Nazi oppression. We will do all we can to help you in your fight for liberty. Down with the Nazis. So, once again, good-night listeners." Enter however, a suspicious Nazi, whereupon "Karl deals him a smashing blow!—and he *grashes* to the ground unconscious!"

Dale Marsh sinks ("to rise no more") a Jap submarine, flying dogs harass Captain Spadger in New Guinea, and "Nick Carver of the Circus" watches a lion and tiger "locked in mortal combat." "Erb and Zeb," red-nosed, bearded, and "Little Ossie" are the humorists:—

Zeb: "Dynamite, OO-ER!"

Erb: "Well, this'll fix him up fair dinkum, because next time he slaps my back the dynamite'll go off 'BOONG,' and he'll blow his arm off!"

And, finally, with strangled exclamations such as:

"UNGF!" "Sniff, snuff, snaff. Sniff, snoff, snitch." "MIGOSH!"

"HRFF! PHNK! HOIK! GURGLE!"

Professor McPhoo, Butch Grogan, Oscar the Scout, and Fortescue the talented hound search for the "GNU-GNAH," the dragon with the 18-carat diamond teeth.

We went to see the wholesale newsagents who distribute a great variety of comics, including those from Australia and the *Danger Comics* series. A representative told us how the war had "reduced considerably the supply of good [?] English comics such as *Chips*, *Comic Cuts*, *Playbox*, *Rainbow*, and so on. *Gem*, *Magnet*, and *Triumph* are dead, but *Champion* and *Scout* are still going."

"By how much has the supply been reduced?"

He wouldn't say. We couldn't find out, either, how many comics from Australia (where "Vargo the Vandal"