

parts, or he'll be blowing about his travels at home." Jim gave a grunt of appreciation, and we continued to chat spasmodically about other old cobblers and happenings in which we had shared.

Then it was time to settle up and move on. "Must see some more of you," said Jim after we had paid our way out, as we stood in the doorway buttoning our coats and looking out at the driving rain. "Yes," I said, "you never know, we might be able to have a real get-together with several of the boys some day." All the same, when we parted and went our separate ways down the street,

I don't think either of us really felt it would come about. However, meeting Jim had been very pleasant, and it started a lot of thoughts again. The incidents that stand out from those tedious months of mud and heat are trivial enough, I suppose. It seems as though the things that stick in the mind most are little happenings associated with particular chaps. The facts and figures will probably get written down somewhere, but the little human facts that really matter more are only carried in the memories of the few fellows concerned.

BETWEEN TWO FLAGS

THIS SMALL sandy cove was hemmed in with bush and overhung with palms, and from the sea one would never know that hundreds of men had passed through there. Most of these chaps had now gone well up the coast, and the Japs were still falling back before them. Our platoon had been one of the first to go up, and now we were back for a short rest. A little in from the beach supply people, the dressing-station, headquarters, and others were toiling flat out. There were also a few native guides about, and we found them intelligent boys, who sometimes spoke good English. However, the figure which attracted most attention was a Nisei—that is, a Yank of Jap extraction. He was a sergeant, and his appearance contrasted oddly with his camouflage suit and other familiar equipment. When Mac said, "Good day!" to him, he smiled and replied in the very best American, "What d'ya say now?" He was on good terms with every one, and laughed and joked with the natives, who thought he was fine. He was our interpreter, and an important man, because no one else had a hope of reading our enemy's perverse language.

The morning after we arrived back we were loafing about and looking forward to an easy day, when the Sergeant came up with that look in his eye. "Got a job for you," he said, and we groaned. "You two Corporals are to take your sections on a patrol up this

valley which runs in from here. There's nothing to it, as the show should be clear of Japs, but the Boss wants to be certain. There's just a chance some of them may have doubled back. Now here's what you've got to do . . . " His instructions were simple: a section would go up each ridge, and the two would meet about four miles in, on the saddle at the head of the valley, and then they'd come back together down the stream. If contact were made with the enemy at any point, we were to fall back here and report.

We were soon underway in the heavy going up the ridge, which carried the usual faint native track. The valley was full of bush, like a steep New Zealand gully, though there were few sounds of bird life. We knew that natives could slip like shadows anywhere across this country, which was criss-crossed with pathways. We saw faint sidetracks branch down the hillsides here and there, but to our untrained eyes they quickly petered out. We stumbled up over slippery roots, while bush lawyer tangled us, and we tried to avoid stinging leaves. We took it quietly, but were soon reduced to greasespots, and were glad of our ten-minute rests. Mac and Jim were ahead, and two others made up the rearguard. We were between, and kept well out to each side of the track, though all in the patrol had to keep contact, so we were not spread out far. We must have gone a couple of miles inland