THE BUSHWALKER
NO. 6 1942

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The Bushwalker

No. 6 1942

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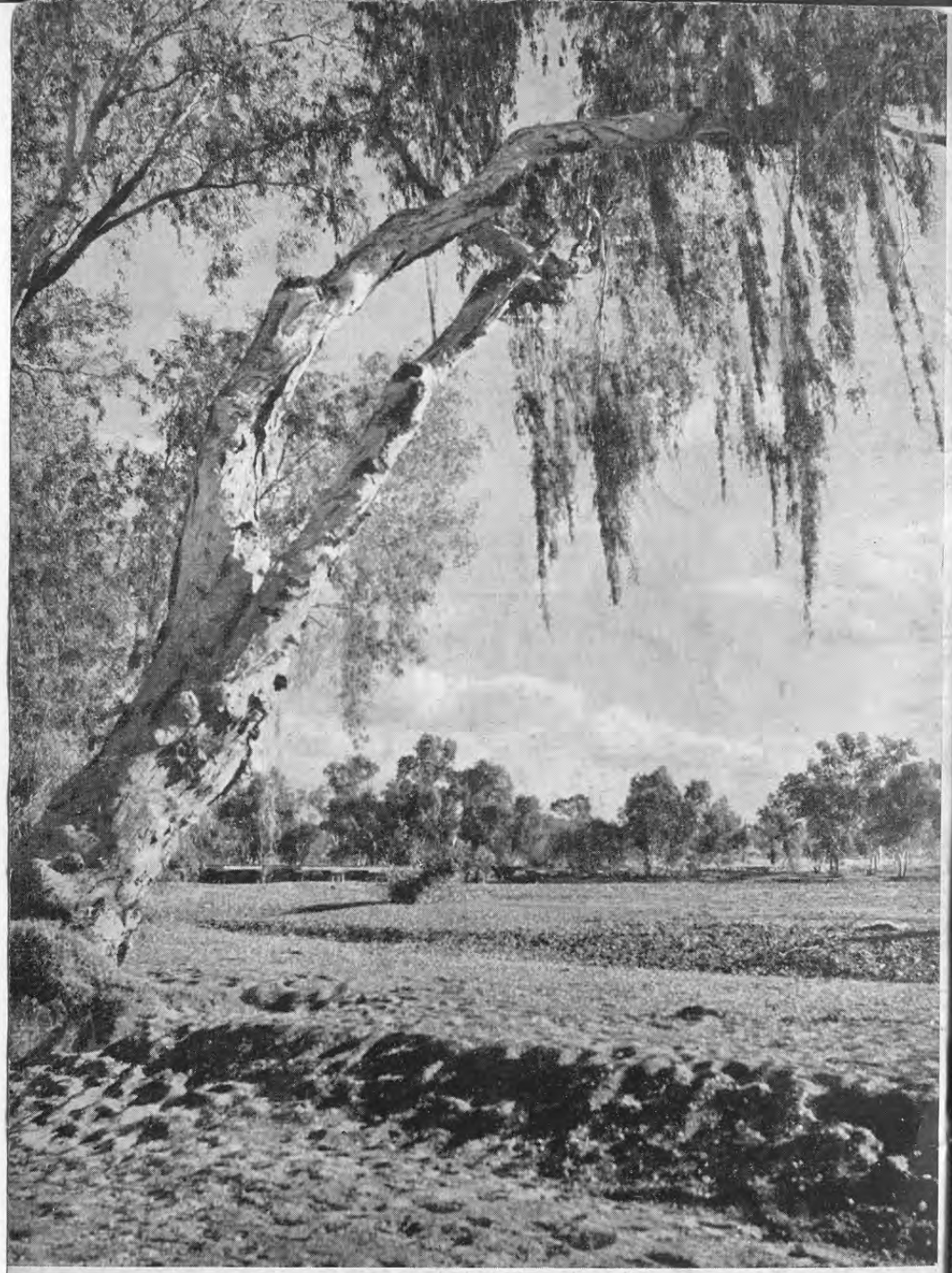


CLONCURRY RIVER. —D. K. Anderson (R.C.C. and R.R.C.).

The Bushwalker

EDITORIAL.

In a world at war we bring you an oasis of peace—the peace of the steadfast hills, the wandering winds and the hardy gumtrees.

With thousands of women and tens of thousands of men in the fighting forces, while hundreds of thousands work long and longer hours to equip and supply the fighters, occasional oases of rest and recreation become essential for health and efficiency; yet they become more and more difficult to find. Balls may be unprocurable and games cut out; shoes may be scarce, and we may yet all become barefoot enthusiasts! Trains may be cut out and we may no longer be able to visit the distant places that are dear to us, but we can walk, can discover, or re-discover, the beauties of the rugged country just beyond the outer suburbs.

In the fat days that are gone many people grew up thinking that fleshpots were essential to happiness; some (among them bushwalkers) discovered that oases were all that was needed. A spring of clear water shaded by trees will provide rest, refreshment, and the strength to carry on the task with renewed vigour.

Between the covers of this magazine we have collected many happy memories, so that our readers may share the joys of austerity and achievement the writers have known; may be refreshed by their own happy memories that are recalled by ours; may see new avenues of enjoyment opening before them as old ones are closed. What the future holds, who knows? How hard or long the way to peace, who knows? But here are memories of a happy past; here is present recreation without use of fuel or manpower. We offer it to you as a contribution to the war effort.

Drink deeply, then press on to victory.

CAMEOS.

By "BARNEY" (C.M.W. and S.B.W.).

1. The rain streams down and four laden figures climb slowly, steadily, the cliff line far above a frowning rampart, while cloud banks swirl in driving gusts of rain and sleet. It is June, and Mount Solitary is the goal. The day has been bleak and cold, and the gale's force is broken awhile by a friendly ridge in whose lee the four are part times sheltered. As they rise the air becomes appreciably colder, until, nearing the summit, sleet is encountered, and at last, 2000 feet above the valley, a biting gale with flurries of snow meets them on the top with such force that standing upright is impossible. A gully tempers the gale to some extent, and late in the afternoon camp is made. The cold strikes deep. Tents are useless, and the billies have heavy stones thrust under their handles to prevent their being swept away into the darkness. Night has come swiftly and the gale screams past laden with snow, sticks and leaves, while fitful sleep shortens the long hours of darkness. A filthy night! Some would aver that four madmen were abroad, foregoing home amenities for the doubtful pleasures of the wide open spaces in peculiarly uncomfortable circumstances. Some (a very few) would think with humour of similar experiences themselves, or

with envy of the four—but THEY are of the BLOOD. Of such are true bushwalkers made.

* * * * *

2. The perspiration drips down our faces, arms and legs. The breeze in our faces is like an oven blast and waves of heat beat up from the granite boulders, over which we make our way tortuously along the valley of the Kowmung River. We cross waist-deep without discarding our clothing (which may or may not be sufficient for city standards!) and forge on mile after mile, now on a cowpad along the flat river banks clad in bracken and scrub, now on a sun-scorched sidling denuded of all but sparse blades of yellow grass, or through canyons whose sheer walls rise precipitously from the rocky depths. No birds sing and animal life slumbers through the heat—all except our small cavalcade, the ubiquitous water-dragon whose oft heard "plop" denotes a high dive from some nearby casuarina branch, and the myriad cicadas whose clarion swells to a scescendo of sound endlessly.

At six o'clock we camp, and the gathering darkness of a December night is intensified by the camp fire's glow. The gum trees and casuarinas form silhouettes of weird shape, and far away a dingo howls. The breeze dies, and as the smoke curls lazily above the blazing logs we stretch at ease and relax. The damper is baked, the stew cooked, and we set to. The stars shine down and a white moon rises, casting long shadows, while a pale, iridescent sheen spreads across the river. All is at peace and the mountain night claims us in slumber.

* * * * *

3. Boom! . . . . . Boom! . . . . . Boom! The breakers crash on the pale shore and a flurry of foam swirls round our legs. A beach at 6.30 a.m.! Our camp lies 200 yards up the valley; the small tents, green and white—or *not* so white—are close pitched. A solitary figure tends a lone fire, and one or two sluggards are still wrapped in sleeping bags or blankets. With shouts of exuberance we dive into the surf and swim and splash for ten minutes, then in the keen morning air we dash back to the fire, which is now well ablaze, and prepare breakfast : a good breakfast of porridge, toast, eggs and what-have-you?—for appetites are healthy and the joy of living is ours. From the east comes the golden promise of a perfect day, a day which also is ours.

* * * * *

4. "Half-past five, Frank!"

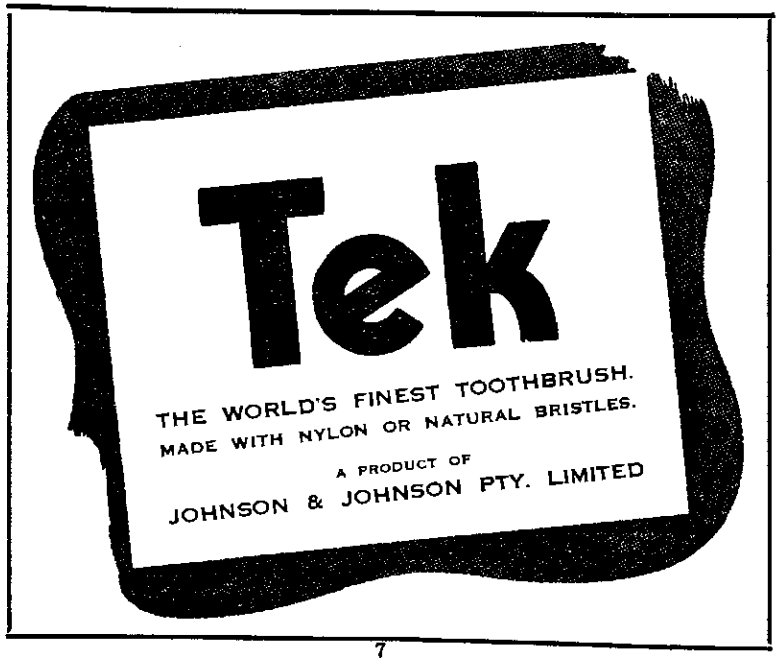
"Ugh!" says Frank, and one eye gazes somewhat doubtfully over the edge of the sleeping bag at the expanse of valley lying hundreds of feet below us, with wraiths of mist curling smoke-like in the deeper pockets.

Our camp is an overhanging rock in the cliff face, looking westward, with a glorious view of the Megalong Valley. Ten feet in front lies an abyss, and our bed is the stony floor of our crevice. We made camp the "night before" at one o'clock, that is to say, precisely four and a half hours ago, arriving in total darkness with the aid of a single torch. I had mentioned the fact that all should be careful when moving about in the dark, hut when Fred realises that his sleeping apartment is in the nature of an eagle's retreat—with little to spare—he says . . . . (but I won't bother you with that, as Fred is a good Australian). Anyway, he says it very loudly, and for a long time! Henry also is a good Australian, but he only thinks what Fred says. As for Frank, well—he has slept in funny places before and just grins. * * * *

5. Far down on our left, somewhere in the depths of the gorge whose precipitous walls rear majestically to The Spires and the plateau wall along which we are making our way, there trickle the headwaters of the Kanangra, its source now—in time of drought—a much depleted, smoky thread of silver tumbling hundreds of feet sheer down the valley head before striking the rocky escarpment below. "Kanangra" is a harsh name and it fits in perfectly with the nature of the country, for the great mountain masses of Gangerang lie ahead, while across the 3000-foot canyon whose lip we traverse this early October morning are Mounts Guouogang and Queahgong. The day will prove long and hard; we shall not strike water until late afternoon, and tracks (if any) will be little known and overgrown.

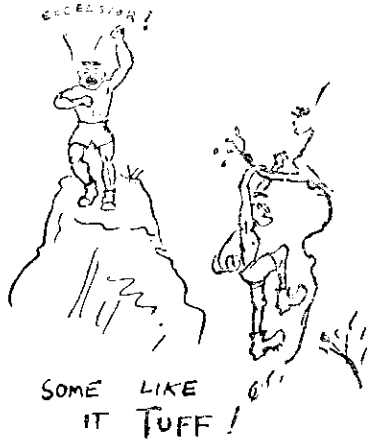
Sometimes we scramble awkwardly along the side of a near-cliff face, hanging on to scrub and bush; sometimes we make a fast pace down hill; at others we trudge slowly up the ever ascending mountain ridge—but at all times the sun beats down with a hard brilliance from a cloudless sky, and we think interminably of cool drinks and the shadows of a river bank. The path is lost in the mass of shattered rock. There is a glint of quartz, a small saddle; we go down a hundred feet, then up, ever up, in the burning heat, until we hear a welcome cry from above, "The top!"

The top of High and Mighty, 4000 feet up! We lunch and sip some of the remaining drops of water in our possession. An hour passes. We shoulder our rucksacks and commence the descent into the deeps 3000 feet below. Masses of rubble, fractured into sharp-edged blocks and splinters, form a loose carpet on the sides of the mountain, and we take one step forward, then balance carefully, or take several together and grab a tree now and then as we shoot past. It takes us nearly three hours to reach the creek, and then, parched and leg weary, we strip off and wallow in the icy stream.



SOME LIKE IT TUFF . . .

By IAN MALCOLM, generally known as "SCOTTY."
(The Sydney Bush Walkers.)



Come over here, where the Walks Committee cannot hear us breathing sedition. Do you really *like* tuff trips? Your confidence is safe with me. Absolutely! And I don't mind confessing, between ourselves, that I feel just the same about it myself. Anything I say to you will, I know, not go any further.

Entrez nous, I have never really been one with that noble band whose ego flagellates them with scourges of lawyer-vine and holly, and drives them from their warm eiderdowns at the skreigh of day (crack o' dawn—Australian) to tear over the craggy mountain at four-and-a-bit miles an hour, with shrieking muscles and breath coming in short pants, on a regular fifteen or twenty miles a day from dawn till dusk, in order to "do" a trip. Those there are who glory in reeling off their feats of human endurance of the previous Easter, but they leave me with a feeling of dumb dismay. A hundred-mile trip in five days is not in itself intrinsically a better trip than a modest thirty-miler. It depends upon what you have *seen*—or failed to see; and, as Confucius says, "There is nothing better at the end of the road than may be found loitering by the wayside."

For example, if we had had to "do" a set number of miles per, could we have seen and done what we did when we "paused" for three days at Billys Creek on that memorable Kowmung trip? It matters not that much sand has run through the glass and the members of the party are scattered to the four winds. The memory and comradeship of that trip will outlast all others. A trip, once over, is worth only the happy things, the unusual things, the glorious, sunny, delightful things that we remember of it. And can you see those things, in fact can you really savour any darn thing (not excluding the countryside itself), if you have to crash through the said countryside sans pause, sans breath, sans everything, at break-neck pace in order to "make" Pumpkin Hill by dusk? Can you? You liar!

In my more misguided moments I, too, have followed the trail of the "tuff," and, after streaking over hill and dale for three furious days, have goaded my aching limbs to a final fierce assault on that deadly hill at Katoomba to catch, by the skin of my teeth, the last train home. Did I enjoy it? I ask you!

All of which brings us inevitably to the Kowmung Loiter already mentioned. The party consisted of, if I can recall aright, the Cheese

Carrier, the Onion Bearer, the Smiter of Ducks, the Custard Juggler, the Rocks and the Barnacle—good loiterers all.

How we got there matters but little, but, on a certain perfect morning, we wended our leisurely way along a scarce-seen track in the Lower Kowmung Canyon, with only the birds for company. Said Custard Juggler, who was no Jock Marshall: "Look! There's a little *calf*." As we froze in our tracks, into sight bounded a young fox, half-grown and fluffy. He chased a butterfly along the track towards us and then stood poised on a log, twenty feet away, regarding the invaders of his sanctuary with the curious, untroubled gaze of a creature of the wild that has not yet learned to fear man.

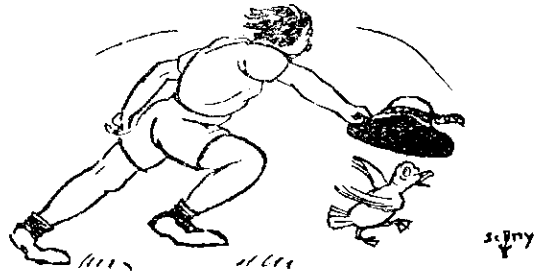
Some half-hour later we were skirting the base of a bluff, with Onions in the lead, when, suddenly, with a flurry of wings, a wild duck flew out of a hole in the cliff. Quick as thought, the Smiter of Ducks swept off her straw hat, and a moment later emerged triumphant with a second duck enveloped in its ample folds!

It was late one afternoon when we reached Billy's Creek and decided to "pause." The reasons? The living green carpet of the river bank, the sparkling ripple of the river, the sunset orange of the rugged bluffs, and the promise of unexplored caves, giant mulberries, campfires, and river blackfish—enticement enough, even for a Carrier of Cheeses. So we explored caves, guzzled mulberries, hoisted the nimble blackfish (twenty-six of him!) from his native Kowmung, met Ned Kelly, the King of the River, and even sampled some mulberry wine, rank as month-old mullet. And on one of those warm, dark evenings, under a giant casuarina, we saw what is only shown to mortals once in a hundred years. The moon leaned over a neighbouring bluff, full and round, divided by a feathery branch, and, dead in the middle, black against its silvery orb, perched a solemn owl, ears cocked and head on one side. The perfect Christmas card—come to life!

I could add that there came a time on the last night of this classic trip when the Cheese Carrier discovered to his joy a series of well-nourished maggots in his over-ripe burden, and resigned his charge to the tender care of a curious small boy; that the Onion-Bearer was mortally offended because nobody had had the courage to tackle dried onions for the whole of the trip; that the party, in toto, repaired to the Yerranderie Palais de Danse and set a new fashion by attending the current ball dressed in shirt, shorts, and various breeds of dancing-slippers from hob-nailed boots to rubber sandshoes.

Herein lies the virtue of loafing. We are not tuff, but, boy, we had fun!

Prepared, illustrated and confessed by Scotty.



RIDING BY GUNGARLIN.

By EDE GILMOUR (C.M.W.).

After reluctantly descending from a breath-taking trip with the C.M.Ws. among the green and flowering uplands of the Main Range between Kiandra and Kosciusko to the driest conditions in living memory on the Monaro, I was looking forward to staying with friends near Berridale and talking over the trip with them. For amongst them were men who had carted the timber by bullock team to build the Kosciusko Hotel, who had built Foreman's, Pound's Creek and many other huts; who made their own snow skis; who knew all the hidden secrets of the wary dingo, and how to trap him; and women who could make their own bread, butter, cheese and clothing, grow and preserve their own fruits and vegetables, cure their own meat, interpret the cries and behaviour of animals and birds, and (far from least) prophesy the weather. This latter is most important in such a severe climate, as stock must be brought down from good grazing on the higher snow leases in the summer before they are snow-bound.

When I expressed disappointment at not having seen the Alpine Hut, one of my friends said that she and her brother were droving sheep up to the mountains on the morrow, and, if I would like to come, they would ride up to the Hut next day. Would I like? I leave it to you!

So, with borrowed horse, boots, jodphurs, and most gorgeous sombrero, I set out early from Rocky Plain on the Monaro, through many diverse and pleasant paths, to the Alpine Hut under the shadow of the Big Brassy Mountain on the Main Range.

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Slowly we left the bare, dusty plains and rose amongst the wooded hills, with ever-widening vistas of mountain range and river valley. Splashing through the crystal waters of the Eucumbene, we climbed steeply up Nimmo Hill. Here two of the weaker stragglers were picked up and carried in front of my friends' saddles, but I turned a deaf ear to any further bleats of complaint, as I have found that a sheep seldom sits down without putting two or more hind feet in your eye, and I would have had to say (like the new chum whose horse put his foot in the stirrup), "If *you're* getting on, I'm getting off!"

We travelled over ever-steeper mountains (part of the way on the Alpine Hut road) until about mid-morning we arrived at the mountain property. This commanded a glorious view of The Big Bogong dominating the Main Range, the varying shades of light on the Big and Little Brassy Ranges, and beneath us the Snowy Plains, comprising the lovely, grassy valley of the Gungarlin with its blue ribbon of sparkling river winding through.

We rode down and along the sunny valley, crossing and re-crossing the clear, pebbled stream, to our headquarters hut. This was very commodious and so well stocked that it necessitated our carrying very little except fresh food in our saddle-bags or small haversacks. It was ideally situated on the side of a grassy, wooded knoll, with a big swimming pool just below on a bend of the Gungarlin, and rocky gorges, rapids, and quiet, grass-lined trout pools close by.

After a wonderful lunch we had an exciting gallop rounding up fresh saddle-horses, which, with flying hooves and flowing tails, protested at losing their freedom. I proved no "Man from Snowy River" when it came to careering headlong down those hills!

We packed salt out to the sheep and cattle, returning in time for a swim and to take the gun and fishing rods to the river. No, I did *not* catch my ear—much—and I *did* get three nibbles, which I am sure must be a record for a first attempt at fly-fishing. And the trout? Well, they must have had the best laugh in years! However, I *did* shoot a rabbit—but the details cannot yet be revealed, as they might prove of advantage to the enemy!

We lingered so long, drawn by the peace and beauty of the river, that when finally we carried our game back over the hill it was almost too dark to see the silhouettes of the visitors, who were sitting on the top rail of the fence. I enjoyed my tea all the more for the flow of rich, humorous tales of droving and the bush, of the difficulties of trying to persuade cows (which are *determined* to drown themselves) against joining the suicide club, especially during times of restricted water supplies.

Next morning it was hard to tear myself away from swimming, fishing and shooting; this time our ack-ack was directed against the fish-hawk, a large cormorant which swoops down, denuding the river of trout, more especially when the water is so low. However, finally we set off, well mounted, for the Alpine Hut, travelling south along the valley, then south-west up Broken Dray Creek through Boundary Flat to Teddy's Creek, which we followed up to the Gap in the Little Brassy Mountains. We now had to walk our horses most of the time, as the path was narrow, stony and steep, with overhanging boughs of snow gums or muzzlewood. From the Brassy Gap we had a wonderful view of the Snowy Plains behind us, while in front rose the Bull's Peaks and Big Brassy Mountains of the Main Range, with the spur of The Porcupines running down this side of the Tin Hut, and, below, the waters of the Burrungubuggee winding down to join the Gungarlin and Snowy below the Hotel Kosciusko. We descended

to Kidman's Hut, with its huge billy (which is almost as big !) whose tea revives Alpine-bound skiers in winter. Climbing steeply up a narrow, rocky track, encroached on by stunted snow gums and frequented by large black snakes, we followed up McDonnell's Creek, whose bed was torn by old gold diggings. Then we turned south along the foot of the Main Range, climbed over some ridges which would make wonderful ski slopes, and arrived at the Alpine Hut, near the head of a creek with the perfumed name of Dead Horse !

The hut has a huge kitchen range and two dormitories which would accommodate about sixteen, an emergency sledge, and a few skis for atmosphere. Immediately behind the hut the slopes of the Big Brassy take you quickly on to the Main Range, with its wealth of snowfields in winter and profusion of snow daisies and other flowers in summer. We were entertained during lunch by numerous wall sketches and writings of ski-ing antics, then returned by the same route, except that we followed Teddy's Creek down to the Gungarlin—the tourist route past the ancient Snowy Plains House with its interesting relics of the old days—a huge fireplace with chimney seats to accommodate about eight built into it at the sides, all sizes of iron camp ovens and three-legged pots to stand or hang over the open fire. Most of the mud has gone from the cracks of its low, thick slab walls—but two good rooms provided sufficient shelter for that ubiquitous Australian animal which penetrates so far and wide throughout the land that its habitat might be styled "Anywhere in Australasia," namely, the Bushwalker Austaliensis—as was proved by the two well-stocked rucksacks and sleeping bags which were found in occupation.

About a mile further on we passed the footbridge on the Gungarlin, where skiers leave motor transport for packhorses as far as the Brassy Gap, whence the skier himself becomes the packhorse for the last four miles !

We galloped home along the grassy valley, only drawing rein at the numerous river crossings or for a talk at the other occupied huts. A quick swim (in the sunset-tinted dusk) as antidote for any possible lack of appetite (!), a mighty tea (cooked by the man of the party), a starlit visit to the river, and then a roll into the blankets, without being able to fit in a return call to the camp of our previous night's visitors— the social round is too hectic in the mountains !

Yes, I think we *did* muster and attend to the sheep, but my thoughts still lingered on the river and the mountains as we rode back by a shortcut down to Grundle—a hill so steep the horses were almost perpendicular.

We gave chase to a fox, turned over a hedgehog, and disturbed flocks of crows almost as thick as the impressive black clouds which rose in a storm over the mountains behind us before we crossed the Nimmo Plains. Then we dived into the cool waters of the Eucumbene for a final fling before slipping off the saddles and cowboy rigs, and returning to the familiar domestic life.

I definitely recommend packing a horse in your walking kit ! Especially if he is Monaro or mountain bred, and I could also guarantee the satisfaction of a trip to these haunts in winter, when they would be covered with the unearthly beauty of a dazzling mantle of snow. But any day would be good enough for me to go, with A. B. Paterson—

"Down by Kosciusko, where the pineclad ridges raise
Their torn and rugged battlements on high,
Where the air is clear as crystal, and the white stars fairly blaze
At midnight in the cold and frosty sky."

WINDY DAY AT ERA. —W. E. Duncombe (S.B.W.).

ACTION ! —J. Wood (S.B.W.).

FALLING MOUNTAIN, TASMANIA. —W. E. Duncombe (S.B.W.).

KANGAROO HOALHAVEN RIVER. —W. Mulligan (R.R.C.).

MEN AND MOUNTAINS.

By B. THOMPSON (C. M-W.).

To all of us in whom the love of mountains and nature is so deeply rooted, it is difficult to realise that mountains were once regarded as objects of dread. Greek and Roman poets write of them with dislike, and even a modern writer has felt this fear—"the threat of the hills and their implication that all men were intruders on the surface of the earth."

This feeling persisted for centuries, until with the waning of the power of classical traditions, and the throwing off of political and religious bonds, the artificial world of towers and towns became too narrow for man's widening activities. Then he perceived that Nature possessed inexhaustible attractions, although, even then, happiness was regarded as a "sort of energy of contemplation," and mountain climbing was consequently condemned by those who considered that the enjoyment of physical exercise was antagonistic, not complementary, to the spiritual enjoyment of mountains.

The writings of Rousseau, Goethe, Wordsworth, Shelley, all exemplify the awakening of the age to an appreciation of Nature, and the development of a school of thought opposed to the materialism and commercialism of the times.

Later still, man discovered a new joy and health from mountain climbing, shown in the wealth of Alpine and mountaineering literature of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He developed a new interest in natural sciences, where walking became the physical medium for the study of birds, animals, trees, flowers and rocks. With this came a finer natural philosophy. As Grey Owl says : "A man will always lack something until he is so steeped in the atmosphere of the Wild and has been so possessed by long association with it, of a feeling of close kinship and responsibility to it, that he may even unconsciously avoid tramping on too many flowers on his passage through the forest. Then and then only, can he become truly receptive to the delicate nuances of a culture that may elude those who are not so tuned in on their surroundings."

Nature also became the inspiration of poetry, landscape painting and music. Beethoven has drawn profusely from Nature, particularly in the Pastoral Symphony, while to Julius Kugy the grandness and harmony of the elements on an Alpine summit brought vivid memories of Bach's music. He seemed "to catch the silver notes of angel choirs in solemn sacred harmony."

Man also developed a new sympathy with the inanimate world through personal contact with it. From this arose Pantheistic forms of religion—what Ruskin calls "the instinctive sense of the Divine Presence not formed into distinct belief" lying at the root of the profound admiration for the nobler aspect of mountain scenery. Although this philosophy was new to Western Civilization, the Hindus have been drawn to the mountains for centuries, and pilgrims to the Himalayas brave the heat and disease of the lower valleys, and finally the freezing airs of the mountains, to purify themselves in the icy glacial waters of the Alaknanda River. A Hindu sage of old has written : "He who thinks of Himachal (the Himalayan snows), though he should not behold him, is greater than he who performs all worship in Kashi (Benares)."

Australia is a product of this awakening desire for wider fields of activity and the subsequent drift towards Nature. The love of wide spaces and mountains seems instinctive to us, but has really

been built up by a slow process through the ages. Our literature is not burdened with complex philosophies, although these have helped to establish in us a solid interest and love for Nature. Here "we are intolerant of everything that is not simple, unbiased by prescription, liberal as the wind and natural as the mountain crags."

SHOALHAVEN.

By ALBERT BUSSELL (R.C.C.).

By mountain pass and hillside track,
By gum and willow oak,
An old campsite, a miner's shack—
Side creek and rocky soak—
O'er stony bed and sandy bar,
And snag and sunken tree,
Shoalhaven answers from afar
The calling of the sea.

I heard her murmuring whisper—
It called persistently:
And growing clearer, crisper,
Appealed insistently.
So I left my books and dropped my pen,
I packed my rucksack tight
And took my paddles up again,
Shoalhaven's stream to fight.

In craggy gorge to rising stream
Canoe and gear we trust:
The Journey's on—the paddles gleam
To fight the river's thrust.
The sullied waters flowing fast
In treachery concealed
The submerged rock—'til 'gainst it cast
'Twas jarringly revealed.

Where "Block-up" rears its russet head,
Thro' mulga-wooded jaws
The river's mighty waters fed
Lost Tolwong's mining cause.
Here ghosts of other days recall
The noiseless foot of time,
And once again 'tween rise and fall
Old Tolwong reigns sublime.

Past spur and wooded mountain-side—
Now wading deep 'midst oak—
The thrilling rapid's racing tide—
The pleasant campfire smoke.
At night the stars in splendour shine,
The air is dripping dew,
And we to Morpheus resign—
To-morrow battle new!

By mountain pass and hillside track,
By wattle and cedar and pine,
An old campsite, a miner's shack—
Fond memories of mine!
From rocky fall to seaward mouth
Her song goes wild and free;
I'm coming back, Queen of the South,
I hear you calling me.

The story goes that someone once asked Daniel Boone if he had ever been lost. He answered, "No; but I have been considerably bewildered."

And when an American Indian was asked the same question, he replied, with his usual dignity, "Injun never lost. Wigwam sometimes lost."

Bushwalkers, like snails, always carry their wigwams on their backs, so they cannot be lost. But accidents do happen; also, hikers and inexperienced walkers do get lost sometimes in our Australian bush.

For many years the N.S.W. Federation of Bush Walking Clubs had a well-organised and active Search and Rescue Section. As a result of the war this gradually faded away, but action is now being taken to re-organise the "S. & R.," and the call is going out for all active bushwalkers to register with it so that efficient searchers can be provided whenever the need arises.

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME.

By PADDY PALLIN.
(R.C.C., R.R.C. and S.B.W.)

"To reserve for public recreation certain scenic and rugged areas accessible to tourists, bikers and campers."

"A classification should be made of all recreation areas so that the need for nature preservation, tourist-catering, camping and other purposes should be clearly defined and distinguished. . . . . In any legislation the designation of an area as a 'National Park,' 'Primitive Area,' 'Camping Reserve,' and so forth should automatically apply to it a specified group of conditions."

This has a familiar ring. Sounds like bushwalking propaganda! Yet the quotation is from the official report of the National Fitness Council of New South Wales.

What is the National Fitness Council? Most people have an idea it is mainly concerned with physical culture, but its scope is far beyond that. Its members aim to promote and assist every form of physical recreation for youth and adult alike. They are not "just another committee," either. Under the dynamic direction of Mr. Gordon Young and the able control of Mr. A. E. Symons (himself a one-time bushwalker), great things have already been achieved. Two camps (mainly for school children) have been established, one near Patonga and the other by Lake Macquarie. Plans are well in hand for the establishment of further camps.

Youth hostels are also on the list. Near Sydney hostels may have to be built, but, generally speaking, advantage will be taken of

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existing accommodation. Arrangements will be made with country folk to supply sleeping accommodation for members of the Youth Hostels Association. In this way people will be able to make walking trips through interesting country without carrying blankets or tent. Many bushwalkers shudder at the thought of Youth Hostels. They see visions of be-slacked, high-heeled females, and litter-scattering louts besmirching their beloved bush. There is, however, no reason why Bushwalking and Youth Hostelling should clash. The tendency of the Youth Hostels is of necessity to develop in areas where there is settlement, whereas most of our bush trips take us into the wilderness. Another thing, the hostels will each be in the charge of a warden, who will not only be "guide, philosopher and friend" to the hostellers, but who will see that the required standard of behaviour is adhered to. Discipline can be maintained because only members of the Youth Hostels Association will be accommodated. Before long that Association will certainly build up traditions that it will require its members to honour, just as the bushwalking clubs have made it a basic requirement for their members to "leave your campsite tidy."

After the war the emphasis will be on the out-of-doors. Camps for school children and adults will be established throughout the State, so that every person who wishes may camp. (The demand even now is so great that the accommodation in the existing camps could be filled many times over.) From these camps short overnight trips are to be run so that the youngsters will have a chance of developing the spirit of adventure.

The National Fitness Council has already set something in motion that we bushwalkers might well have initiated years ago. A series of handbooks is being published which explain in the simplest possible language things we all have wondered about in the bush. Booklets on plants, flowers, trees, insects and rocks are already in hand. Cleverly written, capably illustrated, it is to be hoped that supplies will be made available to the bushwalkers as well as the hostellers.

All this means one thing, that there is going to be a greater and greater number of people on the high roads and the bye roads, on the tracks and in the bush. A movement is gathering strength which after the war will be a mighty rising tide. We can adopt one of two attitudes to it. We may resent what is happening or appreciate what is being done. We can ignore the National Fitness Council or co-operate with its members, not forgetting that in the National Fitness Council we have another avenue of approach on the question of reservations, while the greater number of walkers will increase the urgency of our demands.

Let us not sit Canute-like commanding the tide to turn, but rather launch our craft and ride the flood to reach the ends we desire.

Recently a couple of bushwalkers on holiday finished their trip through country where they proved to be a new phenomenon to the local farmers. There is a war on, and the puzzled farmers decided that the unaccountable strangers must be fifth-columnists—spies!

Happily, the bushwalkers were wearing their club badges, and the local policeman who was called in proved to be Sergeant Jack Love. The same Jack Love who had been stationed at Yeranderie for so many years, so "a good time was had by all" as he received the latest news of many of the older bushwalkers and exploits of the past were recalled.

Those farmers now know that if they see any more bushwalkers wandering through the district they need not worry.

"If they are wearing that little badge, they are all right; and you need not think about organising any search parties for them, either!"

"THANK YOU, MR. HARTIGAN!"

By E. CAINES (TED) PHILLIPS (R.C.C.).

[For the information of interstate and overseas readers, Mr. Hartigan is the New South Wales Commissioner for Railways.]

Walkers and canoeists, being human, are inclined to accept the commonplace with a too-much-for-granted attitude, and rarely do we count the commonplace among our real assets. How frequently does the Katoomba to Hill Top foot-slogger, or the Tallong to Nowra rapid-shooting dipper-of-the-paddle, realise that the train is as indispensable to him as his butter container, tent, or box of matches? How often do these lovers of the wilds realise that the train is as necessary to them as the bat to budding Bradmans, or a tiny white ball to the gentry who bawl out "fore" as their password?

There is no greater joy to me than to take my seat in the country-bound train, and, with my party, delight in anticipation of the trip that lies ahead of us when off for a long walk or a canoe trip; no greater joy than to hear the bell ring and the locomotive hiss out his steam, each hiss increasing in accellerando as he draws me from the drab suburbs out into the "great open spaces." My cares, my ills, my grievances, my troubles, are instantly in the dim background the moment the giant "C36" or "P" loco. merrily hisses as his pistons send those driving-wheels rapidly over the steel ribbons to the wilderness I love. There is no greater joy, upon returning from an extended walk or navigation, than to pile into a "box" of a box carriage and, with my party, delight in foolish revelry with the compartment to ourselves, or, if alone, to relax at ease while the train speeds me back to life's humdrum, which is not my privilege completely to avoid. Thank you, Mr. Hartigan, for the scores of times I've revelled in childish nonsense with my walking and canoeing companions, and for the solace I have frequently experienced as I relaxed in complete comfort on the way home and turned over in my mind the events of a lone walk.

As outdoor folks, we prefer the "primitive" in the wilds; we care not, as a body, for what the military would call "unnatural" features of the landscape, and thus roads, railways, bridges and the like (which come under this category) are apt to escape our notice. But there are times when I like the "unnatural" feature of a train in my landscapes, and many are the recollections wherein the train figures to such an extent as to really enhance the already beautiful view. Once during a three-day leisurely walk along the coast range escarpment, we camped right on the cliff edge; the scene during the hours of darkness was even better than by day—tens of thousands of lights on the coastal flats extended miles to the north and south, some fourteen hundred feet below; but the lights that fascinated us most were those of the lighted carriages of trains making their mysterious way in the inky darkness. With our backs comfortably supported by our faithful rucksacks, and with the cheery crackle of the camp fire at hand, making regular dress-circle seats, we watched a train for forty miles of its journey; it played hide-and-seek with us when it entered cuttings and tunnels, or else was hidden from view by town buildings, but it would always appear again with a sudden burst of light that grew in length until it appeared like a serpent in a glow-worm covering. Thank you, Mr. Hartigan, for that very memorable night, and the hour's delightful entertainment your train gave us!

We saw another train from the Knife Edge on The Bucketts at Gloucester, which we climbed a few bours prior to the commencement

of our Barrington and Manning Rivers canoe trip; it was deep down in the valley, and we watched it for miles of its course. I've seen a train from the ridges many miles north of Woodford, and from such a viewpoint it was a grand scene as it sped on its way down the main mountain ridge; I've craned my neck to see one from the floor of Glenbrook Gorge as, laboriously, it chugged its way along "The Portals" before belching into the tunnel; I've spotted a goods train from Mount Hay, and this would be some twelve miles as the crow flies. On our annual blackberry-gathering pilgrimage in February, the train gives us endless enjoyment as we hold up our kerosene-tins (full to the brim) for envious passengers to gaze down upon as the train puffs out of the tunnel into the buffalo-grass covered Otford Valley.

It was at Colo Vale station that Mr. Hartigan's servant gave us permission to boil the billy on the ganger's fireplace while we waited for the homewards train after a delightful three-day Nattai walk. It was at Kurrajong station that another servant allowed us the privilege of boiling our billies on his kerosene stove in the office. It was at this station, too, that our railway host escorted us to a guard's van on the siding wherein a cheery fuel stove blazed, and whereon we boiled our billies and prepared delicious toast in celestial comfort and out of the icy blasts which surrounded the van. Thank you, Mr. Hartigan, for the many memorable feeds thus partaken of at the invitation of your very congenial servants! Many's the time, when the train has had occasion to wait at a station for a time, I've put some, then unrationed and very plentiful, tea in my billy, taken it along to the engine and asked the driver or fireman to oblige with hot water; provided they had the time, I have never been refused. So I make my way back to my seat and have tea on the train in leisure and comfort as it speeds me homewards for another hour or so. Miss Touristy, who usually sits opposite me, is, perhaps, shocked at the sight of the blackened billy and, perhaps, thinks a silver teapot or something of dining-car standards would be less objectionable, but what care I! Only recently, one of my party took a left-over, partly-cooked grilled steak along to the loco. driver and re-grilled it over the furnace; did he relish it? Thank you, Mr. Hartigan, for the ready-made fires, the tea and that steak!

Nor is the train ride devoid of many humorous situations. It was on the Brisbane Express en route to Armidale for our epic 110 miles canoe trip on the Macleay River that an interested fellow-passenger remarked, "But surely you don't drink the same water that you canoe in?" And it was on the return journey from Kempsey after this same trip that another of like type said, "You can have it for mine—too many sharks!" In fresh water! Once when we were making for the train at Medlow Bath after a Cox's River walk, having "pulled out" via the White Dog, telling our route to tourists from the Valley Farm, we were "tickled pink" when one of them, pointing to the white-painted Hydro Majestic Hotel high up on the Megalong escarpment, exclaimed: "Oh! the White Dog; is that it up there?" Thank you, Mr. Hartigan, for the numerous laughs I've enjoyed at the expense of your patrons!

I have two complaints to lay against you, Mr. Hartigan, and two only. First, your trains end at Central and force me to change over from the snug comfort of your train to a crowded and icy-cold tram-car in order to reach my home. Oh! that you could build a special track to pass within a hundred yards of my door! Secondly, you should discourage mouth-organ playing on your trains. Don't misunderstand me, sir; I'm no spoil sport, I'm not unsociable, but, being

a musician, I would really offer you a thousand thanks if you could restrict such a practice and thus grant me the peace I seek when I use your trains on my way to "them thar 'ills."

. . . . . .

Times have changed. No longer do we see crowds of bushwalkers and canoeists merrily wending their way along the platforms at Central, packs on back and paddles in hand. Mr. Hartigan's trains are now playing the grandest part they ever played in the nation's history—no wonder civilian services are restricted, curtailed, and even cancelled! For all this, we can still sneak away for an occasional trip and regain our physical and mental equilibrium. With the return of peace, which must surely come, we can look forward to complete reconstruction of our activities, and it will be a scene of super delight to see swarms of bushwalkers, canoeists, campers, and others crowding on to the trains as in days of yore. May that day soon come!

For all that the railways have meant, mean, and will continue to mean to the bushwalker-canoeist-camper, I say, in all sincerity: **Thank you, Mr. Hartigan!**

Six years ago the N.S.W. Federation of Bush Walking Clubs suffered a serious loss when its President was whisked off to Brisbane to open a Queensland branch for his firm. The new business proved a lusty infant, and was growing into a sturdy youth when Mr. Hitler entered the arena, followed by Mr. Tojo. Now that business, like so many others, has ceased to exist, and, as a result, Mr. Walter Roots has returned to Sydney, where he is doing a full share in the war effort. All bushwalkers will be glad to know that he has also returned to the Council of the Federation—as its Vice-President.

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FRUGALITY.

By TOD SLOANE.

(Rucksack Club, Sydney, N.S.W.)

I have forgotten
What it is
To eat
A great big Sunday dinner in a house.
On Sunday I am always in the bush—
The Labyrinth,
The Megalong,
The Dogs,
The Grose,
The Nattai,
Or even in the lowly National Park,
Or (say it reverently) Morella-karong.

I have forgotten
What it was
I ate
At those big Sunday dinners in a house;
Did I embloat my hog-like self upon
Roast pork,
Potatoes,
Cabbage,
Plum pudding,
Wine jelly?
And did I fill the cracks with heady fizz?
Or (here's to you!) spirituous liquor?

I have forgotten
All of that
Old past.
I only know the Sundays of the Bush;
That's all the Sunday world I want to know—
The tracks,
The hills,
The creeks,
The rocks,
The trees,
And all the scrub and the lantana vines,
And (do not frighten them!) the singing birds.

But I'll remember
Down my years
Of age
The simple fare the strong Bush-walkers eat;
You must be frugal if you love their life—
Their joys,
Their fears,
Their toil,
Their grime,
Their grins,
And in the nights their silence with the stars,
And (say it softly!) sweet, deep sleep.

"GOOD CLIMBING."

By DOT ENGLISH.

(Sydney Bush Walkers and the N.Z. Alpine Club.)

To-day I received a most pleasant surprise—a red-bordered cablegram from an Air Force boy on the other side of the world. It said, "Good Climbing," and was signed "Birtle Esquilant." Anyone thinking to derive from those few words some hint of a proposed mountaineering trip are due for a disappointment. "Good Climbing" is just a form of greeting among the Alpine Club members similar to the Bush Walkers' "Good Walking" or "Good Camping," or the more common "Good Day!"

Dot English —

"Not much point in cabling that meaningless message from war-stricken Europe," you might say, but for me it has provided a whole day of happy reminiscences. To-day is the anniversary of one of the greatest climbs we did in the Southern Alps of New Zealand. West Peak of Earnslaw is not so high as the Minarets or Malte Brun (each 10,000 ft.), or Mount Cook (12,000 ft.), all of which we had climbed together the previous Christmas. West Peak is lower by 1000 ft., but it has this incalculable charm about it, that it has seldom been climbed before. A dark cloud of mystery broods over it—secrets, stony, silent, inhabit its gloomy fastnesses—a realm where even conjecture may not enter.

Brilliant summer had passed; the air was sharpened with the faint sting of coming autumn—a time of turbulent wind and sudden rain—of falling leaves and ripening snow berries.

Below the Birley Glacier just about sundown we established a high bivvy among the gleaming snow grass. Close by was a dark, rocky waterfall chasm which seemed possessed by strange, shrill voices—cold with an icy breath that made a red fire race in our veins and keyed up all the millions of fine pulses in our bodies to the highest pitch of vibrant, singing life.

We heated up a ready-cooked stew on a high-altitude primus and ate, snuggled up in our sleeping bags, while we watched and listened to the high cold wind which rushed ceaselessly out of the translucent blue darkness, bowing down the long silvery tussock grass till one thought of a dryad's hair streaming down over the lovely curving slope in endless billowing ripples.

Tea over, we stowed away our things for the night, then lay on our backs, partly sheltered by the sturdy tussock clumps, enjoying the gusty tumult of wind as it poured down the slope, bearing a smell of icecaps and illimitable snow-fields. We looked up into the incredible height of blue, deeper than any ocean, where wisps of cloud swirled and streamed and poured themselves in fine cascades from one blue interstellar space to another. Stars lay scattered—myriad golden points of light—and the moon was full. Birtle slept, breathing gently into the tussock grass. In the half state between waking and sleeping I thought I was above that vast infinity of space looking down on it, and then it seemed as though "down, down forever I was falling through the solid framework of created things, and must forever sink into that vast abyss" . . . . and I, too, slept!

There is a quiver which runs through all nature a little while before dawn, when sleep vanishes. We awoke to see the whole hillside a-ripple under the fluid wind, and we listened to its thousand voices while we cooked our breakfast on a flaring grass fire.

And now we were away--up over the windy tussocks in the soft grey light before the dawn, more alive than all the living, light as the wind itself, powerful as a storm, tireless as a turbulent glacier stream! Oh, the joy of living!—to feel the ice axe clink on rock and ice!—to see the timeless miracle of dawn breaking on the mountain tops!

It took time proceeding up the Birley Glacier, which was considerably broken, but from the top we could look down into the Rees Valley--a great space inhabited by moving air and billows of swirling mist. We were now in Wright Col, where the snow slopes make a graceful curve and swell to the summit of East Peak. That was the first mountain I ever climbed in New Zealand, and though I have been up it several times since it will always remain a sight that catches the heart; the thrill and wonder of that first snow climb will never be forgotten.

Passing through Wright Col, suddenly we got our first glimpse of the great fluted wedge of rock which is West Peak. There it rose, vast gloom at its base and vaster gloom surrounding its summit. How wonderful the loneliness was up there!

The desolate scree terraces on the west side of Earnslaw were crossed, then a long stretch of misty morning slipped by while we proceeded up a steep, iced crack of rotten rock which led to the high col between the East and West Peaks.

A short pitch up the hard, unsympathetic ice slopes of the steep S.E. face, moving one at a time, and then we went together along the summit ridge, wind-weathered into two terraces, in a world all grey and white—the rocks grey and grey and more grey, till they they were rather black than grey; and the snow grey, and less grey, and not grey at all, but a gentle tone of white, robbed of its hardness. This is the place where time and eternity, earth and heaven meet. We absorbed it in a vivid silent interval. On a mountain top there is no need for speech—between the climbers there is a silent, comprehensive friendship beyond the need of words. They are conscious together of the subduing spell of silence, the sudden joy of new discoveries in mountain loveliness, the wonder and the beauty of it all —and that is enough.

And now all form and definition were quietly blotted out; a soft mist crept about us as we climbed down south-west of the summit to the col between West Peak and the first of the Seven Sisters. There they sat, seven timeless ladies in a timeless row, and looming out of a sea of mist was the grim black bulk of Pluto standing guard over them, his face stony and terrible, his fierce forbidding brows drawn together in a frown that boded ill for any paltry mortal who might think to show them disrespect. "Somewhat grisly," murmured Birtle; "it will be pleasing to get back to our camp." And so was I thinking of lower levels—of the friendly valley where there were lots of **little** things—little ferns and berries and flowers—tiny gauze specks that flew and flitted above the banks of the singing stream—sunstarts on gleaming leaves and grass, and a gaysome little valley breeze merrying over the swaying clover.

On our mountain height the mist lifted somewhat, and, gazing down, we saw a great, unfamiliar valley, deep, dark and desolate, and wet from a fine driving rain.

"Oh Birtle, where are we?"

Concluding that this must be Pluto Col and not Wright Col as we had expected—the two places lay a whole valley's width apart—we made all haste through it, relieved at being able to turn our backs on the rather frightening giant, Pluto. Skirting round the high rock terraces and snowfields at the valley's head we reached the next col, which must be Wright Col, unless the mountain was bewitched, as indeed it seemed. We searched for our footmarks made in the morning ascent, and found traces so faint and dim that they seemed to vanish as we looked at them, and we could not be sure that they were not rather tracks made by a wandering deer stepping lightly on the hard surface of the snow.

We zig-zagged up a snowslope, following the faint trail till it vanished on the hard ice, and there was nothing visible through the mist to tell us whether this was the col we sought or not. But it was so, and gladly we strode down the Birley Glacier, and so to our bivvy site by the waterfall; thence down the springing tussocks and across the long shoulders of the hills to our little hut perched like an eagle's eyrie on the tree-line, where the golden autumn forest and the snow grass met.

Night had stolen all detail from the hills when we finished our evening meal. The valley slept below and the snowy peaks above had silently withdrawn into the upper darkness. We stretched ourselves comfortably in our hessian bunks—a few desultory scraps of conversation—hazy fleeting visions of snow and rock and ice slopes —of a dark giant and seven princesses who sat together like god and goddesses in the kingly region above—clothed in a blanket of mist—

all asleep . . . . . asleep . . . . . sleep . . . . . .

then all consciousness melted away, and a great silence enwrapped us.

So it will always be. The memories of those early trips when we went hungry or thirsty, when the morning frost found the openings in our blankets and robbed us of much needed sleep, or when the rain came through, or under, the badly pitched tent, will always be with us as we come back for more.

And so it is, to-day, that when new members arrive, it is not the member's friend that I look for, but rather the lone walker that comes in under his own steam, resolved that he will learn more of the game that so far has only given him hunger, thirst and fatigue.

LIAISON.

By D. LAWRY (S.B.W.).

For over eighteen months the "B.S.C." has been maintaining contact between the boys, and girls, in blue or khaki and their cobbers on the home front who are still able to do a bit of bush-walking. No matter how good the various Comforts Funds may be, there is no one but a bushwalker can send bushwalking news and views to bushwalkers on service; and how those boys at battle stations do appreciate the photos of their beloved bush and the latest news of their favourite camping spots!

Inaugurated early in 1941 by The Sydney Bush Walkers as a co-operative effort of all the clubs affiliated with the N.S.W. Federation of Bush Walking Clubs, the representative group of workers was named the Bushwalkers' Services Committee. Its objects were to collect the names and addresses of all the members of all the clubs who were out of physical touch with their clubs through being in the fighting forces, and to combine the efforts of the various clubs to provide for those members some of the things that are dear to the hearts of bushwalkers.

In some of the smaller clubs so many members had joined up that there was hardly anyone left to send comforts of any kind, or to go walking and so provide the right kind of news for letters. The B.S.C. brought into the general pool the membership of the larger as well as the smaller clubs. Its members quickly got to work and made simultaneous drives for the names and addresses of club members on service, and for supplies of bushwalking photographs and magazines, and of books, papers, etc. Its representatives have attended all social functions armed with cameras and paper and pencils, and have collected the letters to the lads on the spot.

Regular fortnightly postings have been maintained for over eighteen months, as has a steady flow of cash to meet the expenses of postage, stationery, photographs, and occasional small parcels of peanuts, cigarettes, etc., as well as a large Christmas parcel. A very fine Christmas card, designed and produced by a member of one of the federated clubs, expressed seasonal greetings. In addition to books, magazines, and a steady stream of letters, approximately 3000 photos of interest to walkers have carried "mental comfort" to men stationed all round the world.

The B.S.C. mails to comrades in the Navy, Army, Air Force, Merchant Marine and Women's Auxiliary Forces. The number of names and addresses in its register has grown to a hundred, and each week the inward mails bring letters of thanks and appreciation for the work this committee is doing.

This magazine will be mailed by the B.S.C. as soon as supplies are available, and will surely be passed round in many ships and camps. If it reaches any club member who has not been receiving anything direct from the B.S.C., will he, or she, please note there is only one reason for the apparent neglect. Postings can only be made to names and addresses that are known; so write to the Bushwalkers' Services Committee, c/o Paddy Pallin, 327 George Street, Sydney, and tell them your club and how to address mail to you. Yes, our very good friend, Paddy, is in this, too. He has lent a room for the Committee to work in, for which all bushwalkers are extremely grateful. We are also deeply appreciative of the indefatigable work of our liaison officers, the members of the B.S.C.

SNAKE-BITE!

By IDA McAULAY.

(*Bush Club.*)

We first saw them soon after leaving our camp site beside the Franklin River on our start towards the Frenchman's Cap. In those days it was not usual for us to meet another party when in the bush in Tasmania. When we overtook a man in a blue serge suit, a collar and tie, and brown calf shoes, picking his way tentatively and unsteadily, because of the weight and ill-balance of his pack, over slippery saplings that corduroyed a boggy stretch of track, our mood became a little tarnished. We spurred on, vouchsafing him little more than an affirmative when he enquired if he were on the track to the Frenchman. Other members of our party had seen two more rather similarly clad individuals on another branch of the track. We were not elated at the idea of sharing our mountains with people who wore the wrong clothes, and packs that could only have been put together by novices. We wondered if they were on their way to the Jane River goldfields beyond the turn-off to the Frenchman, and hoped they were.

One of them carried a shot-gun for protection against snakes, of which they seemed unusually apprehensive. None of the three was very sure of where or how they were going, or whether they would get there. These things we discovered after we had passed and re-passed each other a couple of times during respective halts for lunch.

We made some rather caustic remarks among ourselves upon the unsuitable array of camping gear and tinned foods we saw spread around them as they rested, and bathed their already blistered feet in the clear, tea-coloured water of the Loddon River. The collars and ties had disappeared, but in their city waistcoats, with shirt-sleeves and trouser-legs rolled up, the three still made incongruous figures among the ferns and mosses of the river growth.

We next saw them two nights later when we stood round our fire in the early dusk of a myrtle forest on the borders of Lake Vera, waiting for rice and tea billies to boil. Rather white and weary, they stumbled into the small clearing where we had made our camp. Tasmanians have a rather unfortunate habit of responding to most situations by saying nothing. We went on standing round our fire in silence while the three, visibly impressed, asked us in hushed tones if they might camp beside us. We—graciously, I hope—permitted them the freedom of the bush, and—the billy boiling—offered them tea, then relapsed into our former wordless state. The three went to bed scarcely raising their voices above whispers.

FOREST MAGIC.

Relations between the two parties underwent some forest change in the night, for next morning we were more like one group of people than two. We learned that the three were from Melbourne, and had never been in the bush before; and even began to distinguish them as individuals. The one with the gun, who was so nervous of snakes, and whose brown shoes had offended us, was the most urban of the three. He had only come because of his friendship for their leader, a dark, slim young man of twenty-two or three, who, like all leaders, was the one in the party with the most enthusiasm, imagination and intelligence. It was he who had conceived the whole idea of this trip, and forced the others to come. Having seen a photograph of the Frenchman in some Government tourist advertisement, he had been fired with the desire to see it in reality. The

third was the most uncouth of the three, and we wondered at his presence among them. He had a rather vacant blue eye, and dumbly did what the others told him. All three were factory workers.

It seemed that the first must start back that day, for by the time he reached Melbourne his holiday would be ended. He was reluctant to make the journey alone, so his companions, their leader decided, would go part of the way with him to see him on to the easy Jane River track. They would return to Lake Vera that night, and follow us to the Frenchman next day.

Later, while we dallied high in a mountain cradle, among clear pools set in rounded banks of bright green cushion moss and clumps of silver badger grass, we spoke of our fellow-travellers. For them this was an adventure into the unknown. They came, as we felt people should come to mountains, not to "bag" them, or "do" them, or even to conquer them. The mountains had beckoned, and they had followed the call—all the way from the factories and streets of Melbourne.

This pleasant dawdling was followed by a night which I think none of us will forget. The full moon rose and suffused everything with an unearthly beauty. We sat beside the dark water of Lake Tahune, deep in a bowl among surrounding walls of quartzite, and gazed sometimes at the pale, reflected rock mass of the Frenchman and Venus, a single point of light, shining from the surface of the water, sometimes at the great white overhanging dome itself. We knew how rare it was to be in the perfect place at such a perfect moment. The Frenchman is more often than not torn at and blustered upon by winds, hidden by blizzards, or lost in mists and driving rain. This beautiful, still mood was only a rare interlude among many stormier ones. Knowing how brief it was likely to be, we wished our Melbourne friends were there to see it so, and to climb the mountain with us next day.

It was as if the mountain, for a short time, were spell-bound, for the following morning was as still and clear as the night before. As we climbed higher, with the sparkling quartzite grating sharply under our nailed boots, we grew more elated, and grateful to the gods of the mountains for allowing us this perfect day. On the very summit we moved about a little restlessly, unable at first to adjust ourselves to this complete attainment of our dreams.

To the west, between mountains, was the horizon line of the sea —the southern Indian Ocean. There the sky was dark with coming clouds, and we knew the perfect day was near its end.

HIDDEN FRENCHMAN.

After nightfall, when it was raining steadily, from the shelter of our tents beside the lake we heard voices. It was our Melbourne friends arriving. Some of our party went out to meet them and help them pitch and drain their tent and light a fire. They came back reporting that the two—the Leader and his Henchman, as we called them—were very tired. They, and the whole of their cumbersome equipment, were wet.

Next day, though we were sheltered from the wind, the rain was heavy and incessant, and there was nothing to be seen. This was the day the Leader had reserved for climbing the Frenchman. We all spent it in our tents. The following morning both parties were bound to return. Though we were full of sympathy for the other two and regret for what they had missed, they, or rather the Leader (for what his Henchman felt none seemed to know or think important) appeared satisfied that the trip was well worth while.

Our party was the first to leave. It was still raining, and the Frenchman hidden, but not so heavily as the day before. When we reached the lip of the bowl in which Lake Tahune lay we looked down and saw the water half revealed through swirling mists.

Late that afternoon, when we were well past Lake Vera, the two overtook us where we sat beside a creek, making a late afternoon tea. They passed us, heading out into a long tongue of button-grass that led towards the Jane River track, and soon disappeared in a rain and mist-laden greyness. Ten minutes later we were following them; and were surprised when a sudden lightening of the weather revealed the plain—glisteningly olive-green and orange-brown—completely devoid of human figures.

TRUE LEADER.

While we were wondering what had happened we almost stumbled upon the two where they crouched, hunched up, among the big tussocks of button-grass. Before they had formed the words we knew what had happened—snake-bite. The Leader had his boot open and blood flowing freely from where he had cut his foot with a pen-knife. His Henchman knelt beside him with a white face, one end of a puttee dangling ineffectually from his hand. Strangely enough, they had asked us that morning what to do in such a case. Before that, they had not the most elementary idea. The Henchman seemed uncertain how to make a ligature. The men of our party quickly applied one, the Leader, though a little shaken, remaining the calmer of the two. The snake, a big one, he said, had bitten just where his boot had broken open and there had been nothing to protect him.

The best thing seemed to be to make for shelter in a hut on the Jane River track a mile or so in the opposite direction from ours, where miners sometimes camped on their way to and from the goldfields. Two of us went on to find it, start a fire and prepare coffee, while the others followed with the patient, carrying his pack and helping him along. It was soon so dark that we had to let our feet find their own way along the track by following a stream of water. When we were off it we stumbled knee deep into boggy holes between the buttongrass.

We found the hut beside a river, and by the light of a match saw something of the state it was in. We threw out the worst of the old boots, socks and discarded clothing; and, everything being wet, started the fire with bits of brushwood from the bunks. The fireplace was in an open end of the hut, and rain came down and damped our bits of kindling while we tried to light them. However, long before we heard the others arriving we had a good fire going, for, luckily, in those parts much of the wood burns both green and wet. Coffee was made by the time the over-tired and bedraggled party arrived. They were cold and wet to the skin. The packs of our Melbourne friends were double their normal weight, because their blankets, and everything else in them, were soaked.

We warmed our patient as best we could with fire and dry sleeping bags and coffee, and talked cheerfully of all the people we knew who had been snake-bitten and were none the worse. The ligature was duly loosened at intervals and, after he had been fed and rested, his colour became better, and we began to feel sure that he was not going to suffer serious effects from the bite; in fact, we suspected that the snake had struck part of his boot first and wasted much of its poison on that. We admired the calm, matter-of-fact way he took the whole affair. Even in that predicament he remained the Leader, and told his Henchman what to do.

By some time after midnight we were all dry, and our Melbourne friends' blankets as well. Somehow or other each found a place to lie down and sleep.

By daylight the interior of the hut was so unprepossessing that we preferred to breakfast in the light drizzle outside. Our patient seemed quite well except for a stiff and painful leg. He decided to rest it for twenty-four hours and do the last stage of the journey next day. As they were now on the well-marked track, and seemed all right, we left them, saying quite an affectionate farewell to the men we had earlier looked at so askance. Such is the effect of shared experience in the bush.

Later we heard from the patient that he suffered that day rather badly from headache and sickness, but was quite fit to travel on the next day.

THE CHARM OF THE BUFFALO.

By GEORGE W. KENYON (C.M.W.).

The Buffalo is twenty miles from the Bogong High Plains, a rugged assortment of rocks, hills and patches of forest perched on top of long timbered ridges—a plateau not connected to the surrounding uplands; an individualist in the crowded north-east hill country; small, yet having a bewildering variety of natural features. Grand country to walk in—full of odd corners, even more attractive when there are a few inches of snow to crunch under one's boots and to rest in sparkling clumps on the bending leaves. On ski one can revisit all these places when the snow is deep—trudge uphill through the forests or among the boulders, and skim like the wind down to the gullies.

The highest point is the Horn, of 5600 feet, a bare rocky pile on the edge of the plateau. Although mostly famous for the grandeur of the sunrise, which can be seen better from here than from most other places, it is indeed an unmatchable viewpoint at any time. There is no direction in which one cannot see a magnificent panorama, the distance limited by the strength of one's eyes; perhaps a good thing, for there is enough hill scenery nearby to hold anyone spellbound. The southern part of the plateau is such a collection of rocks and snow without anything to give one a sense of scale that it could pass for a Swiss alpine scene. There is the great chain of peaks of the Bogong High Plains to see—Bogong itself with Fainter, Feathertop and Hotham glittering white in the sun, and Kosciusko sixty miles behind them. Almost 4000 feet below is the silver thread of the Ovens River winding through the hop fields, flanked by pine-covered ridges—an army of green shades blending with the white hills. To the south and west are more and more hills, blue and hazy, dwindling into seemingly infinite distance.

On some days there is a mist in the valley, and the sense of isolation, that pleasant experience so noticeable on The Buffalo, is all the more evident. Now there is no green valley, nothing but a sea of white wool with the Bogong peaks showing through, some shadowed by tufts of cloud. In the afternoon it may be gone, but over the low country spreads an ever-deepening purple, accompanied by a slow change in the white of the snow to pink under the glow of the sinking sun. So enchanting is the colour of this panorama, so distinct is the mental picture, that it seems to remain long after it has all blended into a velvet black.

THE BUFFALO. —G. W. Kenyon (C.M.W.).

THE WOODRUN, MT. FRANKLIN. J. Ferris (C.M.W.).

BONNUM PIC, UPPER BURRAGORANG VALLEY. —J. Wood (S.B.W.).

A BOTANICAL ALPHABET.

By E. G. J.

(*W.E.A. Ramblers.*)

All plants and flowers have scientific names by which they are known to scientists all over the world. These scientific names are necessary in order to distinguish properly one plant from another. Sometimes the same popular name is borne by different species in widely different localities. For example, the Christmas Bush of New South Wales is different from that of Victoria, and from that of Western Australia. Our Christmas Bush belongs to the same group of plants as the familiar hydrangea and gooseberry. That of Victoria belongs to the sage family, and that of Western Australia to the mistletoe family. The Christmas Tree of New Zealand—the Pohutukawa—is a first cousin to our Turpentine, and so belongs to the myrtle family.

Again, the same common name may be borne by quite a large number of trees and plants in the same genus. Blakely records over forty Eucalypts known as "Stringybarks." The Stringybark of one locality is not the same as the Stringybark of another. Sometimes this is recognised by the use of a qualifying word such as Black Stringybark, White Stringybark, so the need for scientific names is quite obvious.

Many bushwalkers, perhaps, would be much more interested in our native flowers if the meanings of the scientific names were known to them. These names are not given in a haphazard manner, and are almost always descriptive. Mostly they are derived from the Greek and the Latin languages, which are almost universally recognised in their applications for scientific purposes.

To help those who might be interested, I now give the names of twenty-five common plants that grow in the Sydney district, with which district most of our bushwalkers are familiar. This will form our Botanical Alphabet, in which I shall confine myself mainly to the generic name only.

Actinotus, the botanical name of the Flannel Flower. It refers to the rayed appearance of what people call the petals. The name, derived from the Greek, means "furnished with rays."

Boronia, named after Francis Borone, an Italian botanist, whose zeal led to his accidental death in Greece in 1794. He overbalanced and fell when trying to reach a plant on the face of a cliff.

Ceratopetalum, the Christmas Bush. The name is derived from two Greek words which describe the antler-like appearance of the petals. The Coachwood is also a Ceratopetalum, but its specific name, "apetalum," signifies that it has no petals.

Diuris, an Orchid whose name, derived from two Greek words, means "double tails," an allusion to the lower sepals, which hang down, either crossed or parallel, under the rest of the flower.

Eriostemon, from two Greek words referring to the "woolly stamens" characteristic of the genus.

Ficus, Latin for "a fig," has reference to the fruit of the genus.

Grevillea, the Spider Flower, named after Hon. C. F. Greville, an 18th century patron of botanists.

Helichrysum, from two Greek words meaning "sun" and "gold," the flowers of many species are of a bright golden colour. Often called "Everlastings" owing to the fact that the shining, petal-like, membranous bracts surrounding the numerous florets do not fade.

Isopogon, the Drumsticks. The botanical name, derived from two Greek words meaning "equal" and "beard," has reference to the silky hairs round the marble-like fruit-heads. These hairs are of equal length.

Junous, Latin for a rush or sedge. The family, and the generic, name for a small group of moisture-loving plants commonly called "rushes."

Kennedya, a dark red, and a scarlet, leguminous plant named after an English florist who was one of the earliest growers of Australian plants. The "False Sarsaparilla" is sometimes included in this genus.

Leptospermum, the Tea Tree. The name refers to the very slender, attenuated seeds characteristic of the genus.

Melaleuca, shares with the Leptospermum the name of Tea Tree. The botanical name, derived from two Greek words meaning "black" and "white," refers to the variations in the colour of the young and the old bark of some species.

Nicotiana, the Australian Tobacco Plant. The name refers to the poisonous, volatile, alkaloid base obtained from tobacco. It was named after Jean Nicot, who introduced the "weed" into France in 1560.

Oxylobium, a member of the Pea family. One species is called Native, or Mountain, Holly. The name refers to the sharply-pointed fruits, also to the sharply-pointed lobes of the leaves of some species.

Phyllota, another common leguminous plant whose flowers have large leafy brasteoles supporting the calyx. The name, derived from Greek, means "leaves" and "ears." The two leaves stand up like ears, one on each side of the calyx.

Quintinia, the only "Q" in Moore and Batche's "Flora of New South Wales," is a small bushy tree related to the Christmas Bush; interesting as it frequently begins life on the trunks of tree ferns, where the seed germinates.

Ranunculus, better known as the Buttercup. The botanical name is Latin for a "little frog" or "tadpole," and refers to the wet or moist localities in which the plants are usually found growing.

Senecio, the largest genus of flowering plants. Many species are known as Groundsels. The name, derived from the Latin, "senex," an old man, refers to the white hairs or beard attached to the seed-like fruit.

Telopea, the Waratah. The name is derived from a Greek word meaning "seen from afar."

Utricularia, sometimes called "Bladderworts." The name, derived from Latin, refers to the tiny, bladder-like traps growing on submerged leaf-stalks. The flowers, usually blue, purple, or lilac, grow in moist places, and on long, slender stalks.

Viminaria, resembles somewhat the Spanish Broom. The name, derived from Latin, "vimen," a switch or plant twig, refers to the long, switch-like, green, leafless branches. It grows in moist places.

Westringea, named after Dr. J. P. Westring, a physician to the King of Sweden in 1797. One species is called Native Rosemary.

Xylomelum, the Native, or Woody, Pear. The name is derived from two Greek words meaning "wood" and "pear."

Y.—No native Australian plant with botanical name beginning with the letter "y."

Zieria.—This genus is closely allied to the Boronias. It was named after J. Zier, a Polish botanist who died in 1796. The flowers are small and white.

AN ADVENTURE IN LONELINESS.

By MARIE B. BYLES.

(*Bush Club and Sydney Bush Walkers.*)

"For seven consecutive days in the year at least, each man or woman under the Rule (of the Voluntary Nobility, the Rulers of H. G. Wells' "Modern Utopia") must go right out of the life of all men or women and have no sort of intercourse with mankind. They must go bookless and weaponless, without paper or money. Provisions must be taken for the period of the journey, a rug or sleeping sack—for they must sleep under the open sky—but no means of making a fire. They may study maps beforehand to guide them, showing any difficulties and dangers in the journey but they may not carry such help. Tbey must not go by the beaten way, or wherever there are inhabited houses, but into the bare, quiet places of the Globe—to insure good training and sturdiness of body and mind—to draw their minds for a space from the insistent details of life, from the intricate arguments and fretting effort of work, from personal quarrels and personal affections and the things of the heated room—out they must go, clean out of the world—they must be alone with nature, necessity and their own thoughts."

It was twenty years since I had read those lines in H. G. Wells' "Modern Utopia," but they had left an indelible impression. Now was the chance to find out just how the rulers of this Utopia really felt.

NO BOOKS FOR COMPANIONSHIP.

Reluctantly I put back on the bookshelves the slim volume of "Some Sayings of the Buddha," which had seemed so appropriate to take into the wilderness, for did not Buddha discover truth while sitting alone in the forest? It seemed like putting away the last link with mankind, and, frankly, I got just a trifle panicky. But one must go alone!

Unfortunately, I am not as hardy as those men and women of the future, and anyhow H. G. Wells forgot to say what happened when it rained, or perhaps the Utopians managed the weather—like everything else—more satisfactorily than we do. Therefore it was with certain concessions to weakness in the form of tent, matches, compass and map that I eventually found myself at the hotel at Kosciusko. At the Christmas dinner table the weirdest and most wonderful reasons were invented as to why I should go camping alone in the wilds for nine days. They ranged from nudism and Yogi-ism. In the end I persuaded people I was neither a nudist, nor a famous writer, nor a great poet, but just a trifle mad. They appeared satisfied, and I was allowed to depart in peace.

The first morning I woke up in my tent above the calm waters of a lonely alpine tarn, and the old school motto seemed to flash across the sky:

> "So here hath been dawning another blue day.
> Think! wilt thou let it slip useless away?"

And here were sixteen hours of daylight, and I positively had to let them slip useless away. I've seldom tackled a more difficult problem, but it had to be done, and I did it.

I walked a little, sometimes slept in different places, and was once caught in a severe thunder storm, but for the most part the holiday was uneventful.

Gradually things emerged from the ground and the air and the sky that I never knew were there before, and there was an increasing thrill in little things like the porcelain-blue edges of the tiny white flowers starring the moss-green banks of the laughing streamlets, and an adventure in noticing they varied their petals from five to seven.

Gradually, too, the world and its happenings got further and further away, and history passed like a cinematograph film to a god on Olympus. The hills with their knowledge of the last ice age, ten thousand years ago, took no account of empires—Babylonian, Roman, Spanish, British, German or Japanese, what did they matter? The only thing that counted and persisted in that cinematograph film, and grew as the years passed, was the little slender plant of human kindliness and helpfulness, and that had nothing to do with empires or wars.

Does one learn anything new from being alone with Nature? Definitely, no! One gets from Nature only interest on the capital one takes to her. One gets no fresh capital.

But, if one does not get anything new, one does get something old, very old—the ability to sit still, to possess oneself and think. About a hundred years ago, when life was comparatively slow, Matthew Arnold wrote:

"We see all sights from pole to pole,
And glance and nod and bustle by,
And never once possess our soul
Before we die."

Since then motor cars, aeroplanes, telephones, wirelesses and a thousand other ways of speeding up life have come into existence. We have been gathering speed like an express train, faster and faster until to-day the inevitable crash has come and the world is plunged into an orgy of self-destruction. Perhaps, if everyone had gone out into the wilds for one week every year completely alone, it might have put on just sufficient brake to have prevented this appalling crash. Anyhow, that is what the silent hills seemed to say as they stood serene and calm in the dying sunlight.

And did I enjoy that lonely, tranquil holiday as much as other holidays? Frankly, I do not know. Such a holiday is not as exhilarating as a strenuous one with congenial companions and plenty of geographical problems to solve, but in the fullest sense of the word a tranquil, lonely holiday is "recreational." One returns from it completely re-created, cleaned and renewed mentally and spiritually, and with an overwhelming love for humanity—if only because one has done without the human species for so long. One also returns with a detachment from the troubles of this world, which all the greatest teachers have insisted is the essence of happiness.

. . . . Far away in the distance the mountains rose darkly, tipped by the moon's rays and backed by stars.

As we stood against it on the rise, the wind chilled our bodies, and wove fantastic patterns with leaves and branches. With each descent in the path came a break from the chill blast, but every rise meant a further glimpse of the fascinating and almost unreal scene far below us.

We had heard nothing but the rustling of stunted bushes and leaning trees till, quite suddenly, laughter came to us on the wind, and over the next crest the glow of a fire was visible. This meant Glen Raphael, friends around a glowing fire, hot stew and sound sleep, with an early rise next morning to view the glories of the sun piercing the mists of Clear Hill.

AN UNPLANNED EXPLORATION.

By DOROTHY SVENSON (S.B.W.).

We had no intention of roaming the Nattai Plateau, but it was one of those walks which just take things into their own hands.

Instead of a leisurely ramble up to Couridjah, we climbed up from the river by way of a nasty creek bed, growing nastier and drier all the way. The foxes and the wallabies did what they could to tell us we were on the wrong track. So did the great trees storms had thrown across the way. But with grim determination we ignored the animals, clambered under trees and scratched our way over fallen rocks.

At last we were on top. Here was a cairn of stones. Ha! now for the road and the railway. H'm! In this wilderness?

We studied our map. We must be there, or there—or, perhaps, there! In any case the railway was ahead, and the road. But in between and all around were wild ranges. We walked along the rubble-strewn top of the ridge to which we had climbed. Shadows were lengthening. We reached the end of a spur. Where were we? We turned back a little way. It was no use wandering about in the dusk, so we pitched our tent on the top of some short bushes—there was no clear space—and settled down among the stones. Our evening meal consisted of two wheatmeal biscuits and half a small mug of soup. We'd carried a container of water, thank goodness!

We dozed. The night was dark and still. Suddenly a shrill whistle pierced the air—the whistle of a train! Then the railway was over there. At regular intervals we heard this whistle, and comfortably told our hungry selves that morning would show us our way. Perhaps the road lay quite near.

More dozing. A loud grunt rends the air! A wild pig! I'd heard of them, ferocious animals! We crouched among the bushes. Several more grunts and scratchings! It couldn't see us, anyway. After hours of apprehension, we heard it wandering off. A train whistled. We were re-assured.

Impatiently we waited for daylight. Then, breakfasting handsomely on another wheatmeal biscuit and our last half cup of soup, we gathered ourselves for serious thought. Wherever we were of all those likely places, a south-easterly route would take us to the railway. All right. Back to the edge of the spur and view our surroundings. Just ridges these were, with deep creeks between; rough ridges by the look of them. But there, stretching away in the distance, was a burnt ridge. Its blackened tree-trunks went on and on in a beautiful curve—a south-easterly curve. But between us was a deep creek. We noticed two great rocks at the base of the ridge we wanted. We'd make for them and straight up. But oh! where was my breakfast!

THANKS TO THE WILD PIG!

The downward slope was covered with low-growing bushes. For a while we struggled through. Then a passage disclosed itself! By bending double we could practically run down the slope. Thank you, wild pig!—or were you just a wombat? And many, many more thanks when the track ended beside a clear, cool spring! A sparkling spring where tender ferns grew and moss covered the rocks with green. Were I a poet, I'd write an ode to that spring! We drank and bathed, refilling our container, for we'd learned the value of water. Then we went up from our two rocks.

I'll never forget that "up." At the top I sat on a rock with that deserted feeling in my heart—or was it my stomach ?—while my companion went forward along the ridge. The ridge was good. Then a train whistled cheerily. I strode forward. It was a nice, even ridge—on and on it took us, always in the right direction. It broadened. Ferns grew among the grasses. Here trees had been felled. Here was an old cart track—a very old one, the wheel marks just discernable, ferns and flowers overgrowing it. Here was a very rusty spade. Oh, civilization, I never before realised your worth !

With light steps we walked the track, now broadening. Our ridge had gone. And here was the road—the broad, red highway. Actually, we ran along it. At a small farmhouse, where they wouldn't give us bread, we learned that Hilltop was only a mile away. Hilltop ! And a mile ? We found a morsel of cheese in one of our packs. Slowly we munched it. So we'd not come to Couridjah or Picton, but back to Hilltop !

Where bad we been ? I dared not think of it ! I'd beard about the Nattai Plateau ! Yes, I have to admit it.

BEFORE A WALK.

By M. S.
(*Sydney Bush Walkers.*)

Before I go upon a walk
I have to be severe,
And sternly to my mind I say,
"You must not stray,
But linger here
And concentrate,
And do not wander out the Gate
Of Business Hours,
Seeking wild flowers
And streams that talk
Of wild folk's ways,
And sunny days
In open un-cramped spaces,
Or lacy verdant green-draped places;
And brilliant toadstools hid away
In damp brown mould :
Campspots to which a-many stray,
Where one may meet
New friends and old,
And watch the campfire's gold;
While tales are told
Of conquered mountain crest,
Of river swum, explored :
'Til importuned by Sleep we are implored
To take our rest,
And sinking down into our ferny nest,
Dreamless we lie a little space,
'Til with tbe light we rise to greet
Dawn, in its pearly grace."

LUNCH WITH THE LIZARDS.

By KATH. McKAY (S.B.W.).

Elusive things, trains ! Ah well, the only thing to be done was to catch the next one, and make the best of my own company, since the party I should have joined was already miles away.

So I journeyed alone, and walked alone, through dry brushwood and patches of radiant flowers. When I judged, by certain infallible signs, that lunchtime was come, I sought the nearest gully, and, after clambering over many boulders, found water.

Water it undoubtedly was, since tadpoles were swimming about in it. In fact, looking more closely at it, I felt that here was a sample of the oft-quoted "first water." It was like a little puddle left over from the Flood, complete with a representative gathering of Noah's wogs. Blessed be the cleansing power of fire, I thought, as I kindled some twigs and slung the billy between two handy boulders. It boiled rapidly, and I was soon sipping tea and munching grilled bacon sandwiches.

It was warm in that rocky defile. I took off shoes and heavy woollen socks and spread them to air while I smoked a leisurely cigarette.

Out of the tail of my eye I caught a flicker of movement. Snake ? I wondered, and sat breathless. Another movement, and I saw a small curved arm and delicate fingers. Ah ! a lizard. All was well.

My visitor advanced warily. His clear, alert eyes watched the smoking mountain that was I, much as a human migbt gaze at a volcano liable to erupt at any moment.

Reassured by my stillness, he moved forward again, stealthily,

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placing one small hand after another on the rock. His quick head turned towards me once more; then he decided that I was only part of the scenery, and went with the most barefaced curiosity to examine my footgear. He crawled over a shoe, paused in thought, and returned whence he had come, round the corner of a rock.

I thought he had lost interest in my belongings, but no. In a twinkling he was back, bringing his wife with him. Together they made a minute inspection of my entire outfit—crawled up and down the socks, darted a tongue into the paper which had held the bacon, ran over my pack and had a look in the pocket.

I watched the queer little creatures with their grey, knobbly skins, so exactly the colour of lichened rocks, and thought what an upstart I was in these surroundings. My pool of "first water"; these ancient rocks; these equally ancient-looking animals—surely they were here unchanged since the beginning of time, and would be here unchanged long after I was dust.

REFLECTIONS . . . .

By "RAMBLER."
(*Rover Ramblers' Club.*)

How many of those ever-so-worldly people who smile indulgently when they see a walker with apparently cumbersome rucksack, ever pause to wonder what strange force draws that man away from the city life at the end of a week of toil? How many of these people realise the power of the call of the bush? All too few, I fear. Do we ourselves understand the mysterious attraction? I am sure that very few walkers could immediately give a complete answer.

It is something indefinite and indefinable : it is composed of many things—the scent of many blossoms, the majesty of tall timber, the unconquerable, untamable might of sandstone walls, rugged valleys and jagged ridges; the untold beauty of solitude, the peace of a camp-fire when all have gone to rest. Have you ever bathed in a crystal-clear mountain pool in the heat of a summer's day? Away with cares and worries and weariness!

Have you ever climbed a rocky peak—scrambling from rock to rock, or slithering gingerly along a ledge, or clambering up a sheer wall of stone? The joy of accomplishment is in itself sufficient reward; but mark also how the expanse of view has increased—how the eye can see such as can be seen nowhere else.

Have you not experienced the thrill of exploration, the thrill of breaking a trail through virgin country, with the ever-present hope that you are the first to have ever trodden those places? Oh, what disappointment when you see evidence of prior human visitation! Or have you wandered lazily along some river bank on grassy slopes amidst shady trees, bathing where you would in its cool, clear pools, or in the champagne of its rapids?

And when the clouds are beating across the sky—the wind is tearing at you like a thousand devils to try and pluck you from the heights and dash you at its mercy—you stand firm with the sting of raindrops on your cheek, and you laugh—how good to be mightier than the wind and the rain!

The end of the day draws near; then camp, with its promise of satisfying meal and crackling fire. And after tea, the cheery comradeship of the camp-fire, the yarns and thoughts of other days; the unspoken hopes of the future. Ah, yes, Mr. Worldly Wise! you have never felt the lure of open spaces.

NARROW NECK FROM MEGALONG VALLEY. —R. Alder (S.B.W.)

KOWMUNG RIVER. —C. W. Barnes (C.M.W. and S.B.W.).

YEOLA, UPPER KANGAROO RIVER. —W. Cosgrave (S.B.W.).

ROGERS CREEK. —W. Mulligan (R.R.C.).

SONNET.

By REECE CATERSON (S.B.W.).

We sought the bud of morning in the chill
Sweet air, where green and silver shone the dew,
Silver the trees and the hill silver-blue.
Noon found us with an open bloom to fill;
Golden and green the pool, no longer still,
But cast into a thousand drops by you,
And laughing you. Sunset was come; soon, too,
The laden blossom of our day to spill.

So now, when we can sit before the fire
Watching each spark outshine the wakeful star,
Folded, the bud, the blossom, both remain
Fragrant forever where no hand can mar.
Memory brings them back at our desire
Ever anew for our delight and pain.

When Bushwalking leads quite unexpectedly to an appreciation of natural beauty and the experiencing of new emotions and thence to a need to find the perfect words to describe such beauty and to share those emotions with people across seas and across time, then it has made one ruler over a kingdom where one can dwell with pleasure long after one's last Bushwalk has been taken, the kingdom of Imagination and Books.

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THE NEW SOUTH WALES FEDERATION OF BUSH WALKING CLUBS

held its inaugural meeting on the 21st July, 1932, and during the past ten years has become firmly established as a result of its services to bushwalkers and to the community at large. Its Constitution states that :—

"The objects of the Federation shall be as follows :

(1) To unite all Associations and persons interested in recreational walking, camping or other similar forms of outdoor recreational activities.

(2) To protect the interests of all such Associations and persons, and extend their privileges and opportunities for such recreational activities.

(3) To promote the establishment and preservation of national parks and primitive areas, and reserves for the protection of native flora and fauna, and to prevent the incursion of roads into recognised primitive areas.

(4) To prevent the spoliation of the bush, natural scenery and wild life, and to educate public opinion to appreciate and preserve these things.

(5) To function as a bureau of information in regard to country, routes, maps, travelling facilities, camping places, technique of bush-walking and bushcraft.

(6) To promote legislative and administrative action for the furtherance of any of the objects of the Federation, to watch the course of any proposed legislative or administrative action affecting the objects of the Federation, and to take such action in connection therewith as may be thought advisable.

(7) To co-operate with other bodies and persons for the promotion of any of the objects or in furtherance of the interests of the Federation.

(8) To promote goodwill and social intercourse between bush-lovers."

The Federation was responsible for the dedication of Garawarra Park (of over 1300 acres) to the south of Sydney, and of Bouddi Natural Park (of over 900 acres), not far to the north of the city. But for the shortage of surveyors, the efforts of the Federation's Conservation Bureau would this year have resulted in the creation of further large parks in the Blue Mountains.

Another result of the war has been to restict everyone's walking activities, and the Search and Rescue Section has not been called upon to assist the police in finding lost hikers. This was a good thing, because most of the members of the "S. & R." were on service or working long hours in the munitions industry, and spending what leisure they had as members of the N.E.S. or V.D.C.

The Publicity Bureau is temporarily in abeyance, but the Information Bureau is still functioning, and this magazine is the work of the Publications Committee, and of the many members of affiliated clubs, who have contributed all the articles, verses, and photographs.

In spite of all difficulties, successful working bees were held during the year at The Blue Gum Forest, Bouddi and Garawarra Parks. Among the work done in the two parks was the planting of trees, so that their beauty will be maintained throughout the years to come. We commend the work of tree-planting to all walkers and all citizens.