

with a touch of sugar and a twist of lemon peel. The miner tossed down the concoction. He swayed, his teeth chattered, his mouth opened and closed, and he sank into a chair. "He done it," he whispered. "Right down to me gizzard." . . . Thus was the *Blue Blazer* born.

The result of the little drama was strange. Thomas decided that he was a cut above serving behind a bar that catered for the vulgar drinker. He was a master of an art that was for the discerning. He left the *El Dorado* and sought a fortune on the goldfields. Mining by day and serving the needs of the thirsty at night, Jerry soon amassed a fortune of over £3,000, and was able to follow his true vocation. It was not a subject that could be treated lightly. He was a student and an artist, and nothing was too much trouble to enlarge his knowledge of drinks. For instance, he once went to Central America to find out the secrets of a drink peculiar to the country, one of the reasons for the trip being that a customer had asked for the particular drink.

In New Haven he opened a saloon to provide Yale sophomores and others in the district with a chance of learning the wonders of the *Blue Blazer*. But it was not for long. Soon he was off to South Carolina to learn all about Julep. Finally he became installed in the Planter's House in Saint Louis, a place famous for its liquor. It was there that Thomas evolved his second great mixture, the *Tom and Jerry* which was a blend of rum, eggs, spice, and brandy. After a few more changes of residence, the "Professor" was appointed chief bartender at the Metropolitan Hotel in New York, an appointment that was observed by a week's free distribution of his *Tom and Jerry* to all customers.

Now began Jerry's real experiments with cocktails. They were already popular with a certain class of drinker. "They were a modern inven-

tion and generally used on sporting parties," Thomas writes, "though some *patients* insist that it is good in the morning as a tonic." When the "Professor" had concentrated on it for a while it was both an insidious appetiser and a "favourite morning tippie of all men of convivial habit."

In 1859, Thomas went to Europe, and with him went a "magnificent set of solid silver bar utensils constructed at a cost of £4,000 for his own personal use." He was not away long but the trip refreshed his inventive mind. He returned to Broadway, concentrated on the cocktail, and invented his own brand of bitters. It was about this time that he wrote his delightful book, "*The Bon Vivant's Companion*." In this remarkable volume he collected about 300 "social drinks" of all types, long and short, claiming both to instruct epicures in the art of drinking "in the daintiest fashions", and to exorcise the "villainous compounds of bar-keeping Goths and Vandals, who know no more of the amenities of *bon*



*vivant* existence than a Hottentot can know of the bouquet of champagne."

Most New Zealanders would find a lot in common with the "Professor". Drink meant everything to him. Bacchus was his god. In his book he