

their own and who have in turn passed expressions to the Air Force. "Erk," for instance, in use in the Air Force for recruits, was originally a lower-deck naval rating.

Many other Air Force terms in use in this country are Army in origin. The ubiquitous "browned off" (from over-cooked meat; depressed, fed up) with its companions "cheesed off" and "brassed off" (both seldom heard in New Zealand and denoting various degrees of browned-offedness) originated with the British Army. "You've had it," meaning "you've arrived too late," seems to be strictly Air Force in origin (compare the civilian "to have had some"), as does "to have gone for a Burton." The latter term meaning "to have gone missing" is especially interesting as it seems to derive from "to have gone for certain," thus showing traces of the famous Cockney rhyming slang so popular in the last war—"Cape of Good Hope" for "soap," "plates of meat" for "feet," and so on.

Of course, a large number of British terms are seldom heard here. For instance, if a thing goes wrong the Tommy says it is "ropey"; "a ropey chap" is one who makes frequent mistakes, and "a ropey job" denotes an uncollaborative blonde. Instead of "fine and dandy," things are "wizard" (this originated in an old American musical comedy, and later had a vogue at Oxford). When everything is under control it is "buttoned up" (amongst New-Zealanders it is usually "jacked up" or "teed up"). Anything that turns out badly is a "bad show," of course, but also a "black." The "bad show," "good show" of the R.N.Z.A.F. prove almost as wearying, by the way, as the fast-dying "that'll be the day" and its numerous variants "that'll be the bright and sunny," "that'll be the pleasant Friday afternoon," &c., all showing the wearisome lengths to which injudicious use will push an apt piece of slang.

However, we are concerned here chiefly with New Zealand Army slang. It has been said that New Zealand slang is probably the most conservative of all colonial slang. It is true that New Zea-

land, for obvious reasons of size and distance, has contributed little that is distinctive to the rich humus of English slang. Yet an examination of New Zealand Army slang shows not only a vigorous use of current slang which gives it a distinctively local flavour, but the development of several terms which are as colourful as anything America or England has to offer.

Amongst the older expressions still used, "swinging the lead" has not been ousted by the American "gold-bricking"; "on the mat" still means a telling-off; "scrounge" (from a North Country word meaning "to wander idly, to search"); "burgoo" for porridge (from the Turkish *burghul*, wheat—porridge); and "bull-ringing" for the training-ground, still retain their popularity.

But several newer terms have come to light. Perhaps the best of these is "emu parade" for an organized sanitary scavenger (obviously Australian in origin, as is a great deal of standard New Zealand slang). "Maori P.T." for a sound sleep, usually surreptitious, is self-explanatory. The most important of Army slang expressions, however, has been "doing the scone" with its variant "doing the bun," used for losing one's grip or one's temper. I have been quite unable to trace its origin, but it seems closely related to "doing the block" (losing one's head), and, like "browned off," may be associated with over-cooking. Is there an echo of Alfred and the cakes there? Or is it related to the Cockney "loaf" for "head"?

"Wouldn't it rock you?" is also popular, this indicating astonished reaction, usually to the "Army way." It has been fairly recently shortened to "Wouldn't it?" and may, like the Cheshire cat, soon fade away completely, leaving only the grin. Hunt and Pringle in "Service Slang" relate this expression to "Wouldn't it shake you?" which I have never heard in the New Zealand Army. "Wouldn't it rotate you?" is however, also common. This seems at first sight to be connected with flying, but several soldiers have solemnly explained that it comes from the fact that when the flanges of a tank become loaded with sand, it tends to spin the vehicle