

to one side, causing a "rotation" and confusion to the occupants. I reserve judgment on this explanation.

A very interesting expression with a definitely literary origin is "choco," a term of genial contempt used by overseas men of a territorial or Temporary Staff man. This is short for "chocolate soldier," and derives by way of Oscar Strauss' operetta "The Chocolate Soldier" from Shaw's "Arms and the Man," in which Bluntschli, the cautious soldier, carried chocolate creams instead of bullets in his bandolier. The irony of the expression is, however, that, in Shaw's play Bluntschli is the only really practical man, the other soldiers being a lot of fanciful, romantic nincompoops.

Hardly less frequently heard than "doing the scone" is "bludger" and "to bludge." This is a development of "bludgeoner" from "bludgeon," a club (in turn, from Dutch *bludsen*, to bruise). "Bludgeoner" was originally a piece of thieves' cant and meant a harlot's bully or a bawdy-house chucker-out—that is, one likely to use a bludgeon. About 1850 the modification "bludger" is also found. It is not easy to discover how this piece of Cockney criminal argot found its way into the New Zealand Army. Yet to-day it is one of the most frequently used terms. By extension it has come to mean a loafer, a malingerer, a borrower, a dodger, a sneak; in fact, any kind of anti-social creature. The verb "to bludge" has also developed, and usually means "to cadge," "to scrounge."

Another popular word with a similar history is "clink," or detention-cell. This originally was the name for a prison in Southwark, London, then for prisons in general, but about 1870 it acquired the meaning it still has in the Army. It is significant, perhaps, that "to grouse," a common civilian term, originated in the Army about 1890. A term like "napoo," popular still in the New Zealand Army for "finished" or "done for," carries the unmistakable stamp of the first World War, being the remains of *Il n'y en a plus*—"There's no more (drink)"—a common estaminet answer.

The Middle East has provided us with a good selection of slang terms as well. The most attractive, I think, are SABU (self-adjusting b—s—up) and NAFU (untranslatable, meaning the opposite), with their cynical assessment of administrative tangles. "Sand-happy," with its suggestion of "slap-happy," may be compared with the Pacific "troppo," both pithily indicating the impact of alien climes on some New Zealand temperaments. Interesting, too, is "snarlers" for the inevitable Army sausages. "Growlers" is another form, "barkers" still another, the latter the oldest name, which I have not heard in the New Zealand Army. "Bumph," the schoolboy's rude word for toilet-paper, now applied to all useless Army files and documents, seems to have gained universal favour. When one is so busy that one doesn't know where to turn, Army as well as Air Force men are "in a flat spin," and any one who gets in a "flap" (state of excitement) is warned with the phrase "Don't panic!"

One of the commonest words overseas for "information" is "gen" (genuine news), popular with British and American alike. This doesn't seem much used by New Zealanders. But whereas the B.E.F. has its name for the R.A.F. "Brylcreem boys," the New-Zealander prefers "blue orchids," thus perpetuating the name of a happily long-forgotten blues dance-number.

After all this, it might not be inappropriate to quote a noted authority on slang, Frank Sechrist, and see how much he says can be truly applied to the slang of the modern New Zealand soldier. This is what Sechrist says of slang in "The Psychology of Unconventional Language": "Slang ignores all that belongs to the routine duties of ordinary life; it does not characterize the humdrum and the commonplace. There is little in the vocabulary to suggest innocence and spontaneous playfulness. It is purely unsentimental. It castigates every kind of excess . . . It prefers the abrupt and the shocking. It is superior to accepted use through its emotional force."