

SONGS OF THE SERVICES

The N.Z. Forces Overseas Contribute to the Music of this War

By Flight Sergeant T. J. KIRK-BURNAND

Fight for Freedom everyone
Build the ships and man the guns—
Fill the shell and speed the plough
Every soul's a soldier now.

THESE WORDS by A. P. Herbert, especially written for the C. B. Cochrane B.B.C. wartime programmes, inspired listeners so greatly that the words were used as the motif for Cochrane's famous broadcast programmes entitled "Cock-a-doodle-doo." The music belonged to Elgar's concert march, "Pomp and Circumstance No. 4," written some years previously.

Few realize the national importance of music and songs and their historical value. It is a historical fact that nations produce in times of stress more songs of the people than at other times—songs that live and help to win wars and subsequently become recognized as national songs. Fletcher of Saltoun stated in 1704, "If a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of the nation."

It was Lord Wharton who boasted that through the words of a song, the music for which had been written by Purcell, a famous English composer of the seventeenth century, he had "rhymed James II out of his dominions," and it certainly appeared that "Lillibullero," the song concerned, contributed in some measure to the feeling against James which led to his dethronement in 1689. An interesting point is that the same tune is being used to-day by the Allied Armies; the words have been changed but the music remains the same.

The original words were:—

There was an old prophecy
found in a bog,
Ireland shall be ruled by an
ass and a dog—
Lillibullero, Bullen-a-la.

The inference was that Tyrconnell was the

dog and James the ass. The last line is, presumably, a meaningless refrain.

The first appearance of the tune in print was in 1686, in a book of "lessons" for the "recorder" or flute, and it was classed merely as a quickstep. It was very often whistled by British soldiers "at the wars," and probably, indeed, by the Duke of Marlborough's 16th Foot Regiment on the way to Walcourt in August, 1689—the first Regular British unit ever to fire a shot in a European war. Then, sooner or later, it was forgotten.

And now, inexplicably, "Lillibullero" has leapt back into favour, although its name is now rendered "Lilliburlero" and the words have, for obvious reasons, been changed. It is reported to be "inspiring the British Armies of 1944," and has apparently caught on firmly in the Mediterranean and other theatres as well as in Great Britain.

These are the words sung to-day:—

Here is a song to help you along,
It stands for the right and conquers the wrong
Lero, Lero, Lillibullero.

Calling the Fleet that nothing can beat
Calling the Air Force foemen can't cheat
Calling the Ships that bring us our food
Lero, Lero, Lillibullero.

Few realize how much music has been written about this war. It is frequently claimed that the war has not produced as many songs as other wars, but I dispute that statement. I say there are more songs being sung and there is more war music being written to-day than ever before. It may surprise many to know that Army Archives in Wellington have already collected no fewer than 130 songs and tunes written and played and sung by members of the New Zealand Forces overseas and many have yet to be collected. In addi-

