

GROPERDOM GOSSIP

TERRACE TALK AND HAY STREET HAPPENINGS

(BY THE "SUN'S SPECIAL.")

THE "Sunday Times" secured a scoop last week by publishing an exclusive interview with Corporal Parsons and Private Stewart, the two West Australian soldiers who escaped from the Huns, four months ago. Taken prisoner on April 11, along with 754 other Australians, of the Brigade which tried to break the Hindenburg line without artillery, they escaped on the night of Sunday, May 20, and turned up in the British lines on Tuesday morning after experiences which were thrilling in the extreme. Four men actually got away but two of them—Corporal Job, of East Perth, and Gunner Smith, of Bunbury—were lost in the darkness; Job was captured, but Smith's fate is unknown. The other two doggedly went forward, crossed in the darkness a sunken road on which German soldiers were working, stole past a sap which was packed with Germans, and traversed the final Hun trench without knowing it, the ground being so gapped and pitted by the British. Finally at day-

pitted by the British. Finally at day-break they heard the welcome challenge of a British sentry. The rest is history.



The place where the two lads escaped from is a village called Marquion, 15 miles north-east of Bapaume. As the crow flies it was not quite seven miles from the British lines, but they were obliged to take a round-about course, and must have covered 20 miles of country in parts pitted with shell holes. All day Monday they hid in a forest exposed to British shell-fire, their travelling being done at night. From the time they quitted the compound in which they were confined to the time they hit the British trench 28 hours elapsed, and every minute was packed with sensation and excitement. Theirs was a thrilling adventure and a most miraculous escape. After their return from captivity they were taken before General Birdwood, who decorated them with the Military Medal, and sent them back to Australia, where they will probably be placed on recruiting work. Corporal Parsons has supplied your correspondent with a list of the West Australians who were with him at Marquion. At least one was a Kalgoorlian, Private Clark, of the 16th Battalion, and some of the following may possibly have come from the goldfields: — Sergeants Orr, Ward, Budd, Dan. Walker, Thomas, Benson; Privates Troyle, Dickson, Sloggett, Wynne. Bell. Claude Marsh, Killalea,

Wynne, Bell, Claude Marsh, Killalea, Scottie Smith, Thomas, Seaman, J. Smith, H. James, Jerry Roberts, Gilmore, Pinkerton, Dodds, Davies, Davidson and Lance-Corporal Baines. Inasmuch as several hundred West-ralians were taken prisoners in the action of April 11, the Corporal realises that there are several hundred women anxious for news of their lads, and he will be pleased to supply it as far as he can. His address is 303 James-street, West Perth.



Apathy still characterises the public attitude to politics and politicians. The nearer we get to the elections the less interest seems to be taken in them. A Cabinet Minister nearly fell off his chair when he found he had to address an audience of a hundred last week. "It's the best attendance I've seen or heard of during this campaign," he said. "A dozen is the usual thing, and twenty is a crowd." This state of affairs is probably due to the prevailing conviction that the O.L.P. hasn't a hope. Its candidates may do fairly well on the goldfields—the writer doesn't profess to be able to judge the feeling in that quarter—but as far as the metropolitan district is concerned, it is down and out. If it holds Guildford, per medium of Plane Bill Johnson, that is all it will do. There is an impression that the astute William has gained ground in the last few days, but he is having the fight of his life. For Perth, Pilkington should have no difficulty in defeating

should have no difficulty in defeating Dunn, of "Truth," and the irrepres- sible Mills. McCallum Smith has a pretty soft thing on in North Perth, and supporters of Sid Gibson for Leederville, could get a shade of odds if they wanted to back him against the sitting member, Veryard, whose return is tolerably sure. Eben Allen's defeat is predicted in West Perth, where he is fighting a strong opponent in Draper, K.C., and al- though there are five candidates in East Perth, three of them are fighting a forlorn hope against Jacky Hard- wick, the sitting member, and J. J.

Simons, of the O.L.P. Hardwick should win comfortably.



There will be a good go at Clere- mont, where four candidates are battling for the honor and glory, not to mention the £300 a year. Dr. Macauley, president of the Y.M.C.A., and John Stewart, a Fremantle mer- chant, are the two most talked of, and if personal popularity counts for anything the Doc. should bring home the bacon. He will get the bulk of the Labor vote. A capable O.L.P. man might beat Bill Carpenter for Fremantle, but the blatant Ben Jones is not likely to achieve that consum- mation. Ben is an impossible per- son. In south Fremantle, Lieuten- ant Harry Bolton, now on active ser- vice, is being opposed by a bloke named Rocke, who calls himself an Independent Laborite. Bolton is in

Independent Laborite. Bolton is in no danger. Touching the outposts, the O.L.P. has a fair to middling chance of winning back Geraldton, as inasmuch as neither of the Nationalists is a strong man. If they pull together they will beat the Labor chap, but there is said to be some feeling between them. Private letters from Albany insist that Jack Scaddan is going to get licked. McKenzie, the Country Party man, an ex-Mayor of Albany, and a member of one of its best known families is tipped to be the destroying angel. But Albany is a place where cliqueism is strong and where local feuds have time and again contributed to the exaltation of a stranger—Price, for instance. Scaddan may be licked, but the others will know they have been in a contest, if he is.



Five Ministers are standing for election, and the Nationalists are rather uneasy about two of them. Their names are Hudson and Thomas. At the last moment, G. C. Money, who fought Thomas in 1914, and nearly beat him, came into the field at Bunbury as a Wilsonite - Nationalist. Money is a Bunbury solicitor, who has a strong local following, and stands well with the farmers on the fringe of the electorate. On paper, Thomas should beat him, but the Government will be uneasy until the numbers are up, more especially as Money will get the bulk of the O.L.P. second votes. The O.L.P. man has no chance. In Canning

man has no chance. In Canning "Cocky" Robinson has a sweet thing on, Don Cameron being marooned in in Melbourne owing to the strike (Don has no earthly chance in any event). George is safe enough in Murray-Wellington, but how is Hudson going to get on among the fiery untamed Macs of the Yilgarn? The mulga wires from that constituency are conflicting, and it is too far away for one to judge. The neighboring constituency of Avon may be won by the sitting member, Harrison, albeit Tom Duff has hopes, and Bertie Johnson should down old Uncle Tom Rabbish easily enough in the Williams. But it is a matter of impossibility to say how most of the cockying contests are going. Obscure local issues enter largely into the fights for these pork-and-sandalwood seats.

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Odds and Ends:—A well-known Perth sharebroker has called a meeting of his creditors—and there are plenty of 'em. He beared Deeps at the wrong time.—The Dimboola's cargo of cow-grease has saved the butter problem for the time being, but it is complained that much of the butter is only second-grade stuff, and is being sold at first-grade price. But Rae, the Federal price-fixing Commissioner, lies low and says nothing. God alone knows what he does for his salary.—A chap named Hardy has come over from Melbourne to see how things are shaping in the military pay office. He is shaking things up like Hades.—The "sports"

things up like Hades.—The sports are holding a meeting at the big theatre on Monday to protest against the new racing restrictions. It is complained that they will hit the racing fraternity hard, and probably they will. But it may be doubted if protests will do much good.—Objecting to the appointment of J. J. Simons as secretary of the Teachers' Association, many of the teachers have seceded, and are forming another union. The secretary's salary is only £150 a year, but it's not the salary that is worrying the malcontents, it is Simons. By the way J. J. Simons is launching out as a newspaper manager in a month or so. He is taking over a Perth sporting paper.
