

JULY 28, 1944

## One World

**O**NCE more the Prime Minister has proved that the world is small when you travel on wings. Although he was away about three months his travelling time in relation to time spent at meetings and conferences was about the same as it would have been if he had set out by rail and road to visit each constituency in his own country. We hope Professor Cotton will allow us to say that distance has surrendered to science. But we shall not ask his permission yet to say that the world is one. It isn't. Neither the speed of travel nor the invention of international languages nor developments in the mechanical means of communication has brought nations any closer together than they were a hundred years ago. Mr. Fraser has given us a hint of the attitude the winners of the war are likely to take if it is proposed to restore the League of Nations. A League of some kind is fore-shadowed but not such a League as came into being 25 years ago. And the reason of course is that the world, instead of becoming more of a unit since that time, has further disintegrated. We may be closer to world unity than we know, but we are not close enough to risk an international government or to be planning the establishment of anything like a super-state. Unity, after all, is a psychological condition, and it can happen with nations as it so often happens with individuals that propinquity increases the chances of friction. There was not much trouble with Japan when no one was allowed to enter or depart, or with the Maoris or Red Indians when they lived in one hemisphere and the white races in another; but there have been some incidents since. So, we must assume, it will continue to be in the world at large until nations draw near not because they can't help doing so but because they wish to. All we can say in the meantime is that unity has been made technically possible. If Mr. Fraser can talk to Mr. Churchill on Monday and to his Cabinet on Saturday, world unity is no longer impossible physically. But world war is no longer impossible either.

NEW ZEALAND LISTENER, JULY 28

# LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

## WE NEW ZEALANDERS

Sir,—The discussion in your columns has provided me with the excuse for saying something I wanted to say about Mr. Fairburn's essay *We New Zealanders*, recently reviewed in your paper.

His reference to the wealthy woman in a Cadillac on page 6 of his essay is commonplace; his reference to "our" attitude towards the English on page 7 is not true (the average New Zealand workman does not regard the English as the dominant race); I query his statement that "we have been influenced by the American standard of business efficiency that would enforce prohibition if it could"; I don't think his stress on the war being a global one is news to anybody; I think he is far too superficial when he says "we" are all intent on grabbing our share of the gravy; I think he overdoes his harping on the attitude of a minority towards England as home; I disagree entirely with his opinion that most New Zealanders have respect for a man with a title; I don't think he is being clever when he says the English people, "from rag-pickers to dukes," agree that nobody can run England but Old Etonians and Old Harrovians; I consider his statement that it is impossible for him to go along any street without having threats of damnation hurled at him from large hoardings a typical generalisation: from my own experience in the reporters' room, I disagree with him when he says a newspaper will fully report a "successful usurer" whenever he opens his mouth; and I think his suggestion that nine out of 10 films sent to this country should be banned is too drastic.

In short, my point of view is a lot different from Mr. Fairburn's. But I am not saying that my point of view should read "our" point of view. I believe Mr. Fairburn should have been equally cautious. Things would not have been so hazy in his formal essay if he had stated at the outset that "we" for him meant "we of the middle-class," and that he himself was a member of the middle-class, even if a Douglas Reedish sort of member. As it is, his references to such things as protracted telephone conversations will be foreign to those people not possessing telephones. And it is ridiculous of him to distinguish between shop assistants and tram conductors. The job makes no difference. People are people, with their bad points and their good points. A cantankerous poet can't do much about it.—D. W. BALLANTYNE (Auckland).

Sir,—“Third Generation New Zealander's” letter contains matter for serious thought. If things are as he says, I agree that some sensible thing should be done about it. For a start, I would suggest that he and people of like mind should procure a good mirror and a copy of that queer old book “The Bible,” and earnestly read St. Luke Chap. 18, v. 10-12. After reading they should study the figure in the mirror and ponder deeply.

“Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, “God, I thank thee that I am not as other men

are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican, I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.”—ANOTHER NORTH AUCKLANDER (Kaitiaki).

## REFUGEES

Sir,—It is perhaps not too late for me to express the very great appreciation I felt some weeks back at the appearance in *The Listener* of an article putting forth the case for the German and other refugees in New Zealand in such decent and fair terms. There have been so many warnings appearing in various papers lately about the danger of this minority to the community, that it was a real pleasure to find a paper ready to give space to a calmer and more Christian view of the situation, and one which is, I think, more in keeping with the spirit of tolerance and fair-play, which we hope is still a characteristic of the British people, as well as with the truth. It is not the first time that your paper has seemed to me to be trying to be representative of that decent, and very large element in the community, whose voice, strangely, is so seldom heard in official utterances.—M.M.A. (York Bay).

## MORE MUSIC WHILE WE WORK

Sir,—I would like to make a suggestion through you on behalf of the many workers of New Zealand who are as fortunate as I am—that is, who have the radio while they work. I am employed in a large factory which is installed with 12 speakers, and we all enjoy the *Music While You Work* session from 4YA for one half-hour morning and afternoon. But could we have one hour of this delightful programme in the morning and one hour in the afternoon, as half an hour is so short? I am sure my sentiment regarding this broadcast would be endorsed by many thousands of workers in this country.—“WORKER” (Dunedin).

## LECTURES ON THE AIR

Sir,—May I endorse the suggestion by “Materfamilias” in a recent issue of *The Listener* that a series of half-hourly talks along the lines of W.E.A. lectures take the place of “Music While You Work.” To those of us who are no longer free to attend the lectures which once we found so stimulating, such talks would be “lapped up” with enthusiasm. “Child Psychology” or “Woman's Place in a Changing World” are topics which should have a wide day-time appeal. More talks and plays during these precious hours of relaxation when the children are abed would also be deeply appreciated by many.

JOYCE JEFFERY (Auckland).

## WAR WITHOUT END?

Sir,—I am surprised that your paper should publish an advertisement “calculated to cause alarm and despondency” among those readers who have been hoping that this Second World War will also be the last one. I refer to the exhortation to “invest now in the next War Loan!”

DESPONDENT (Wellington).

(We recommend our correspondent to invest in this loan and help to make it the last.—Ed.).

## ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT

Brian L. Fisher (Otahuhu): See G.M.'s Notes for April 28, 1944.