

JUNE 15, 1945

Neighbours

WE print in this issue some interesting remarks by an interesting young Australian, and the most interesting of them all is his confession that he came here by accident. It is true that Australians sometimes come to New Zealand deliberately, and that New Zealanders sometimes go deliberately to Australia; but it does not happen often (outside the ranks of officials). In any case it does not happen as often as it should. Though we are now less than a day apart we forget what science has done to distance, and, more surprisingly and alarmingly, what the last three or four years have done to the Pacific Ocean. It is time to remember those two facts and forget some others: our difference in size, for example, in population, in material and intellectual resources. There may have been a time when Australia could not take an interest in us without injury to our *amour propre*: there certainly was a time when we could not look at Australia without jealousy and some fear. But those bad old days are gone. Whether we like it or not we are a Pacific nation now and must accept all the implications of that development. Whether Australians like it or not they must take up the burden of South-west Pacific defence. They must ask themselves too, as we must ask ourselves, what their relations are going to be with their near Asiatic neighbours; what trading exchanges there must be; what readjustments of international outlook. The future is not free of menace for them or for us; nor is there, apart from danger, any possibility of going on as if the social and cultural balance of our lives had suffered no disturbance at Pearl Harbour. From the end of the Pacific war we draw closer to Australia or we drift farther apart, and drawing away will mean that we shall not have sufficient weight to withstand the winds that will blow on us. With Australia we can develop a South Pacific culture strong enough to remain indigenous; Pacific British instead of Atlantic British; something that will have the same place in the struggle of Britain's culture to survive as Australian and New Zealand armies have had in her struggle to survive politically.

• NEW ZEALAND LISTENER, JUNE 15

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

BROADCASTING PLUS

Sir,—As an old subscriber who buys *The Listener* to get the advance programmes and information about them, I have a legitimate grievance about the paper's set-up. The cover says it is the "Journal of the National Broadcasting Service." Anyone reading that would surely suppose that the paper dealt with broadcasting. I've taken the trouble to check up on the issue of May 25, and I find that of 104 columns, exclusive of programmes, not more than 24 even remotely concern broadcasting. Surely owners of radios who buy *The Listener* have the right to expect that advertising should be reduced to a minimum and that, if the paper will not then show a profit, the Government should assist it with some of the huge reserves built up from license fees. If *The Listener* is to be the vehicle for aspiring writers, let them write about what we listen to, instead of anything else from the war loan, Chinese art, and French socialism to mistaken journeys and mother's bread pudding.

AUDIO (Dunedin).

[The great majority of our subscribers buy *The Listener* for advance programmes, for information about them, and for everything else we can give them for their money. To argue that we must not give them anything else is to argue that a wheat-farmer must not fatten lambs or a dairy-farmer grow oats, that a mail-car must not carry passengers or a passenger train carry mails, and comes near to suggesting that no one should live in Dunedin unless he burrs his r's, has porridge for breakfast, and attends the Presbyterian Church.—Ed.]

WE CAN'T DO RIGHT

Sir,—Your correspondent A. L. Taylor accuses you of overlong association with members of the New Zealand Labour Party, but something on page 17 of the very issue in which his letter appeared made me wonder whether, in fact, *The Listener* wasn't lending itself to subtle propaganda for the National Party. I refer to your heading, "The Men Who Saved Holland's Mentality." Really sir!

TOM THUMB (Wellington).

N.Z. ERN MALLEY

Sir,—In reply to "Spectator's" letter concerning the existence of an Ern Malley in New Zealand, the person to whom "Spectator" refers is no Ern Malley. But as "Spectator" remarks, his work is still being published, and therefore it is not advisable to say anything more about him at present.

"OBSERVER" (Wellington).

POETRY READINGS

Sir,—Last night from 1YA we heard the last poem in the series "The Moods of Man," readings by the Rev. W. A. Naylor. Please if it is possible, will Mr. Naylor, or someone equally proficient give us a reading of poetry weekly? I am sure that numbers of your listeners will greatly miss him.

F. MOISSON (National Park).

MAORI PRONUNCIATION

Sir,—The letters on Maori Pronunciation are timely. To those who know something of the Maori language the pronunciation of many of the Maori place names that comes over the radio is grating to the ears. The Maori language is easy to pronounce since it is phonetic, and a wonderful opportunity

is provided by broadcasting, to have it spoken correctly over the air. I doubt whether any other aboriginal race has used its language to such splendid effect in naming places. All up and down the land we hear of names which are so apt, when one knows something of the locality, that it is quite easy to imagine that much thought and common sense were used when designating such places. Many are named after the physical features of the locality and others after traditions (some of which are long forgotten but many of which are still known). E. T. FROST (Mangonui).

SUNDAY LEISURE

Sir,—Your correspondent A.G.W. is very emphatic that the question of Sunday observance is one solely between the Creator and the created; and quotes in support the Third Commandment — by which, to judge by the remainder of his letter, he actually means the Fourth.

If he will take the trouble really to read this ordinance, he will find that it distinctly nominates the seventh (Sabbath) day—or Saturday—in each week, as a day of rest; and gives as reason, the fact that God Himself rested on the seventh day from His labours of creation. Conformity with this custom has endured to the present day without interruption in the Jewish community. It is, however, quite impossible to accord the same authority to Sunday. This is a day (the first instead of the seventh of the week) arbitrarily selected by human beings as a substitute for the Sabbath, and designed to commemorate an entirely different event (the resurrection of Christ from the dead).

It is quite open to anyone to hold that Sunday is a better day than the Sabbath, or that it is not as good, or even that (on account of its human origin) it has no validity; but the one thing which clearly cannot honestly be advanced on its behalf, is that it is the same day. The Sabbath or Saturday may fairly be claimed, by those who believe in the Bible, as a God-ordained day. Sunday is purely man-ordained, and to invoke the Fourth Commandment in its support is absolutely disingenuous: as, also, has been the use throughout the centuries by the Christian Clergy of all denominations of the word "Sabbath" as a synonym for "Sunday" with the deliberate object of habituating their flocks to this deception: a trick utterly unworthy of those who profess themselves to be our spiritual teachers and moral tutors.—H. BRADNEY WILLIAMS (Tauranga).

Sir,—The Rev. K. Liggett advocates a Continental Sunday here in New Zealand because Sunday has lost its meaning. Were the results of secularising Sunday on the Continent beneficial or otherwise? Hitler de-Christianised all sacred days and usages, Sunday being devoted to the training of the Hitler youth. Are we not already doing without any compulsion just what Hitler would have us do? The results of too much secularism have been disastrous in the extreme for all of us, and when the clergy become secular, what hope has the church of competing with the world?

Apart from the Christian aspect most people long for and need one day of

quietness and rest from the clamour and clatter of ordinary things. Some solitude in a busy world is a necessity if we would take time to think and take stock of ourselves, but we are never given time in which to know ourselves.

In another issue Professor Sinclair quotes an old gentleman's reply to a circular on why we go to Church. "The Church," he says, "is the only place left where a man of any taste can go with the certainty of hearing some good literature and probably some good music. But the great thing about going to Church is that it gives him his only chance of registering his hatred and contempt for what he calls the obscene slough of secular Philistinism in which all cultural values are in danger—not indeed of being engulfed—since the slough is too shallow for that—but of being cheapened and befouled."

F.M.Mc. (Wellington).

We have had numerous other letters on this subject, from which we take the following points:

"A.G.W. writes of a 'monstrous statement.' Does he realise the monstrosity of his own statement that, if 100 per cent. of people stayed away from Church, they would not have a democratic right to do so... I would like to tell A.G.W. that the greatest and richest freedom of all is freedom from religion."

MARY B. CALVER (Devonport).

"A.G.W. hurls a Commandment at me. I'll warrant he was conveniently silent about that Commandment, and another too, when young soldiers—for Democracy's sake—were obliged to manufacture, slay, shoot, etc. on the Sabbath."

RETURNED SOLDIER (Keri Keri).

"Let us grow up. Let us investigate, systematise, and become truly scientific. The real or ancient-rumour-born gods can fend for themselves. Let our total and life-long devotion be for the happiness and betterment of our needy fellows. One world and one life at a time."

EXCELSIOR (Kaeo).

"In the place of churches let us have Mother Societies, Culture and Instruction Groups, scientifically informed moral teaching in schools, societies for world-wide understanding, friendship, co-operation, and mutual aid."

COUNTRY WOMAN (Keri Keri).

A WORD FOR THE ANNOUNCERS

Sir,—I'm very amused sometimes at the letters in your paper about the pronunciation of radio announcers. We sat here one evening recently and listened while an announcer read the Hon. W. Nash's statement on Farm Debts. I've been used to farmers nearly all my life, and I don't know one person who could have read this statement with such clearness, bringing out each point as it should be. I've heard that announcer give out bad as well as good news with just the right inflexion. He is a trained man, but his voice is flexible. As I sit and listen to the different announcers, I mark the accent. Training can do a lot, but it is the accent that counts.

FAIRPLAY (Waitara).

BEFORE AND AFTER

Sir,—Is there any real reason why our National stations should not announce the name of each item after presentation as well as before? I am sure that others feel as I do when, after waiting ten minutes or so to identify an orchestral item, for instance, we are told what is to follow. It is appreciated that the extra announcements would take up a certain amount of time, but it seems to me that this time would be well spent in the manner suggested.

HOPEFUL (Gisborne).

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT

G.H.A.S. (Wellington): Appreciated; but publication would put us in a false position.