

Does she remember that as soon as Britain declared war on Nazi Germany, the Dominions, on their own initiative, rallied to her side, even though we felt disgust with the England of Munich, but we learned to admire and respect her after Dunkirk. New Zealanders have died fighting to keep the Nazi bombers from England; what other proof does she want than a New Zealand life? If again she means we are anti-British because we choose to have our own opinions, if because at the San Francisco and other Conferences, we did not follow Britain's lead like a lot of sheep, but disagreed, sometimes violently and voted against her, if she thinks that is being anti-British, then she may as well pack up and go back to England, because we are nations in our own right, we govern ourselves, we think for ourselves, and we always shall.

I see no reason why a New Zealander should not be given preference in a Government job; after all it is the New Zealand Government. As for the remark about our callous treatment towards farm animals, well why does J.M. not find out for herself? No one objects to criticism, in fact, we New Zealanders could do with a lot more of it, but I suggest J.M. look first to herself. Are there things about her which people don't like, I mean people of any country. Then again does she speak in an affected manner, does she feel superior to New Zealanders, and make that feeling felt, does she talk continuously about "Home," does she run down New Zealand to our faces? I have lived in New Zealand all my short 22 years, and I know we would not care twopence how she walks and dresses, but the affected voice and superior manners would not find her friends.

We pledge our allegiance neither to America nor to England, our allegiance first and foremost goes to New Zealand, then to the British Commonwealth of Nations, and it always will. We, the Dominions, are young, vigorous nations; we may probably seem to older nations uncouth and rather raw, ill-mannered and intolerant; but have patience, we shall mellow. What J.M. hasn't realised is that we are no longer lion cubs gambling round the mother lion; we have grown up, we are New Zealanders, Australians, Canadians and South Africans before we are British.

M. M. WILSON (Wellington).

Sir,—If J.M. is really sincere one cannot wonder that she has not been happy in New Zealand, and her attitude is the greatest possible hindrance to closer relationship between Britain and her colonies. Let J.M. ask any returned New Zealand soldier, sailor or airman who sojourned in Britain, particularly north Britain, what his feelings are for the Old Country. From what I have heard there is a real love and affectionate regard for the Motherland and the people thereof.

I also am of "that mentality" that sees no reason for preferring J.M.'s husband, a new arrival, before a New Zealander for a Government job in New Zealand. Evidently J.M. thinks herself and her husband superior to any New Zealander and therein lies the cause of their failure to get along with New Zealanders. She says she does not like "their ignorance and immaturity, and petty and

persistent persecution in various subtle ways." New Zealand's "ignorance and immaturity" has made a splendid job of leading the world in many ways, particularly in social reforms and common-sense legislature. (No, I am not a "Labourite").

J.M. believes on hearsay that the New Zealand farmer is callous. From experience I deny that. I have read in British newspapers reports of parents' cruelty and neglect of their children, but it would be utterly stupid to say the British parent is callous. Had J.M. ever seen the sufferings of a fly-blown sheep she would realise the wisdom of cutting lambs' tails, and had she been privileged to see a New Zealand farmer at work among lambing ewes she would revise her opinion of farmers. After 23 years among New Zealanders in city, town and backblocks I have the greatest admiration and affection for them, and had I the choice of settling anywhere on earth, I should again choose New Zealand.

J.M. could help to preserve the unity of the British Empire by refraining from referring to Britain as "Mother England" or speaking of "England and her colonies," a minor point, but a sore one with Britons who are not English. "HOMIE FROM NORTH BRITAIN" (Wellington).

Sir,—Your correspondent J.M. offers some pungent criticism of New Zealand without fair judgment. Some of her remarks are sound, but unduly scathing. As a resident of over 30 years, I have learnt to avoid hasty conclusions. It is true that after serving with New Zealand troops in the last war, I came back to a country where discharged men were officially informed that New Zealanders would receive preference in all Government jobs. Again, ability counts for little. The country always had a bureaucratic bias, with its attendant lack of inspiration among leaders and departmental heads.

But comparisons are futile. In some respects, life is freer in Great Britain, because of an infinite variety of jobs, entertainment and social life. Surely this little country cannot expect these without a far greater population.

But there is a type which I call the typical New Zealander, that in my opinion surpasses most in any country. He is the young manhood of the land. Clear cut, steady and capable, he is the backbone of the country. There are plenty of him. He stiffened the ranks of the services in both wars, and has to thank his open life and country for his fine character. He is proud, without arrogance, and listens well. Above all, he makes no hasty judgment of his fellow-men!

Certain people of all countries are discontented when trying other "fields and pastures new." But taking all in all, this is a fine little country, and to infer that unkindness to animals is a characteristic, is ridiculous. The great danger to the peace and prosperity of New Zealand is political bigotry and wrangling. The country is too small to stand up to it. There is too much intolerance. This, with racing and gambling, dominates the scene. The assistance of the British Council may help to offset these tendencies. More diversity of interests is vital to the future.

ENGLISHMAN (Havelock North).

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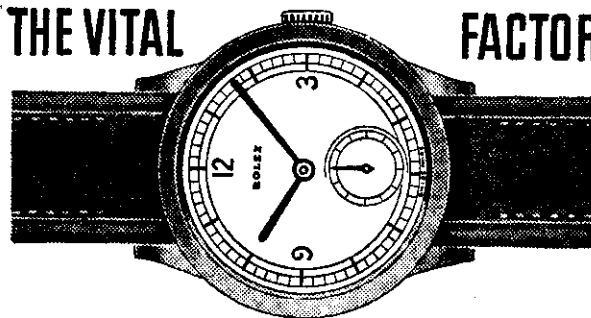
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