

almost as soon as the people of England. There are, of course, many things from which I would learn much in England—for example, a performance of one of Sean O'Casey's early plays in the Abbey Theatre, and a conversation with O'Casey himself. But, speaking very generally, modern communications and modern science have made mincemeat of the argument that to live fully one must necessarily live near a source of values. And, after all, perhaps, it is better for the soul to be forced to seek those values, to carve them out of the rough rock, rather than to find them nicely factory-fashioned for you and offered for sale at cut rates.

And I think that the usual argument of the newspaper correspondent—about the difficulty of finding a good job in New Zealand which will enable you to live well and work usefully—is in large measure a clumsy rationalisation. If it is so terribly important to a young man that he should make £1,000 a year rather than £500, or that his name should appear in a world *Who's Who* instead of a local edition, then to hell with that young man and all his works. It may ultimately be of greater importance to build a community centre at Nae Nae than to become Economic Adviser to His Majesty's Government. There's not really much difference between the vital jobs that need doing in London, in Wellington, or in Littledene. I should like to be a good economist, and help to do these jobs in that way, but it won't break my heart if I'm forced to assist in some less spectacular manner.

No, these things are only the externals. In the case of the young men for whom I am setting myself up as an apologist, the desire to escape springs from another source. I think it springs most urgently from the loneliness of those who, in a little country, find themselves in one way or another unable to conform. I understand fully what this thesis implies. It simply means that people who want to escape from New Zealand are cowards in the worst sense of the word. They are seeking "safety in numbers, even for faith," as D. H. Lawrence put it. But Lawrence was walled in by sex and classes, and not by the boundaries of a little country, and it was easy for him to sneer.

There are some things which a man, however steel-minded he may be at most times, finds it difficult to bear, and which in a decent society he should not be asked to bear alone. There is scorn, for one thing, and indifference, which is more hurtful than scorn. And even worse than these is the knowledge that in a little country things tend to be more important than people or ideas; that visitors come to New Zealand to fish our rivers and to gape at the geysers and the largest wooden building in the world, rather than to meet our poets and our painters and our composer. To those holding strange faiths and despising men who run yapping after martyrdom, to those who have shed like a skin the doctrines of their fathers and their rulers, these things are real and not phantasmal, and far more bitter than the petty physical persecutions which shadow them wherever they go.

The Enemy's answer to all this is only too easy, and unfortunately it is also perfectly true. He says: "If this little country is a Land of Things, and you think it ought to be something else, why don't you stay here and do something

NEW ZEALAND HOUSE BESIEGED

Brains—and Brawn—Clamour to be Imported

(Written for "The Listener" by SEAN DILLON)

"THE butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker" . . . not the last-named — not yet, but dozens of his modern equivalents, the electrician. It's a current popular joke at New Zealand House, London, that makers of candlesticks and glass-eyes for children's dolls are among the few people who have not yet come to the counter and shyly asked: "Can you give me any information about emigration to New Zealand, please?"

For eighteen months now, up to 200 enquiries a day have been received by the High Commissioner's Office regarding the prospects of settlement in New Zealand. Over 100 letters a day; up to 100 calls at the counter. Each mid-day the Englishman forms yet another queue, this time across the wide foyer in which carpenters, glaziers and painters are busy preparing the once-sightless windows for displays of New Zealand produce and general publicity. Heedless of the hammer, the girls on the counter deal with the enquirers individually or in batches,



"BOMBED-OUT PEOPLE have to start again anyhow"

about it, instead of flitting off to another country where they don't need you?" He may also make a quiet reference to the spirit of the pioneers.

But the Enemy is subtle, and he wouldn't have put this question to you unless he'd known the only possible answer. He knows very well that if you stay in the little country and try to do something about it, he stands a good chance of filing off these ugly rough edges of non-conformism, packing you back into the appropriate box, and fastening on a pretty label. In all probability, he wouldn't even have to close the lid of the box, for his allies are many and powerful, and often possess the great virtue of not knowing that they are his allies.

The only possible answer you can give the Enemy is something like this: "Beat me, orthodox Christians, for I am a villain. I am no Lenin, and no Christ. I cannot work as I would like to work, as I feel I can work, unless the seed I am sowing grows quickly and clearly so that I can watch it grow, and unless I can sow it in the company of many others

who are stronger than I. I am not strong enough to fight you unless there are others to help me, who love the same things. And it is not enough for me to know that they are there, but in other countries—I need them at my right hand and all about me."

Does the desire to escape, then, arise fundamentally because of the hope that the people of England will be more tolerant, and that there will be many men who will support you if the people do happen to turn against you because your faiths are not those of their teachers? I think it does. I know that much of our best native literature has been born of despair, but that is no argument for despair. There is no answer to the old question of whether you get the best work out of an artist by feeding him or by starving him; that will depend on the artist. I'm afraid that I'm one of the many who need to be fed, and until New Zealand realises that this need is urgent and widespread it will not rear pioneers: it will continue to breed, teach, and finally exile wretched cowards like myself.

O. to be in New Zealand!



for the questions are almost always the same. So are the answers.

With a little red book, *New Zealand*, whose cover shows a land-girl feeding lambs, and a printed slip "Prospects of Settlement," some sit on sofas beside a glass-case of kiwis, or beneath a new, huge picture-display, "This Land of Ours," and think up their questions. Some add our pamphlets to the little bundle collected from the offices of the other High Commissioners and debate the advantages of Canada, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand in homes from Watford to Wapping Wall. How many debaters? Well, 10,000 pamphlets lasted three months and each pamphlet usually means more than one would-be immigrant. And that's only those who bother to call or write.

Comprehensive Cavalcade

A list of those who called during the lunch-hour one day early in January reads like the cast of a modern Cavalcade: A newly demobbed motor mechanic from Northern Ireland, curious about the prospects of his trade in New Zealand, a business man with executive experience in engineering and the capital to invest in an agricultural implements business, a dressmaker and three dental nurses, two Poles, both studying economics at London University, a dentist, a Post and Telegraph mechanic, a doctor, a chartered accountant, in neat trilby and quiet tie, asking for figures about our secondary industries, a professional violinist whose wife was confident that he could make a good living among "so musical a people," the owner of a Rolls and a rich complexion who "thought of retiring to the Antipodes," two officers of the Indian Army, and a "happy warrior" whose qualification was "Jack of all trades, Guv'nor!"

Cows and All That

Quaintest of all has been a slim, prancing, youngish man in earthy Harris tweeds who informed us in a high, precious voice: "I intend to buy a farm in New Zealand. What should I do?" Eschewing the obvious, we asked if he'd done any farming. "No. But my people have estates, you know. And I have a nephew, a big, strong boy and very keen, who knows all about farms. I intend to take him with me. And I want to learn all about it myself, you know. Cows and things." And his neat, white-nailed fingers danced daintily along the counter.

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