



A moment in which he is not master of his fate

to grow food as well as gather it in, and I can think of no advance in agricultural science that will keep him always comfortable and clean.

So the wind that has hardly stopped blowing since I left Wellington nearly three weeks ago is destiny as well as air in motion. It keeps me in the current of history from which no farmer ever escapes. I do not find it pleasant. Neither does the man hoeing carrots just through the fence as I am writing this note. With every gust the weeds that must come out get inextricably tangled with the seedlings that must stay in, the dust blows up into his eyes, there is a moment in which he is not master of his fate at all. But man was never master of his fate. The farmer more than any other man (with the probable exception of the fisherman) has defied fate and grappled with it, as that man out there is doing. But the answer to wind is trees, and the farmer who can afford as many shelter belts as the Wairarapa demands is not often hoeing crops by hand. It will take another century at least to protect the Wairarapa against wind, and the best the average farmer can do in the meantime is to fight on hopefully. He can't master his fate, but he can fight when it tries to master him, and so the wind now blowing dust into that farmer's eyes, and taking the moisture out of the soil, and threatening to reduce the ground to that bone-hard state which Virgil said was fatal to husbandry, comes from Eden and beyond, and makes him a soldier in the world's oldest and most honourable army and myself a kind of camp follower by the mere act of watching him sympathetically.

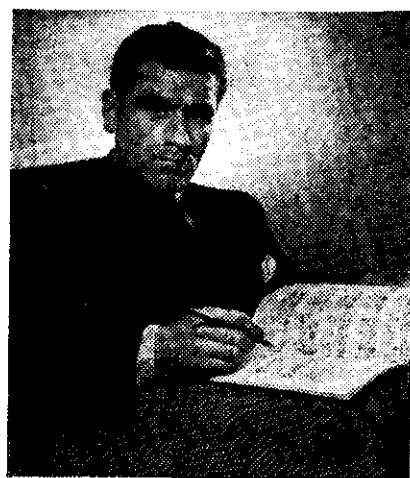
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I HAVE not said as much about the people of the Wairarapa as I have about their lands and flocks. But they have said a good deal to me. Some day, perhaps, I shall repeat what they have said; but not before the end of

POLITICS

November. This is not a political story, directly or indirectly. It is some impressions gathered on a journey of five or six hundred miles made, by accident, a few weeks before a General Election. And I am old enough to remember about a dozen earlier elections, with their excitements, crazy rumours, and frantic passions. It is very unlikely, I think, that the situation in the Wairarapa is either better or worse in this respect than it has been a dozen times before, but I

have not before been there on the eve of an election. I don't know whether the followers of Sir William Russell ever said such things about the followers of Mr. Seddon as I heard some of Mr. Holland's supporters saying about some of Mr. Fraser's; but I feel sure that they did. And I feel sure that Radicals in the past said as violent things about Conservatives as some of Mr. Fraser's followers are now saying about Mr. Holland's. But I did not hear them said then, and last week I heard them said in the Wairarapa. So I record the fact that the Wairarapa is at present a little excited, a little credulous, a little ridiculous; but I record it for historical reasons only. Elections pass, but the people remain. The land remains. The eternal struggle with wind and weather and pests and disease remains. I leave party politics to the party newspapers.



RAYMOND LAMBERT (above) arrived in New Zealand last week for his broadcast tour as accompanist and solo pianist with the dramatic soprano Joan Hammond. He arrived in Auckland on Monday afternoon and left for Wellington by the main trunk express on Tuesday afternoon; in the meantime he put in two hours on Tuesday morning working in the 1YA studio on the solo pieces he was to play in the first concert in Wellington (October 19) notably the Bach chaconne arranged for piano by Busoni. I asked him why it was we heard Bach neat so seldom, why so often we heard instead the arrangements for piano.

"It is very simple because Bach wrote his music for the clavichord and harpsichord and not for the piano," he said, "and it sounds too thin, too meagre very often when it is played on the piano. And of course this chaconne is violin music and so has to be arranged for piano—and Busoni has done it very well, he was surely the king of arrangers. He understood Bach very well and was also a supreme master of the piano."

I END with a few disjointed notes that space will not allow me to extend.

Flowers: One of the delights of the Wairarapa in spring are the hosts of wild daffodils — plain old-fashioned double blooms that no one any longer cultivates. You see them in the cow paddocks, on little islands in swamps, in garden corners where the rubbish goes, decorating ditches, waving on banks and terraces, and marking abandoned paths from front gates to front doors. And once I saw a bucketful of them overshadowing the small goods in a butcher's window, and casting a kind of golden haze over the masses further in.

Earthquakes: One of the surprises is the still-remaining earthquake damage. It was no doubt reported at the time that the two 'quakes which rocked Wellington in 1942 had nearly destroyed Eketahuna and done an enormous amount of damage in Masterton and Martinborough. We probably knew too that many Carterton and Greytown homes and dozens of isolated farm houses had been jolted, twisted, tilted, and cracked in the most alarming ways. But the war was at a desperate stage. We were incapable of two alarms at once,

and of two waves of sympathy at once, and the woes of the Wairarapa were forgotten. It is a sign of the resources of the territory and of the character of the people that the shock was absorbed with so little knowledge or help from outside and so little fuss at home.

Names: One of the misfortunes of the Wairarapa is its name, which will be mispronounced for a thousand years. "Wai" will always be "Wy," "rapa" will soon be "rappa," the first "ra" will disappear altogether. Go to a football match and you will know. But "Wy rappa" is not much worse than "Wy rah rappa," the pedantic alternative. Unless we imitate the Kaffirs, whose vowels have one value when the feet are squarely on the ground and another when the speaker stands on his toes, we shall have to give up the attempt to reach the exact point between "rahpa" and "ruppa" that is pure Maori and go on Anglicising native names till they have no Maori meaning at all.

The next series of articles by "Sundowner," to be published in two or three weeks' time, will deal with "Wellington West of the Ranges."

ACCOMPANIST WORKS HARD Raymond Lambert Likes French Composers

"It is a very difficult thing to play Bach well," he said. "It needs years and years of study; it is necessary to understand the musical language of Bach and most important of all, to understand the period in which he lived. But then this is necessary for any piano playing; no one can expect to become a good pianist without a thorough study of the classical writers and the classical periods."

In Melbourne on the Friday evening before he left Mr. Lambert gave a concert of solo piano works in the Town Hall. This was his first big solo recital for several years. During the war he has been travelling with singers as accompanist and has appeared very often at concerts for the troops and concerts to raise funds for patriotic purposes. His concert tours covered Australia from Adelaide to Darwin. I asked him if he had found, as Solomon and others found during the war, that audiences of servicemen demanded serious music rather than light music.

"Oh, yes, they did ask for plenty of serious music; but I can't say that such requests were the most numerous."

I asked Mr. Lambert if he ever felt he was taking a too modest place, being accompanist for so many singers.

"Not at all," he said. "Every serious artist will tell you that a sympathetic accompanist is of very great importance. And, of course, in these tours in which I work partly as accompanist and partly as a solo pianist there is an enormous amount of work to be done. There is rehearsing with the soloist and then separate study of the pieces to be played. And then in such a case the accompanist is actually on the stage for the whole evening; moreover, he has to change

completely from one type of playing to another and back again. I can assure you it is really hard work."

He Likes Debussy

Mr. Lambert, who has been in Australia off and on for twenty years—he was two years in Europe and England studying from 1934 to 1936 and he toured New Zealand with John Brownlee after that—still has a distinct accent. He is Belgian by birth and began his study at the Brussels Conservatoire. For this reason, he thinks, he is particularly sympathetic to the work of Debussy and others of the French school. But he says he much enjoys playing the work of Prokofieff and Shostakovich and other moderns as well.

Mr. Lambert is an examiner for the Australian Examiners' Board and teaches piano music at the University of Melbourne Conservatorium of Music.

In a picture shop in Shortland Street some reproductions, in most delicate colour, of Twelfth Century Chinese colour prints were displayed and Mr. Lambert and I stood gazing in admiration and delight. Beside us stood two elderly men. They turned and went on up the street and one said gruffly to the other: "Huh! This modern futurist stuff doesn't appeal to me."

"Dear me," said Mr. Lambert, "perhaps I should cut those Shostakovich preludes out of my programmes."

—J.

Races from 4YZ

STATION 4YZ's coverage of sporting fixtures is extending and this station will broadcast commentaries on the events in the Gore Racing Club's meeting this Saturday, October 26, and on Labour Day, Monday, October 28.