

(continued from previous page)

I ADMIT an unreasoning irritation over the present popularity of Tutira. I thought I would be at peace there, and in a negative way I was. No one called

### LAKES FOR WHOM?

on me or camped beside me or deliberately interfered with me. But it was not the peace of silence or of solitude. Cars rushed past at intervals all day, quite frequent intervals, so that the whole lakeside was buried in dust. It was strange to find myself longing in the presence of so much water for a deluge to wash everything clean. But even darkness brought no relief. I heard at least a dozen cars pass before I went to sleep, and when a particularly noisy motor-cycle woke me after midnight I lay wondering how long it would be before another car came. It was not more than five or ten minutes, and four more passed before I went to sleep again.

Well, they had as much right to the road as I had, and as much to the day and the night. The milk lorries and transport trucks had a better right. I hope we shall never see aesthetes and self-conscious romantics claiming privilege in our beauty spots, and if they do I hope they will be laughed at. But multitudes are a problem too. Not many of us are fine enough to visit such places for the best reasons or crude enough to go there for the worst. We don't, like D'Arcy Cresswell in Panama, climb our Dariens for poetic inspiration and get arrested by unimaginative policemen. But we don't go there to open gambling dens either, or sly-grog shops, or camouflaged brothels. All the people I saw camped round Tutira, with the boat-loads of picnickers on it, were good average New Zealanders: the men and women and children who fill our streets and shops and tramcars, talk to us over the back fence, go to the races with us or to church, work with us, work for us, keep our railways going, our factories, our farms. To object to them as neighbours would be to object to one's self, to be a donkey that said no to thistles or a sheep that refused to eat grass: in short, a pretender and a fake and a fool. But whoever surrenders a lake to birds surrenders it to thousands of human beings who have no special interest in birds, who would say if you made them think about it, that human beings come before birds, but who are in general too happy and healthy to do much thinking at all. No solitude will ever be secure against them, and no solitude ever should be. But I don't think it is a sin against the Holy Ghost to wish sometimes that they would be happy and healthy somewhere else.

### "Thin Moral Ice"

BLAMING adult misdeeds on childhood frustrations is a widely popular excuse among amateur Freudians—and professional movie-makers (says the critic of *Time* in reviewing a new film which exploits Hollywood's hardest-worn current themes: psychiatry and vicious womanhood). None the less, church and state still hold a grown person responsible for his sinful and anti-social acts. Hollywood is cutting figure-eights on dangerously thin moral ice by suggesting to its huge mass audience that an unhappy childhood not only explains but somehow excuses a lady's indulgence in bitchery and murder."

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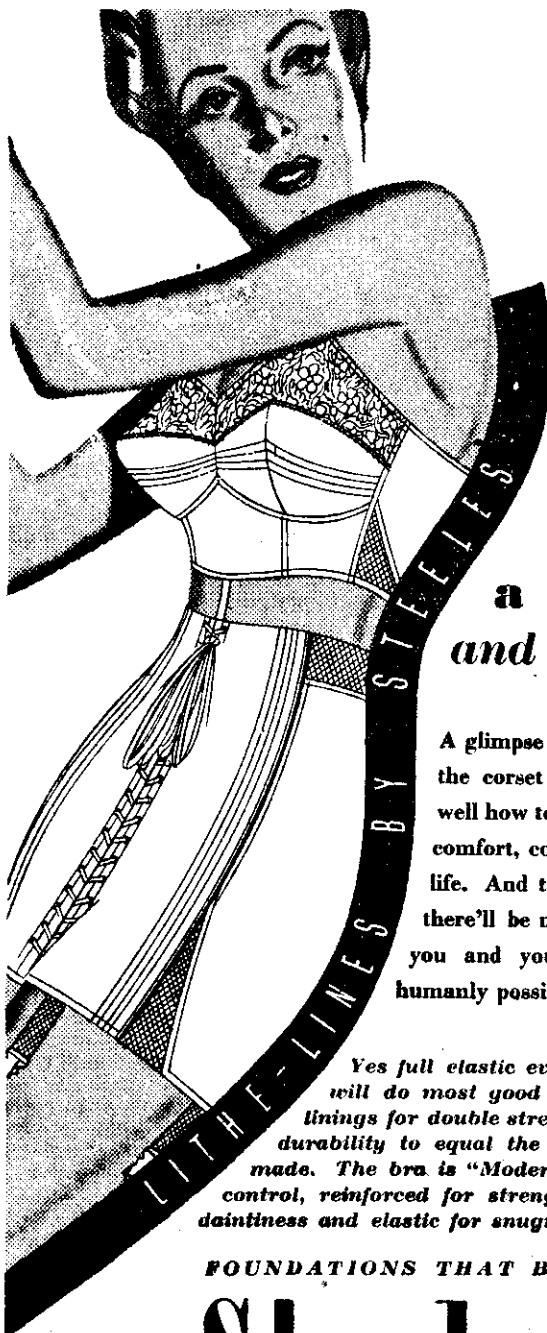
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