

## Anzac in 1947

IT is not in itself a good sign that Anzac Day was celebrated as reverently in 1947 as in any of the 32 years since the landing. It is a good sign that we still reverence courage and self-sacrifice; but in Australia and New Zealand Anzac Day is the national day of war remembrance—not mourning alone or victory alone—and it is possible to remember war unprofitably as well as profitably. It is no doubt true, all in all, that Anzac Day still means what it has always meant to those who are old enough to remember 1915. To them there is still more sorrow in it than rejoicing, and in their rejoicing still more humility than pride. Apart from anything else the fact that Gallipoli itself was a military defeat, that those who died won no victory and those who lived no triumph, that fact still keeps us humble about military glory in general. Anzac Day to the Anzac generation would have been a mockery long ago if its central meaning had not always been that remembering virtue in others brings virtue a little nearer to ourselves. But each year the proportion of those who were not born in 1915 rises, without diminution so far in the proportion of those who have had bitter experience of war. The world has seen a more total war than anything it thought possible in 1915, and Anzac Day could easily become now a meaningless echo of a past that we would do well to forget or an excuse for further war-mongering. The first would make it a mockery faster than anything else, the second a very real menace, and the day it threatens to be one or the other it should be dropped out of our lives. It will not then be Anzac Day. It will be something that Anzac Day never was and must never be allowed to become.

# LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

## WINDOW ON RUSSIA

Sir,—If Ian S. Macdougall had taken the precaution of checking initials he would have found that the name of the great Russian botanist and geneticist he refers to was N. I. Vavilov, whilst that of the President of the Academy of Sciences, according to Mr. Macdougall himself, is S. I. Vavilov. Perhaps it was simpler to suspect Professor Ashby's objectivity and fairness; yet it was Ashby—one of the few non-Russian scientists who have met the redoubtable Lysenko—who brought back from Russia welcome news of lively developments in genetics, growing up side by side with, and in spite of, the Lysenko school.

There can be little doubt that, as "A Very Puzzled Scientist" suggests, "Lysenko's absurdities will find him out," even in his own country. The greatest contribution the world of science can make towards this end, and towards a full resumption of the great work Russian geneticists and plant geographers did in the 'twenties and 'thirties under the leadership of N. I. Vavilov, is to expose the mediaeval quackery of the Lysenko school. This has recently been done with admirable objectivity by P. S. Hudson and R. H. Richens, in a book *The New Genetics in the Soviet Union*, Imperial Bureau of Plant Breeding and Genetics, School of Agriculture, Cambridge. This publication can be obtained through the inter-loan service of New Zealand libraries.

O. H. FRANKEL (Christchurch.)

Sir,—May I make a correction to a statement appearing in your columns over the name of Ian S. Macdougall. Mr. Macdougall's statement is to the effect that Professor Ashby distorted the truth in his published statements about the fate of Academician Vavilov. The Vavilov to whom Professor Ashby referred is N. I. Vavilov the geneticist. The Vavilov referred to in *Moscow News* is S. I. Vavilov, a physicist who is at present President of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. I have no clear evidence as to the fate of N. I. Vavilov, but I believe that he died in public disgrace after a life of brilliant service to Soviet science, to be replaced by an apparent impostor.

As for the question of inaccuracy in Professor Ashby's statements about Soviet Science my present impression from reading much of his writing is that he is accurate and fair.

A STILL PUZZLED SCIENTIST  
(Hamilton).

(Two other correspondents have made the same correction.—Ed.)

## ANZAC DAY

Sir,—In the broadcast over the national network on April 25 by "Four Who Were There," one of the speakers mentioned that he was astride the Peninsula and was ordered back to the beach during the night for artillery support, but no further mention was made of the troops he sought aid for, and who were laying the very foundation of the Anzac tradition.

The speaker mentioned that the beach was prepared to turn it in, but those still in contact with the enemy were fighting a soldier's battle and succeeded all through the night in keeping the Turks off the Beach. The navy smashed up the big attack by the Turks at daylight on the morning of the 26th, but during the day the Turkish Commander

succeeded in his strategy of encircling Anzac Cove, and after that, there is no doubt he ordered the removal of our dead from where they fell on the numerous strategic positions astride the Peninsula.

Anzac Day is a commemoration of those who were prepared to give their all, and I would like to think that when the Turks had placed our comrades in their last resting place, they would have had the thought, "Stout fellows, these Christians. Surely Allah, the Compassionate, will open unto them the Gates of Paradise."

"THEY WERE ALSO THERE"  
(Christchurch).

## VOLKNER'S MARTYRDOM

Sir,—A statement having been made in a recent *Listener* letter that Carl Volkner was killed and eaten, it may be as well to point out that in his martyrdom there is no evidence of cannibalism. His headless body lies beneath the chancel of the Church of St. Stephen the Martyr at Opatiki.

While writing, may I suggest that the original query with regard to Whangarei was not as to the correct pronunciation of its present spelling, but whether, in view of the earliest recorded pronunciation of the name its spelling was not arbitrarily fixed. In Arrowsmith's 1841 map of New Zealand the spelling is in accordance with the way the early missionaries quite evidently heard it pronounced—Wangari.

A.H.R. (Dunedin).

## IN ENGLAND NOW

Sir,—In an article recently in the daily press a New Zealand correspondent says the gardens in New Zealand now are ablaze with flowers and are more English than the English. Well, although summer seems a long way off to us now during this very cold spell, some of the gardens in this district in summer would take a lot of beating for the mass of blooms produced. Every front garden seems to have dozens of rose bushes of every colour in full bloom. As regards the food situation, we get enough to eat, although there may not be much variety. I'll admit the housewife has rather a rough time queuing for the food in short supply. I know from experience, as I have to do all the shopping, my wife being an invalid after a leg amputation; but we still have confidence in spite of the present crisis that better times are ahead and are proud of being British.

T. J. HARRIS (Enfield, Middlesex).

## SHOSTAKOVICH'S NINTH SYMPHONY

Sir,—The article on Shostakovich in a recent issue of *The Listener* puzzled me. According to Dr. Lang, whom you quoted, the Russian composer has been in trouble with the Communist Party because in his "Ninth Symphony" he imitates the classical models.

Just after your article appeared, I read in the *Moscow News* that a cycle of Beethoven concerts given in Moscow had been booked out almost as soon as the booking opened and that one of the most popular of the young Soviet pianists had promised to play the Bach "48 Preludes and Fugues" at his forthcoming concerts. The music of Bach, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven is very popular in the U.S.S.R. Why then should the

Communist Party object to Shostakovich's writing a symphony in the classical style? An article by David Rabinovich, a Soviet music critic, in the magazine *Soviet Literature*, answers the question. The Ninth Symphony has been condemned by some critics in Russia because it is too like musical comedy; not because it follows the classical model. The article is too long to quote in full, but among other things Rabinovich says: "There have been attempts to interpret the entire Ninth Symphony as a kind of musical comedy." Further on he writes, "The pamphlet style is perhaps the most suitable definition we can find for the genre of the Ninth Symphony."

As to Shostakovich's article on trends in Soviet music—he has said the same thing many times before, both in the press and from the public platform.

E. RYAN (Kilbirnie).

## "THE ROCKING-HORSE WINNER"

Sir,—The "silly" plot of "The Rocking-Horse Winner," as revealed by H. Thompson, proves it to have been a dramatization by the BBC of one of D. H. Lawrence's more popular short stories; perhaps his most popular, to judge by the frequent reprints. Had I heard the BBC version, I, too, might have been disappointed, but for a different reason, I think. It would take an artist as great as Lawrence to convey the atmosphere of this intense and powerful story, let alone its undoubtedly serious import, to a radio audience.

If Mr. Thompson is astounded by the merely physical aspects of the story, let him read the original, where he will find the metaphysical and final value of the piece.

It is interesting to note that even such a minor and comparatively straightforward piece of D. H. Lawrence can still arouse cries of "crass nonsense," and "blasphemy," though I hasten to repeat that this may have been the fault of the BBC.

A. D. RUTHE (Howick).

## ARE WE MATERIALISTIC?

Sir,—Replying to Judith Terry, may I respectfully point out that although we have thousands of Christians, according to the census figures, they are mostly nominal. We have a pagan money system, and a pagan educational system. What are these Christian soldiers doing? No, only when danger rises do we think of God Almighty. When the danger is past, we revert back to forgetfulness of high matters or vital concerns. 'Tis strange, but still, 'tis true.

MARCUS ST. B. JAMES (Hamilton).

## SATURDAY AFTERNOONS

Sir,—May I put in a plea for your many listeners on Saturday afternoons who are not interested in sport, boogie-woogie, crooning, or Tom, Dick and Harry and their orchestral moanings. To many of us this is one of the few peaceful times of the week when we can spare time to sit and listen to something good, but after switching vainly from station to station for the past two hours I have given up. Surely one of the stations could give those who care for it at least a short time of light classics or good orchestral music on Saturday afternoons instead of rubbish from all stations?

ENID M. SMITH (Wellington).

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

"Euclidian" (Huntly): Made in America by American artists.

W. A. Douglas Cole (Tangatorua): No space for another controversy on evolution.