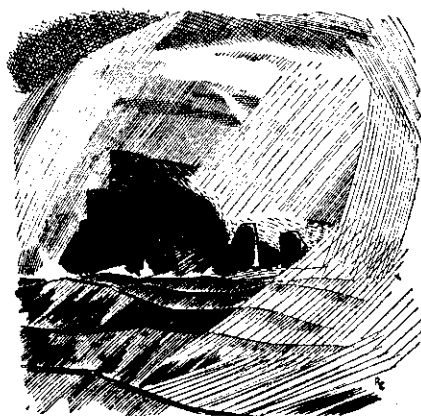


DIVIDING SEAS

NEW Zealanders may be interested in a debate which has broken out in the Australian press between A. R. D. Fairburn and myself on the respective demerits of the New Zealand and Australian cultural mind. Mr. Fairburn's thesis was that New Zealand lacked cultural vitality and was, by and large, totally ignorant of the painting and literature of its immediate Pacific neighbour, Australia.



Written for "The Listener" by
MAX HARRIS

My reply in the Australian press may stimulate a wider interest in bridging that Tasman gap, and, incidentally, give New Zealanders a somewhat less depressing picture of themselves than Mr. Fairburn is wont to paint. This is what I said:

WHY are there no strong cultural ties between the two neighbouring countries? Mr. Fairburn attributes much of it to the apathy of his own country with its consequent ignorance of the more lively Australian culture.

The pot is accusing itself of being black, but, on the face of it, the kettle seems well satisfied with itself.

It is this situation which I regret, for, believe it or not, the Australian kettle is black with apathy, smugness, and a village-pump attitude towards cultures other than its own. What do Australians know of New Zealand painting or literature? How many Australians have heard of Frank Sargeson, Greville Texidor, Allen Curnow, Denis Glover, or A. R. D. Fairburn for that matter?

In many respects very important cultural work is going on in New Zealand—in their literature, for example.

Frank Sargeson is a New Zealand novelist and short story writer. To help "bridge that Tasman gap" an Australian edition of his novel *When the Wind Blows* was published. It was a dismal failure. For the most part the reviewers ignored it.

Was it, then, an unimportant work? It sold very well in New Zealand, but that might have been because the New Zealanders' standards were not as high as ours.

(continued from previous page)

everyone in the country, an absurdly simple aim which seemed the most difficult of all to achieve, for not only was the combined desire necessary, but even more remote the combined will.

As a member of one farmer's family expressed it (reducing a very complex situation to extremely simple terms as this story does) it was like a game of marbles, where one player was getting all the marbles, and unless something was done to give some back to the other players the game could not go on.

ant cultural work. Are all these countries out of step except Australia?

Another example concerns an account of "D-Day" by Denis Glover. This was considered one of the finest reports on D-Day. Once again *Penguin New Writing*, which represents the best work from all over the Empire, published it. As far as I can remember, no Australian has had a story accepted for this publication.

Glover's "D-Day" booklet had practically no sale or reviews at all here.

In New Zealand an annual anthology of short stories (and New Zealand short story work is every bit as good as Australian) is published. "Speaking for Ourselves" contains New Zealand and Australian short stories. Are there any Australian anthologies of stories which contain New Zealand work? Where does it seem that energy and vision is needed to "bridge that Tasman gap?"

Do I hear the kettle whistling? Mr. Fairburn himself is a case in point of an important writer being virtually unknown in Australia. An extremely agile satirist, his "We New Zealanders" was a most controversial contribution to "New Zealand Writing." He has strived valiantly to defeat New Zealand's cultural conservatism.

Because there is no Australian market for our neighbour's books, Mr. Fairburn and many other competent minds have not even been heard of here.

Allen Curnow's comprehensive collection of New Zealand poetry is not to be found even in public libraries; the book work of the Caxton Press, which outstrips in quality anything Australian publishers are doing, is only to be found in the shelves of the resourceful bibliophile. It is not that these works haven't been imported. They have. There is just no interest in them.

On the other hand, New Zealand, with its smaller population, is providing a useful appendage to the Australian market, and the export of Australian books across the Tasman is expanding rapidly. The process is not, however, operating in reverse.

So that what A. R. D. Fairburn says of painting is, I imagine, quite true. But it distorts the picture. And it leaves us smugly regretting New Zealand's "cultural stagnation."

The logical thing for us to do is to scour our own kettle; the pot will soon find the comparison odious, and Mr. Fairburn will not need to be such an unhappy patriot.

But a kindred novel by Sargeson, *That Summer*, was published serially in *Penguin New Writing*—the only time I can remember that Penguin Books published a novel serially. The English rights of *When the Wind Blows* were snapped up. The French liked it, and a translation into French was made—of a book that may have sold 200 copies in Australia.

England and France found *That Summer* an important cultural work.

Wool gathering?



Copley's Knitting Instruction Leaflets and Copley's Wools are available at better stores throughout New Zealand.

THEN ASK FOR

KNITTING WOOLS

When you seek English Knitting Wool of quality, ask and search for Copley's. The supply of Copley's to New Zealand is limited but it comes regularly, and Copley's is well worth waiting for.

If you can't obtain Copley's Wools write to: "Copley's," P.O. Box 828, Wellington, for name of your nearest stockist.

L. COPLEY-SMITH & SONS LIMITED, MANCHESTER, ENGLAND.

Chest Cold Misery Relieved by Moist Heat of ANTIPHLOGISTINE

CHEST COLD
SORE THROAT
BRONCHIAL
IRRITATION
SPRAIN, BRUISE
SORE MUSCLES
BOILS

The moist heat of an ANTIPHLOGISTINE poultice relieves cough, tightness of chest, muscle soreness due to chest cold, bronchial irritation and simple sore throat. Apply an ANTIPHLOGISTINE poultice just hot enough to be comfortable—then feel the moist heat go right to work on that cough, tightness of chest, muscle soreness. Does good, feels good for several hours.

The moist heat of an ANTIPHLOGISTINE poultice also relieves pain . . . reduces swelling, limbers up stiff aching muscles due to a simple boil, sprain, bruise, similar injury or condition. Get ANTIPHLOGISTINE at your Chemist or Store today.

Denver Chemical Mfg. Co.,
78 Liverpool Street, Sydney.

500

During past 12 months over 500 BSA Motor Cycles sold in N.Z. Shipments landing monthly, but all sold before arrival—only way to secure a BSA is through our Reservation Deposit Scheme and have one definitely reserved for you.



Send £10 Reservation Deposit to our address below or place order and pay deposit to any B.S.A.

Dealer. Full specifications, prices, terms, of all B.S.A. models, with Reservation Order Form, from local dealer or post free from:

N.Z. Distributors:

SKEATES & WHITE LTD.
48 FORT STREET, AUCKLAND.