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Otago's First Century

NEXT week Otago will reach the end of its first century as an organised settlement, and the climax of its centennial celebrations. Though there were white men in the area before the arrival of the two ships from Scotland, it was the dropping of the John Wickliffe's anchor on March 23, 1848, and the Philip Laing's a few weeks later, that started Otago on the course it has held ever since. Nor is it careless to call it a continuous course. If it has not been a straight line it has been an unbroken line leading always in the same direction. It was plain enough, once gold had been discovered, that the people would no longer remain Scottish; but the gold came and went, and the spirit of Scotland lived on. It is not profitable, not even desirable, to ask what proportion of the people of Otago and Southland are still Presbyterian; but there is no danger in pointing out that Presbyterianism is still the strongest moral force south of the Waitaki, and some danger in forgetting it. Otago is upright, cautious, and serious to a degree unknown in the northern provinces. To what extent it has financed northern enterprise is not very important (except to borrowers and retailers of stale jokes); but it is important to gauge the influence it has had on standards of character and conduct, and this, if it has sometimes been a little hard to bear, has been overwhelmingly beneficial. An Otago man is just as likely as a man from Canterbury or Auckland to be a humbug, a pretender, or a public nuisance; but he is a little less likely to be lazy, improvident, casual, or frivolous. Otago men have therefore had an influence out of proportion to their numbers. If they have sometimes seemed what one of their ministers said about the faces of the pioneers in the Early Settlers' Hall—a little too resolute for the grace of God—their resolution and the fear of God have left an indelible impression on New Zealand's first century.

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

RADIO NEWSREEL

Sir,—Would it be possible to curtail the opening and closing music of the Radio Newsreel broadcast? This through constant repetition over the years has become decidedly tedious and bores one to listen through to the end. Also we listeners are not in the least interested what especial number of thousands of them have been put across the air. If they need a record it could be kept in their own office files. The time thus saved could be put to a much more useful and pleasurable purpose, surely, instead of an irritation. One need not then say "turn off that thing." It must irritate you, too, I am sure.

CHANGE NEEDED.

(The NZBS says: "The music of the Newsreel takes 23 seconds to play each time. It is an integral part of this BBC service and could not be taken away. It serves as an announcement that the session is at hand, and for that reason is appreciated by many listeners. We get quite a number of requests for the title of the music."—Ed.)

LANDFALL

Sir,—In his notice of *Landfall*, vol. 1, No. 4, O.D. describes Lawrence Baigent's review of *For the Rest of Our Lives* as "a pacifist's refusal to try to understand a soldier." Yet in spite of its being "so obviously hostile" he finds it "effective" and "uncommonly well done." There is surely a contradiction here. O.D. must be reading into the review something which he did not find there. Mr. Baigent keeps strictly to the point; he discusses the novel before him, criticising its "philosophical immaturity," "uncertainty of purpose," "flatness of characterisation" (I quote his own words); he does not discuss war or soldiers, and no one could deduce from his review that he held any particular opinion on these subjects. If he had refused to try to understand, if he had failed to understand, how could he possibly have written an "effective" review? He would then have been, precisely, ineffective.

As for O.D.'s implied criticism of my choice of Mr. Baigent to review the novel in question, he has answered it himself. If the review is "uncommonly well done," it appears that I was right in not first catechising Mr. Baigent about his views on war, but considering solely his ability and integrity as a literary critic. And when O.D. writes of the "hostility" and "offensiveness" which he discovers in the review, he no doubt means that Mr. Baigent has no right to criticise a book dealing with experiences which he has not himself shared. It is a pity he does not say so openly. Then we should know where we are. For this would of course put an end to literary criticism.

CHARLES BRASCH

(Editor, *Landfall*).

(A copy of this letter was posted to our reviewer and brought the following reply: "If Mr. Brasch finds it interesting to tell me what he knows I meant I am not going to spoil his fun. What I said, however, was that Mr. Baigent's review was hostile but effective. That is as contradictory as to say that Mr. Brasch is an editor."—Ed.)

PAYING FOR TALENT

Sir,—Your editorial dated January 30 is interesting and has much truth in it. You say "it is not in itself worse that a scientific worker should have financial worries than that a farmer . . . should . . ." This is true, but I should like to point out one important difference—the farmer has a farm. You admit frankly

that scientists are not paid what they are worth and seem to think it is sufficient for a research worker to receive enough "to keep him from worrying and spoiling his work." As a scientist's wife, while appreciating the realism of such a view, I cannot be expected to share it! In this country the tradesman who supplies our material needs is valued the most and paid the most. It is the tradesman's wife who has the fur coat and her own car; the scientist's wife walks, and in four-year-old tweeds at that!

The scientist himself does not worry greatly about his material needs as long as he is fed at approximately the usual times. His navy suit may be so shiny as to be visible in the dark: he will not be aware of it; and if it is pointed out he will not believe it. It is true, as you say, that though underpaid financially, the scientist does reap his own private rewards. It is true that he serves this generation and others to come; but no one lives on an exalted plane continually. I do believe the fascination of the job itself is the best pay. Continually interested, he is always interesting company. He can find congenial friends and occupation anywhere in the world. Always, even in extreme old age, the scholar is mentally young, eager to see what lies on the other side of the ranges.

To sum up then, we pay our scientists enough for a roof, bread-and-butter, and taxes. This is admittedly freedom from want. Should he expect more? Unless present policy changes in this country he will not get it. He may achieve "Freedom from wanting."

L.A.S.

SWIMMING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Sir,—Would you please explain why neither the events nor the results of the New Zealand Swimming Championships recently held in Dunedin were broadcast by the Main National Stations at reasonable times. I believe that certain events were broadcast at 11.15 p.m. each night. I wonder what our racing enthusiasts would say had they to wait till this hour to hear the results of the various race-meetings held every week. In Napier two years ago, practically the whole programme each evening was covered by 2YH with excellent running commentaries by the announcers. Swimming is probably the most popular of all our national summer pastimes yet a small amount of broadcasting time could not be found to describe the annual National Championships.

J.C. (Tauranga).

(The NZBS supplies the following particulars: "There was more than the Swimming Championships held in Dunedin during that particular week, and as it was not suitable from programme commitments to broadcast each event as it was held at the baths, 4YA recorded the commentary on each Championship event, and the recordings were played on each of the three nights, February 18, 19, and 21, from 4YA, at 10.30 p.m. Following the usual custom when national events are held in the evenings, each evening's results were broadcast by the Main National Stations after the 11.0 p.m. News. This time was agreed on by the swimming authorities as it is seldom that the evening's programme is ended by 10.30 p.m."—Ed.)

"GUTTERBROWS"

Sir,—Your correspondent J. D. Parkin (Timaru) is not a lover of the lighter side of radio. I come to this conclusion after reading his words (I quote): "The air is polluted by plagiarists, pirates, crooners, jazz fiends, modernistic atrocity-mongers and gutterbrows generally."

The three words "and gutterbrows generally" seem to imply that all classes before them can be lumped under that heading. And I suppose we who enjoy such programmes are included in that expression. Who is J. D. Parkin to use such words to people, who though differing on music and programmes, I am sure are on as high a social plane as the correspondent himself? Let him listen to his programmes, but we others who differ from him in our choice, should not be abused for daring to think differently.

T. S. C. DOYLE (Whangarei).

INTERRUPTED RECORDINGS

Sir,—Can you not organise your readers to collectively split an infinitive and protest at the continued interruption of real music as if it was merely the Charlady's Ball. Do operators not know three minutes or whatever time the disc takes? To stop in the middle is an offence unpardonable and leaves a sense of righteous wrath.

J. EWATT (Southland).

THE UNITY OF RELIGION.

Sir,—Your correspondent "Christian" (Auckland), commenting in the February 13 number of *The Listener* on my letter on The Unity of Religion, closed with a mis-statement of fact, saying "Again, Mr. Hodson mentions 'Salvation, Liberation, Christhood as the assured destiny of every human being.' This reads like foolishness from the point of view of Christian doctrine, having no support in the Word of God." Describing the destiny of all men, in Ephesians 4.13, St. Paul says: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Other texts amply demonstrate the presence in the Bible of this doctrine, as also those of the Fatherhood of God and, as an inevitable consequence, the Brotherhood of Man. Assurance of salvation to all men is made in Luke 3.6 and Titus 2.11. References to "Our Father" are: Deut. 32.6; Isaiah 64.8; Malachi 2.10; Matthew 6.9; Matthew 7.11; Matthew 23.9; Romans 3.29; I Cor. 8.6; Ephesians 4.6; Hebrews 12.9; and I Epistle of St. John 5.7. Since all men are thus stated to possess one Father, they must therefore all be brothers. I repeat that these selfsame doctrines, equally with the others which I enumerated, are to be found in other World Faiths.

GEOFFREY HODSON (Auckland).

(This correspondence is now closed.—Ed.)

NOISES OFF.

Sir,—May I suggest that every care be taken to eliminate all distracting background noises during announcements and readings? To-day, during the educational session at 11.0 a.m. (through 1YA) hammering noises were plainly evident. Even whilst announcers describe musical items, the listeners can hear mumbling voices in the background and these noises often accompany the various weather reports.

LISTENER (Waitoa).

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

"Schoolgirl" (Kaitia): The Smetana composition is the second of a set of six symphonic poems entitled *My Fatherland*. It is called *Vltava* or *Moldau*. *Solemn Melody* is by Walford Davies.

L.B.B.: Your letter appreciated and your request noted.

E. de L.: Thank you. Matter is being looked into.

"Socialist Secret Weapon": Too political.