

# LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

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KARL ATKINSON

Sir,—As secretary of the Yorkshire Society I was for a number of years closely associated with the late Karl Atkinson. Alar Mulgan's is a vivid, comprehensive and touching assessment. May I add a tribute to one whom it was a privilege to know.

Vital, alert, sagacious, kind, the varied treasure of his mind, he showered with a royal hand on all who sought his aid.

Concise, constructive, clear and bold, a noble range of new and old; the gift to choose, the power to plan diurnally a feast.

His presence is no longer here, his spirit lives serene, secure in hearts and minds of those who knew and loved to call him, friend.

J. MALTON MURRAY  
(Oamaru).

WRITER AND PUBLIC

Sir,—Many thanks to E. A. W. Smith for explaining what it is that spoils a fiction writer's chances of writing a masterpiece; the necessity of eating, just as he eats, and therefore expecting to be paid for his work. He makes use of Virgil to put me outside of his appeal for better stories. I say that Virgil got his answer from Samuel Johnson: "No man but a blockhead ever wrote except for money." If Mr. Smith removes from his shelves all the fictional masterpieces written for profit, who will be left? Not O. Henry for one, and yet your correspondent classes him as a genius (which is, of course, a fact). Perhaps the explanation is that Virgil's ideas were suited to seventy years before Christ, whereas O. Henry lived in this century. That there is no such thing as a new plot is not news. What I said of the women's magazines was that they specialise in sentimental tripe, and it is not a case of what you can achieve, as Mr. Smith says, but what will sell. I agree with him about the artistry of Dickens and Hawthorne, and will even add A.

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whether to buy an expensive kitchen gadget until we are sure that we can use it day in and day out without thought of health hazards—and perhaps we shall wait until we know of some American housewives who got a start on us and who have used it for a generation or so without prejudicing the family's health.

## Preserving Food

Those of us who have always had a hankering for applying the only really safe method of preserving our surplus crop of peas and beans will certainly buy one if we can afford it. Or again, if we are country folk, going to town only occasionally, and wanting to lay in a stock of fish, we could take back quite a quantity and preserve it in jars, the opening of which could be spread over a longer time than even a refrigerator will permit. That large catch of trout or salmon could be dealt with similarly, Mr. Angler, and would provide many an occasion for telling the story of how many and how big they were! Or on the farm we kill a sheep only occasionally and instead of begging

A. Milne to please him, but tell me what chance have these got with the ordinary reading public in New Zealand? In conclusion, don't blame the writers for what you get; blame the editors who accept it, and, in turn, the public which demands it—without the latter being fussy as to whether it was paid for and earned a crust for its author. The amount he gets in New Zealand is harmless enough anyway.

LEO WATERS (Christchurch).  
(This correspondence is now closed.—Ed.)

## "GIFFORD OF WELLINGTON."

Sir,—Under this heading S. H. Jenkinson in *The Listener* of March 12 pays tribute to a great mathematician. But A. C. Gifford was more than this. His essential humanity and kindness earned for him the affectionate regard of the thousands of boys who passed through his classes. We knew him as a whole man—one whose transcendent ability was apparent even to the mind of the young male, whose burning enthusiasm lit many an answering flicker, some never to fade, but whose joyous vitality and sincerity in the classroom, on the tennis court, or in any one of the numerous out-of-class activities in which he loved to join, demonstrated to us the full flowering of human personality.

Looking back on one's days at Wellington College, it is clear that our association with "Uncle Charlie" was a vital and permanently enriching experience, which we shall always treasure.

G. R. POWLES (Washington, D.C.).

## OUT OF ORDER

Sir,—We have just been "Among the Immortals" with the author of "The Ancient Mariner" and "Hymn to the Sun"—Samuel Coleridge Taylor (vide *Listener*, Sunday, June 6; also cf. 22A announcer).

PERCY SHELLEY-BYSSHE

(Palmerston North).

(*The Listener* is not privy to all programme details.—Ed.)

in the summer time for space in someone else's refrigerator and thus losing a friend, we could preserve the mutton—or rabbits or a windfall of venison—for future use. A valuable article giving details about the points to be observed when applying the pressure-cooker for various kitchen procedures has been written by Miss Catherine MacGibbon, Lecturer in Foods at the School of Home Science, for the February, 1948, number of the New Zealand Women's Food Value League Bulletin (Box 1905, Auckland).

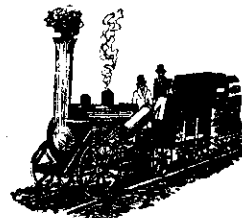
So there are certainly points for pressure-cookers—saving of gas and of electricity and temper during fuel shortages being not the least. We reserve our judgment, however, in the final summing up till we know a little more about them. To many, the speed with which they will cook meat appeals, but unless care is taken with the time allowed, meat is apt to go stringy; for, after all, the process of cooking meat to perfection depends not only on softening the binding fibrous tissue (which the pressure-cooker does admirably), but on preventing hardening of the protein of the muscle tissue, which is best achieved if the temperature does not rise too high.



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