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EDITORIAL AND BUSINESS OFFICES:
115 Lambton Quay, Wellington, C.I.
Box 1707, G.P.O.
Telephone No. 41-470.
Telegraphic Address: "Listener," Wellington.

Dead Horses

WE print the story that appears on Page 19 largely because to most New Zealanders it comes so near to the incredible. It is sad, but no longer sensational, that farm horses are disappearing everywhere in the world; and as fast in New Zealand as anywhere else. They are disappearing because they are no longer required, and no longer therefore being brought into the world. But the horses of Britain are disappearing because they are worth more dead than alive. They are being sold, slaughtered, and eaten, and the Government admits openly that it does not know how to stop the slaughter. All it even wishes to do, the discussion in the Commons suggests, is to stop irregular trading—selling secretly, and at prices above those fixed for this class of meat. Farmers, it says, if they still want horses, must breed them a little faster, and the Government will do what it can to help them. Even the *Manchester Guardian*, when the discussion took place, found itself unable to comment except in the language of wonderland, and we suspect that most New Zealand readers will take refuge in the clouds of doubt. But the doubters are at least three years too late. The figures given to the Commons, and not questioned by the Ministry of Food, make it clear that about a thousand horses have been slaughtered every week since the beginning of 1945—a thousand that the Government knows about. No one knows what the real figures are—and only the farmers seem to care. The position of course is that thousands of people in Britain are meat-hungry, and some hundreds of others are exploiting that hunger. Before we feel too horrified in New Zealand we should ask how many animals we ourselves slaughter, how many more we eat than we require, how many we deny ourselves for the sake of the people of Britain, and why it is more "sordid" to eat a horse when we no longer wish him to work than to fatten and eat a cow when she is no longer profitable to milk.

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

JIMMY DURANTE

Sir,—Your *Radio Viewreel* commentator must be made of iron. Anyone who can listen to and enjoy Jimmy Durante's recordings, and more especially "The Lost Chord," has my deepest sympathy. He (or she) must be devoid of any sense of musical appreciation whatsoever.

Having been forced to sit through this ghastly rendering twice I now turn off my radio whenever I am unfortunate enough to hear any Durante record. Your commentator challenges anyone to prove that this "gem" bears any resemblance to any work by Sullivan. He need have no fear that this challenge will be accepted—the only resemblance I can see is to a crosscut saw going through a sheet of roofing iron.

W. R. DOBSON (Oamaru).

STATION 1YD

Sir,—I am pleased to see in *The Listener* that 1YD is only on 1240 k/cs temporarily, as reception on this channel is spoilt in the evening by an Australian station alongside. It was better on 1290 k/cs. Station 1YD seems to be the black sheep of the NZBS flock, as, although it is a very popular station with listeners it is not getting any increase in power. Its opposite number in Wellington, 2YD, is to be boosted up to 5,000 watts, but 1YD is being left at only 750 watts. Some of us would like to know why.

1YD FAN (Hawera).

HAL COLLINS

Sir,—In your issue dated December 24 appears an extraordinary story about a half-caste Maori named Collins, or Te Auke, who, though he knew nothing at all of the theory of music, composed a song which a highly gifted composer, Peter Warlock, wrote down as Collins played it on a piano. Warlock recognised the composition as one having real merit, and brought it to the notice of the Oxford University Press, who published it.

I have said the story is an extraordinary one, and it is—extraordinary indeed.

A man who knows nothing at all of the theory of music is a man with no musical knowledge whatever. A man with no musical knowledge is a man who knows nothing at all about music; and to say that Collins was such a man is plainly to talk nonsense. Collins knew that the quality of the sound of a piano differs from that of a voice: he knew of time and of rhythm, of melody and accompaniment: he knew there is such a thing as a song, and that song has a definite form. He must have had this knowledge, or how on earth could he have composed a song at all, far less composed one sufficiently well to have it published?

Collins, we are told, died in 1929, and I believe Warlock died some years ago, so it is unlikely that your contributor got his information from either. Who, then, is his authority? Can he give us any conclusive evidence that the melody and the accompaniment as published are the entirely unaided work of Collins? I have written "melody and accompaniment" because "song" often means nothing more than the tune and words. I do not think your contributor is using "song" in this sense. Let me repeat my last question, altering its

wording. Is your contributor certain that neither the melody nor the accompaniment was arranged or altered in any way whatsoever by anyone, other than Collins working unaided, before the song was published?

The answers to these questions, and the following, are important. If a man who knows nothing at all of the theory of music, can, working only by inspiration, compose a song of sufficient merit to be published by the Oxford University Press, what need is there for textbooks and teachers of the theory of music? What need is there for textbooks and teachers of anything? If inspiration alone can achieve such a result in the art of music, why should it not achieve a like result in any other field of human endeavour?

JOSEPH C. McEVOY (Tomahawk).

(We are informed by a relative of Collins (a) that he spent much of his youth with musicians, (b) that attempts were made, but always without success, to get him to study theory. The following reference to him appears in the book on Peter Warlock by Cecil Gray:

"He was one of those people who, without ever having learnt a note of music or received a lesson in piano playing, have an inborn technical dexterity and a quite remarkable gift for improvisation. He used to compose systematically also but without being able to write it down."—Ed.)

Sir,—The article you printed recently about Hal Collins is not correct in several respects. It is true that he called himself a Maori, but in fact he was three-quarters English, being the son of an English jute merchant who married a half-caste Maori girl (a great-niece of Te Rauparaha's wife, Te Aukau). He was born in London, and on the death of his father, the family came out to New Zealand while he was still going to school. He returned to England some years before the 1914-18 war, after having taught art at the Wanganui Technical College. He served with the British forces during the 1914-18 war. It is thus clear he would not be correctly described as a Maori, and it is open to question whether he would be described as a New Zealander, as his cultural background was English and his period of residence in New Zealand was not extensive. He used the name Te Aukau (not Te Auke) which was also, we think, the name of his grandmother. He was brought up in a musical atmosphere which may be presumed to have had its influence—Ava Symons (Mrs. Will Prouse) was his cousin.

W. D. COLLINS (Hawera).

CRICKET BROADCASTS

Sir,—I listened to the broadcast report of the Canterbury and Wellington Plunket Shield match recently and was rather shocked to hear the way one of the announcers made his remarks about some of the batting.

Here are some of the remarks—"So-and-so has just 'slammed' a ball to the boundary," "So-and-so 'carved' at that ball, but missed," "So-and-so has gone 'doggo'," "So-and-so tapped that ball just past square leg and they have gone through for an easy 'stroller'," "So-and-so smacked that ball to the boundary, will it be a boundary? Will it what?..." These are only a few of the remarks that I can state from memory. Well, I thought, it may be all right for the football fans, but it just did not "go down" with a cricket enthusiast. Another thing,

I do not know if the announcer concerned knows all the players, Wellington and Canterbury alike, personally, but he seemed as if they were all personal friends, as he would say "there is Tom so-and-so, or Wally so-and-so, or Peter so-and-so, or Eric so-and-so, or Brun so-and-so."

Let's try and keep cricket what it has always been, the king of outdoor sport, and not make it a cheap-jack show.

WRONG 'UN (Wellington).

(One of the announcers when asked to comment on this letter denied the use of the words "Doggo" and "Stroller." He asked if the correspondent had also written to the BBC complaining of John Arlott's use of the words "Slammed" and "Carved," or his references to Ernie Toshack, Ray Lindwall, Don Bradman, Denis Compton, Norman Yardley, Bill Edrich, etc.—Ed.)

THE MAORI IN WESTLAND.

Sir,—In reply to "Cantnell" in your issue of December 31, the word "kawaterere" will be found in the 1932 edition of Williams. Its definition is "Cyanorhamphus novae-zealandiae, parakeet." The study of Maori place-names is full of traps for the unwary, and the comments by R.S.D. suggest that Mr. Mitchell realises the hazards of committing himself to interpretations. Who would think that Temuka should be Te Umu Kaha, the fiercely heated oven, or that Ngahauranga should be Ngauranga, the landing places? J. R. Grigg's story about Ko te Awatere has a familiar ring, and is probably an invention—not, of course, Mr. Grigg's. Only testimony of old Maori residents is entitled to attention in these matters and even then not invariably. I have no local knowledge on this particular question whatever, but I should certainly back the contention of the author's Maori informant, Tama Mokau, that Kawatere was the correct name of the Buller River.

W. T. MORPETH (New Plymouth).

THE MAORI LANGUAGE

Sir,—On the evening of Monday, January 3, the opinion was broadcast from 2YA that the pronunciation of "New Zealand" did not matter so long as the hearer understood what was meant. A schoolboy would probably earn a flogging if he acted on such advice.

The question under discussion was whether the effort to secure correct pronunciation of Maori place names should be continued. I hope that the effort will be continued, because it is one way of cherishing all that is of interest in Maori history and tradition. The difficulties are many, but the prevailing pronunciation of Paraparaumu is vulgar in the extreme.

I am one of many who have an affection for Maori place-names and their force and vitality is strengthened by an understanding of their meaning and by an effort to pronounce them in native fashion.

W. R. MARTIN
(Martinborough).

A NEW WORD

Sir,—In answer to your correspondent "Puzzled," Professor Sinclair was at one time Professor of English at Canterbury University College. He writes articles on various subjects in a style quite unlike that of any other writer. So I think that is how the word "Sinclairism" came to be used.

STUDENT (Christchurch).

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT.

E. Killick (Timaru): We do not print letters that have been sent to other journals.