

# MAD ABOUT MUSHROOMS

IT is a regrettable fact that one can seldom be mad about anything without finding that almost everybody else is mad about it too. The opera, for instance. If it were not that others share one's enthusiasm there would be no need for this overnight standing and the subsequent risk of falling asleep in the third act, or, less reprehensible, in the office next day. And the same thing applies to mushrooms, since the material appetites are only less strong than the aesthetic. And the human propensity for communicating enthusiasms plus the benefits of universal education mean that every year there are bound to be more and more people who are mad about opera and/or mushrooms and getting up earlier and earlier in consequence. The coincidence this year of the two sea-

Written for "The Listener"  
by M.B.

We piled out of the car, and, eyes on the ground, began our myopic progress. It was still very dark.

In good seasons the spectacle of three people in a mushroom field tends to resemble Millet's *The Gleaners*; on bad days there is less productive stooping and more of the frustrated dartings best expressed by the less representational painting techniques of the moderns. It was our favourite hunting-ground, but I found only two, on one of which a large cow had inconsiderately trampled. I knapsacked it nevertheless. Then, the flat exhausted, we started up the long hill, leaning heavily against the wind.

Down the other side of the hill there was a sheltered valley, tussocked with rushes. I looked perfunctorily among the rushes, on the ground that you never know quite what you may find. There were no mushrooms, of course. But I did find a very old horse's skull, and sat down, in the blessed calm of the valley, to muse upon it. Alas, poor Neddy. I had never known him. He might

have been a noble animal fit for a king to give his kingdom for, or he might have been an Old Faithful tackled once too often by the bot-fly.

IT was now the crack of dawn, a metaphor which I now found to be literally correct. A slit appeared in the clouds, and briefly the sun looked through, illuminating two dark and toiling figures on the hill's far slope. They climbed steadily, with never a stoop. It was obvious that I might just as well continue my unproductive musing, although, of course, the car would be warmer. I hurried enthusiastically back over the hill.

There were now four other cars lined up behind our decoy, and the flat paddock near the stream was comfortably filled with warily circling mushroomers. Good luck to them, I sneered, my rattling knapsack flapping as I hurried down the hill. But even as I mouthed the words two figures swooped with cries of joy.

"I thought you'd done that end," said a voice behind me. My companions had caught me up.

"Just going back to empty the bag," I explained. "Mighty good crop this morning."

But they were not deceived.

"We've been back twice," they announced with hollow mirth. Surreptitiously we stuffed our raincoats into our bags and suitably laden swaggered past the new arrivals.



"The mushroom favours wind-swept uplands"

sons may well prove to have effected a drastic change in the nation's sleeping habits.

One of the effects of the mushroom rush is that now Saturday morning is de rigueur for mushroom hunters, and there are even enthusiasts who start on Friday morning and go to work afterwards. We started at 5.30 on Saturday. It was quite, quite dark, with a high northerly. Even so there were signs of life in the suburb, and proof of the rising birth-rate was the fact that one house in five had a kitchen or bedroom light on in deference to the six o'clock feed.

THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANICA states that the mushroom favours wind-swept uplands, which possibly accounts for the fact that there are mushrooms to be found round Wellington. Generally speaking I do not favour wind-swept uplands myself, and even the sheep and the occasional cow looked in the dim light as though they would prefer something a little cosier.

(continued from previous page)

after cleaning, and then, most important of all, thoroughly dried to prevent any possibility of galvanic action.

The high degree of heat conductivity coupled with the small amount of heat required to heat it, and its lightness—these are virtues that commend aluminium to the housewife. The fact that a film on the surface protects the aluminium underneath may lead her to be less fussy about having the metal always bright and shining.

We were back in plenty of time for breakfast, which consisted of bacon and eggs and a small garnish. But, as everybody pointed out to everybody else, it was a nice change not having to wait an hour while we peeled four pounds apiece.

Of course there's this to be said for the opera—there's more chance of getting some reward for your early rising. The seating is a constant quality. The mushroom, on the other hand, is even more mobile than the donna.

## MOTORISTS CAMPERS

12 Cupfuls boiled in six minutes with the "Thermette" Chip Heater. No special fuel required—only twigs, paper or rubbish. The more wind the quicker it boils.

**BOILING WATER  
6 MINUTES**

Campers and Motorists carry one in your car. 16/3, Post 8d. (Cooking Grid 3/6 extra).

**SKEATES & WHITE Ltd.** 48 Fort Street, AUCKLAND.



## VARICOSE SUFFERERS

—Here's Welcome  
Relief for YOU!

**LASTONET**  
SURGICAL STOCKINGS  
Now Available!

LASTONET Surgical Stockings are essential to all varicose sufferers. This English-made elastic fabric, being net, allows air to circulate freely over the skin... combines minimum weight and elastic control, and is invisible under normal stockings. Despite its fine texture, LASTONET gives you maximum support. LASTONET, the featherweight elastic net stocking—is believed to be the nearest approach to the perfect stocking of its kind. Available in 3 sizes—small—medium—large. Don't suffer any longer—send in the coupon, NOW!



**LASTONET**  
SURGICAL STOCKINGS

POST THIS COUPON NOW!

To  
H. L. BRADLEY & CO.,  
Box 231, Wellington.

Please send me..... LASTONET Surgical Stockings.  
I enclose..... as full payment (29/- thigh; 23/- knee).

Left } Leg      Knee } Length      Small } Size  
Right } Thigh      Thigh } Large

(Cross out lines not applicable)

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

H. L. BRADLEY & CO., 28 Grey St., Wellington.