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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.

Anzac Day

THE correspondent who writes to us in this issue suggesting that Anzac Day should be abolished because it is "no longer seriously observed" will have at least the silent support of a considerable body of our readers. It is true that observance becomes more and more difficult as the years pass and that for those who feel nothing on April 25, Anzac Day has become just a "miserable excuse for another holiday." But that is the case with every holiday in our Calendar, beginning with Sunday. It is the case with Good Friday and Easter Monday, with Saints' Days, and (of course with more excuse) with social-political observances like Labour Day. It would be necessary to expunge all those days from the Calendar if the justification for keeping them there had to be their earnest observance by a high proportion of the public. The test of holy days is not whether we all get something out of them, or whether most of us do, but whether any appreciable number do. If they make better men and women out of a considerable number of us they are not merely justified but necessary. If they open doors that nothing else will open, bring influences to bear on us that we would not otherwise feel at all, the question is not whether we have time to open the doors, whether we all go in, or all feel what is there, but whether the effect on the others is good. Our correspondent's general view of course is that "holy days, like other holy things, should not be treated with contempt." Most will agree with that; and if Anzac Day ever becomes an occasion for mockery and nothing else, it should cease to be publicly observed. At present, however, that calamity is not in sight.

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE.

Sir,—Any normal thinking person, especially one who had seen something of the horrors of a great war, could not escape feeling a great sense of pity and a wish to do something to assist to alleviate the sufferings of some of the innocent victims of the awful affair which terminated some three years ago, after having heard the broadcast on the above subject from 2YA the other evening. One is reminded of the shipwrecked crew, thrown up on the beach, with a crowd of sympathisers around, expressing their sorrow. An old farmer jumped up on a box and said, "Well, folks, we are all sorry, but I am sorry five pounds. What about you?"

My wife and I are old veterans of the first world war, with our pensions to live on, and we are sorry two pounds, for which I am sending you a money order, with the suggestion that if every other reader or subscriber to *The Listener* will do what they can, after having read your leader and heard the broadcast, a worthwhile sum will be raised to help the children, of Greece, for instance.

DO IT NOW (Orewa).

(We thank our correspondent for his gift, which we have passed to CORSO—the organisation responsible for sending assistance to displaced children everywhere, including those of Europe. Other readers of *The Listener* who may wish to follow his example are asked to send their donations direct to CORSO, Tisdalls Buildings, 100 Lambton Quay, Wellington.—Ed.)

TROLLOPE ADAPTED

Sir,—F. G. Tucker (Gisborne) is probably wrong in his surmise that Trollope, in the autobiography, excluded *The Small House at Allington* from the Barseshire series by an oversight. Michael Sadlier, in his commentary, says that "Trollope set so strict an interpretation on the phrase, 'The Chronicles of Barseshire' that he was unwilling to reckon even *The Small House at Allington* among their number. When at last he yielded to pressure from friends and publishers, it was against his better judgment." In the same commentary is a redrawing of the map of Barseshire, prepared by Trollope when writing *Framley Parsonage* and it is significant that Allington does not appear on that map. Although Trollope was, on the whole, eminently reasonable, he could at times be very disputatious and obstinate. It is recorded that once at a meeting of Post Office surveyors, he roared to the speaker who preceded him, "I differ from you entirely; what was it you said?" It is therefore likely that Trollope excluded *The Small House* without sound reason and then when overcome by the arguments of friends and publishers gave a growling consent to its inclusion.

The *Oxford Companion* correctly quoted the autobiography but failed to realise that Trollope yielded to better counsel and that the book itself proves that it must be included in the series. I have listened to one episode of *The Lilian Dale Affair* and found it a travesty of *The Small House* both as to the incidents and the spirit of the story.

While Trollope was on a voyage to Australia and New Zealand in 1871-72 Charles Reade took the plot of Trollope's book *Ralph the Heir* and made a play of it. This led to a

first-class row. If his ghost walked there would be trouble for the latest adapters.

R. L. ANDREW (Kelburn).

ANZAC DAY.

Sir,—Is it not time to drop Anzac Day quietly from our Calendar? Since it is no longer seriously observed, I can see no advantage in observing it at all, and some disadvantages. Holy days, like other holy things, should not be treated with contempt. All we achieve by keeping the day in the Calendar is to give ourselves a miserable excuse for another holiday.

FORWARD (Wellington).

(We refer to this letter in our leading article.—Ed.)

BRASS BANDS.

Sir,—I beg to thank you for the opportunity of last word on the subject of brass bands and for the space you have most generously afforded. I also acknowledge the clever and most provocative letter from A. R. D. Fairburn. He got results where I failed. It was most gratifying to read letters from readers flying to the defence of brass bands—among them some very well-known names in the brass band world.

A final request to the NZBS for more coverage of the National Contests. A brass bandman, also, does not relish military band programmes in *For the Bandsman*. Give us fewer massed band items, they are only inspiring to eye-witnesses; more records of bands who were not placed at the contest to enable their conductors to hear faults of intonation, interpretation, etc., and enable them to check their performances with judges' reports. These points would be of great assistance to the bandsman, and would make bandsman sessions more bearable. Once more, Mr. Editor, thank you.

BAND CONDUCTOR

(Now of Palmerston North)

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS.

Sir,—I got considerable amusement from reading the "Cruelty to Animals" letters. This discussion (if the very downright letters can be so described) started, I believe, with an English lady's opinion that we in New Zealand are callous in our treatment of domestic animals. (Personally, I think that her views will become modified in course of time and, anyway, hasty generalisations are to be deplored.) Whereupon two New Zealanders immediately put the "Homie" in her place by some very forthright but misleading generalisations of their own about the English.

What are the facts? In England we have a predominantly urban and suburban population which, perhaps, at times does sentimentalise over its domestic pets. In New Zealand we have a population which, even in the cities, in the main is not so divorced from the land and therefore has a much more practical and utilitarian outlook as to livestock but certainly not exactly callous. The attitude towards animals probably does not differ if one compares the New Zealand countryman with his English counterpart. To describe any farmer's attitude towards animals as "callous" is as much an exaggeration as to so stigmatise the

unsentimental and detached attitude of nurses and doctors towards their patients.

To generalise that the "predominant smell in England" is "of dog" is about as fair as to accuse the New Zealander of an aroma of cows, pigs and sheep. To paint a picture of the pavements of English towns as unfit to traverse on account of evidence of dogs is as unfair and ill-natured as judging New Zealand by what our footpaths often prove about our cows. I cannot credit that the standards of public cleanliness can have fallen so much since I left England as a young man in 1923. And even after 25 years I still hesitate to generalise about New Zealand.

"FIFTY FIFTY" (Ngauruahia)

NED KELLY

Sir,—You published a review recently of Ned Kelly, *Australian Son*, by Max Brown, in which it was stated that Ned Kelly's father had been transported to Van Diemen's Land, and received hard treatment there. None of the Kelly family ever set foot in Tasmania or Van Diemen's Land as it was formerly called. The father was transported to New South Wales and when his sentence expired he moved to a farm close to the Victorian border. Mrs. Kelly was left a widow with eight children, but that was considered a small family then and pioneers made a point of helping in such a case. But Ned Kelly preferred to steal, acquired bullet-proof armour and a gang to suit. Then he got to work. Many a young fellow starting out for Melbourne with his gold disappeared. The little wooden country banks held the cash of hard-working settlers who broke in the bush—the best type of pioneers. No priest went to administer the last rites of his church, the place blazed, and there was nothing but ashes left. As for the death mask of his face being like a benign Church of England priest, Kelly was no more like that than Bryan O'Brien is like Captain Hobson.

MIDFOLK (Auckland).

HOME NEWS FROM BRITAIN

Sir,—Please allow me to express to whoever is responsible my appreciation of the rebroadcast at 7.0 a.m. of the "Home News from Britain." I can now avoid disturbing the house at six o'clock in the morning, as all the news is repeated at seven o'clock.

A. BLAKE (Pukekohe).

SACRED MUSIC SESSION

Sir,—As one who listens regularly to the splendid programme of sacred music from 1YD every Sunday at 10.0 a.m. may I be permitted a word of appreciation? Living as we do some distance from a church, we find that this programme serves not only as a reminder of the true purpose of Sunday, but as a fitting prelude to the broadcast church services at 11.0. A special word of appreciation is due to one announcer who, instead of baldly announcing each item, takes the trouble to introduce it with some brief well-chosen remarks which do much to enhance the value of this all-too-brief session.

SUNDAY MORNING AT TEN
(Whenuapai).

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS
"New Era" (Meane): Not ours to publish.
Vernon Brown (Auckland): Try again. With a little more effort you may reach the minimum standard of courtesy.