

MAY 27, 1949.

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## Last Test for Otago

A YEAR ago Otago asked all its scattered sons and daughters to come home and celebrate its centennial; and all who could did. Now it puts them to the test again. The story of its first hundred years has been put into a book\* that will cost buyers 47/6, but no one in Dunedin asks whether the wanderers will rally a second time. They will. The volume will sell as fast as it can be printed and distributed, first because it is a very good book, second because it looks a very good book, and in the third place because it is very big. All buyers like quantity if they get quality too, and there will be very few critics of Dr. McLintock south of the Waitaki. It may be pointed out north of the Waitaki that the author who fills 900 pages of history in three years fills them from existing material; that there may be time to rake over, re-arrange, and re-value, but not to search and discover; that Dr. McLintock has come through a terrifying ordeal with credit, and sometimes with real distinction, but that no one must confuse what he has done with what still remains to be done. Criticism of that kind is necessary, but it is high praise too. It is another way of saying: "In history there are no last words. This is so like a last word that we must put readers on their guard." It is certainly good to read critically, and to buy critically; but it is also good to trust our emotions. The native of Otago who takes this book in his hands, turns over the pages, and follows some of the half-forgotten clues, will soon be too far gone with longing to be capable of criticism. There will be a moment of alarm as he breaks into the third pound; then he will see Cabbage-tree Ned or H. S. Fish, P. B. Fraser or Professor James Black, and thrift will fly out of the window.

\*THE HISTORY OF OTAGO. By A. H. McLintock. Whitcombe and Tombs with Coulls Somerville Wilkie, for Otago Centennial Historical Committee.

# LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

## STUDIO RELIGIOUS SERVICE

Sir,—May I protest against the travesty of a Church Service broadcast on a recent Sunday from the studio of 2YA. Better no service at all than such a mockery as that. Something of the same kind has occasionally been broadcast in lieu of the customary morning Devotional Service during the week, and that was objected to, but just switched off. On Sundays, however, we do like to listen to the Church Services and 2YA is the only station we can get with any clearness. Surely your country listeners should be able to have some preference in such a matter. I would refer the perpetrators of the scheme to a verse in *Isaiah 9* which reads, "For the leaders of this people cause them to err and they that are led of them are destroyed."

"LISTENER," (Nelson).

## CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

Sir,—The real cruelty done to animals both in the Dominion and elsewhere is the ruthless slaughtering in the prime of life of weaker living beings solely for the benefit (largely monetary) of the slaughterers. The slaughter-house is the greatest blot on human civilisation. Those ethically inclined might even see in the coming atom war, in which *homo sapiens* will do his best to commit mutual suicide, the inevitable penalty of the strong doing to the weak what they would not like a still stronger to do to them. There is thus a kind of "wild justice," as Bacon might say, in the grim thought that the slayer actually slays himself.

N. M. BELL  
(Christchurch).

## LEVITATION

Sir,—In reply to "Argosy" I would like to suggest that Home's levitation was a scientific demonstration to convince sceptics of a truth. The main point at issue is that Home's body passed out of one window and entered another. Who opened the window and whether he went in feet or head first, horizontal or perpendicular, are all beside the point. If D. D. Home's levitation demonstration had remained inside the room only, sceptics would have said the body was supported by invisible wires or given some other explanation. What of the scores of other levitation demonstrations which have taken place with furniture, where heavy tables have been "levitated" to the ceiling and lowered again, in spite of two or three strong people trying to hold them down? Who was it that said, "There are more things in Heaven and earth than are ever dreamed of in our philosophy?"

TURNSTILE (Wellington).

## GOD AND MAN

Sir,—In his *Interpretation of Christian Ethics* Niebuhr says: "The ethical demands made by Jesus are incapable of fulfilment in the present existence of man." He also says: "Human rebellion is not the first cause and source of evil in the world. The world was not perfect harmony even before human sin created confusion." The correspondence revolves round the problem of God and evil. Joad, in his *Guide to Modern Wickedness*, writes: "That God should exist and should permit evil to exist when He might abolish it, is to me an

intolerable view. I have never been able to see any answer to St. Augustine's dilemma: 'Either God cannot abolish evil, or He will not. If He cannot, He is not omnipotent; if He will not, He is not good.'" What we call evil permeates the entire universe. Professor J. B. S. Haldane writes: "If the world of nature is God's plan, then attempts to banish pain are contrary to this plan. So are attempts to perfect human society by eliminating the various evils which men inflict on each other."

If, without worrying about heaven or hell hereafter, we would genuinely seek to fashion our conduct and relations with each other on the accumulated moral teaching of the ages—including that of Jesus Christ—we might get nearer to a reasonable life.

J. MALTON MURRAY

(Oamaru).

(This correspondence is now closed.—Ed.)

## MAORI CULTURE

Sir,—There is a tendency these days to forget the past and to single out persons of the present day as the ablest the Dominion has ever known. Professor Sutherland's broadcast on Eric Ramsden's book was a case in point. No one wants to detract from Sir Apirana Ngata, but his activities were supplementary to those of Sir James Carroll and Sir Maui Pomare—orators, administrators and patriots of the first water, who represented the rank and file of their race with distinction. With others I met Sir James Carroll in Auckland not long before his death. He was a great man till the day of his death, and had been Acting Prime Minister of the Dominion during Sir Joseph Ward's time. The Rt. Hon. M. J. Savage said that Sir James Carroll's oratory flowed from his lips as no other Members did except the Rev. Leonard M. Isitt. Mr. Savage also described Sir Maui Pomare as one of the greatest Maori patriots, whose eloquence resounded throughout the four walls of the House. As Minister of Health he captured the hearts of men and women for the way he did his job, holding the same view as that great Pro-Consul, Sir George Grey, that there should be equality between the two races.

## ANZAC DAY

Sir,—The remarks of "Forward" (Wellington) in your issue of April 29, makes one wonder where we are getting to. Anzac Day is as much a sacred day as Sunday, and to ignore it shows a distinct disloyalty and lack of appreciation for those noble lads of New Zealand and elsewhere, many of whom never returned. I would advise *The Listener* to remind "Forward" that he or she would not be sitting so smug and pretty if it had not been for those we honour on Anzac Day.

ALWAYS AN ANZAC DAY

(Wellington).

## EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

Sir,—Recently you had an article in your paper by a Mrs. Grace Murphy, visitor from U.S.A. One phrase in her article read (apropos of schools in her country) "... most are very good." The question I would like to ask any U.S.A. citizen is this: Is the high incidence of juvenile delinquency found in

the United States in spite or because of so-called modern methods employed in education, and the almost unlimited self-expression permitted children in their country?

A well-known man recently remarked that what struck him most forcibly in the United States of America was how parents obeyed their children. Mrs. Murphy feels that our children have not the self-possession and precocity of children of her country. I trust our system of education will for many years consider self-assertion not a very excellent virtue. STUDENT (Wanganui).

## SAM CAIRNCROSS

Sir,—Mr. Ramage praises Sam Cairncross's "energy and drive," but from what I have seen of reproductions of the painter's work in the *Arts Year Book* and your journal, the energy and drive seem limited to the appropriation of other painters' ideas. Copying may be sound technical training (though I doubt it), but the results should not be offered up as originals without acknowledgment, thus "S. Cairncross after Matisse, or Rembrandt, etc." Wellington seems to be trying desperately to find a genuine contemporary painter, but will have to find something more impressive than the "Phaidon Press School" as represented by Messrs. Cairncross and McCahon.

CHAS. E. WARDLE (Hamilton).

Sir,—I think I can reply for Sam Cairncross on "Vincent's" question, whether the resemblance of his painting to Rembrandt's flayed ox was intentional or a coincidence. No painter can escape the influences of his contemporaries or his predecessors, not even the most original painters such as Picasso. Besides, there is to me no other resemblance, than that both paintings represent a carcass. Sam's picture reminds me of an empty pod, while Rembrandt's picture invokes the image of a giant flower.

THEO SCHOON  
(Christchurch).

## FOOD FOR BRITAIN

Sir,—Your footnote to the letter signed L. D. Austin (*Listener*, May 6) is quite correct. Both could certainly be true. I quote here a few extracts from a newspaper cutting sent me from England.

Last year so many potatoes were grown here or bought in Ireland that the Ministry of Food were glutted. Farmers were paid the agreed price, then were asked to buy back their own potatoes at a much lower price to be used as cattle feed. That little deal cost £9,000,000. Now onions. Last year the Ministry invited Lincolnshire to grow more onions, which it did. This year Mr. Strachey bought thousands of tons in Spain, Holland, France and Poland. As a result there will be a surplus of 60,000 tons, which nobody wants. Lincolnshire loses heavily, and has to watch the onions rot. Tomatoes: By way of encouraging tomato-growing in Britain, the Ministry again go to Holland and contract to buy more than the Dutch can produce. The farms, orchards, market gardens and glasshouses of England produce the finest fruit and vegetables in the world, employ thousands of people and represent millions of pounds of capital. We ... are producing or making all these things, yet cannot buy them because they are going to these same countries from which we are buying the same things.

That is the answer to L. D. Austin's question, though whether or no he can make sense of it, goodness knows. I cannot, nor can the worried farmers of England.

M.R. (Christchurch).

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENT  
O. O. Perry (Okaihau): See page 20.