

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

(continued from page 5)

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

Sir,—So little understanding of the vegetarian way of life is shown by your correspondent "Corpus Delicti" that it seems desirable to clear up some points lest others acquire these erroneous views. Obviously he has never visited a vegetarian household or been acquainted with a vegetarian.

Regarding by-products of the slaughterhouse: there are suitable alternatives available, whose numbers are constantly increasing as research proceeds. Often these are superior to the animal products which they replace. There are many proprietary glues of vegetable or synthetic origin; many of the better grades of soap are made from vegetable oils, and in some parts of the world the lower grades also. Vegetable fats and oils for cooking are available and are freely used, not only by vegetarians, but also by many others. Developments in plastics already invade the domain of leather, and will do so increasingly in the future. A plastic "shoeleather" has been developed, and is in many ways superior to leather for this purpose.

The principle is that although we must to some extent compromise, because we live in a community of meat-eaters, it is technically possible to find substitutes for all animal products. It would be defeatist to refuse to start because at present it is difficult or impossible to go the whole way. Finally, the indications are that an increase in vegetarianism may be dictated in our time by economic considerations. Sir John Boyd Orr and many others have pointed out that the present food crisis is caused by our wasteful methods of production, and that the war was only an aggravating, not a causative, factor. Most land will produce more food directly by its crops than indirectly through food animals: those countries which are already hard pressed eat much less meat than those which are not. So it may soon come to pass that meat will be regarded as a wasteful form of food which we cannot afford. At present, the vegetarian millions of the earth's population are playing a large part in showing the way to the time when all peoples may keep well above subsistence level.

DAVID MacGILL (Pinehaven).

Sir,—"Corpus Delicti" is right in guessing that "the author is a strict vegetarian." For fifty years he has not knowingly eaten fish, fowl or meat, and for twenty years no animal product such as milk, cheese, butter, eggs, etc. In regard to milk my critic must remember that for every female calf that is milked a male steer goes to the slaughterhouse; for nature produces male and female in about equal numbers. Quite right in regard to glue; but there is olive oil soap and vegetarian fat (coconut) for frying, not of course, "fish and eggs," but pancakes in their manifold variety. Yes, he never buys leather-bound books, and his shoes are made

of rubber and American cloth. He would rather see "bovines and porcines" (harmless fellow-creatures) roaming the land than men who drop atomic bombs on their fellows and who are preparing for the Third World War. "Corpus Delicti" sees no connection between the ruthless killing of animals and the ruthless killing of men (in war). I do. The most aggressive animal on the earth is man. Largely owing to his education lacking a thorough training in biological and ethical science he does not realise that all plants, animals and men form One World Family of Life and that therefore an injury to even the weakest is an injury to all. Man gets what he gives. Therefore "those who take to the sword (i.e., kill) will themselves perish by the sword."

N. M. BELL
(Christchurch).

NEW ZEALAND WINTER

Sir,—Tut, tut, Marie Alderson! The trouble with you is that your blood is too thin from stewing in Canadian houses. Stir yourself; fly around and do some work, as New Zealand women do, and you won't feel so cold. And thank God that you are living in a civilised climate where, even in mid-winter, the flowers bloom and the birds sing, and there is no day in the year when it is too hot, or too cold, to go out. And cease your long, literary moanings.

NELLE SCANLAN (Wellington).

Sir,—Mrs. Alderson's article on the climate of Auckland struck an approving chord in the breasts of the three-quarters of a million people who have to endure it. But there is disappointment that she made no mention of that seemingly non-existent heavenly body—the sun. Just as there are children born in Australia who have not yet seen rain, so there are babies born in Auckland, babies who have cut four teeth already, babies who can sit up and take notice, who have never seen the sun! What the effect on the poor little mites will be when it first bursts upon them, only the psychologists can tell us. But its absence from our scene explains why the Public Relations Office have not yet issued their third prize slogan: "Auckland, the place where the Arctic spends the summer." No doubt they will have to add, "and stays over for the winter."

JUDY T. (Auckland).

BREAKFAST SYMPHONY

Sir,—A few weeks ago I read in *The Listener* a letter of appreciation of IYA's "Breakfast Symphony." I, too, wish to congratulate that station for giving us something really worth listening to so early in the morning. My main criticism is that this programme is so very brief; a mere 15 minutes. Surely it is not too much to ask that one station in the whole of New Zealand should give us a really good breakfast session, at least lasting till 8 o'clock. During the day most stations cater for listeners who dislike the sessions usually presented between 7.20 a.m. and 8.0 a.m. But should it be presumed that all people require trash early in the morning? Moreover, would it not suffice for the announcer to give us the time between items, without breaking into the middle of lovely music, as at present.

RUTH H. WOODWARD
(New Plymouth).

N.Z. LISTENER, AUGUST 19, 1949.



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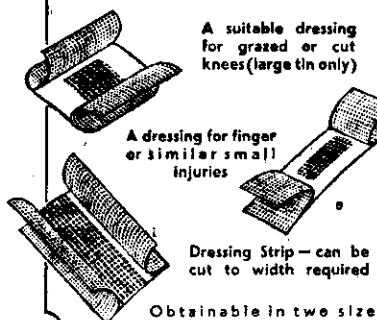
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