

"EYES OF THE PIG"

Sir,—In answer to your correspondents "Nimrod" and N. V. Hodgson, I would like to murmur that I have never at any time seen either a wild pig or a pig hunt; moreover, I have never said that I have. Come to think of it, I have seen relatively few domestic pigs.

It should not be necessary to point out that "The Eyes of the Pig" is not a report; it is an imaginative work of fiction, and it should be judged as such; not by reference to any fact.

PETER N. TEMM
(Auckland).

QUIZ PROGRAMMES

Sir,—I should like to endorse the remarks of "Bowman" about quiz programmes. A glaring example of inaccuracy occurred a few weeks ago when the answer to "Where is Sarawak?" was given by the compere as "In the Dutch East Indies." Sarawak was never in the East Indies, but was formerly ruled by the three successive White Rajahs, and in 1946 became one of Great Britain's newest colonies. If accuracy is not of first importance, then the quiz loses its point, even from the entertainment point of view.

V.L.A. (Dunedin).

RELIGION AND SCIENCE

Sir,—The question, "Can a scientist be a Christian?" may be given a wider application. "Can a scientist believe in a superintending Intelligence?" John Tyndall, the eminent physicist of the last century, said in a lecture: "The primeval fiery mist could not evolve an intelligence." Therefore behind the mist and the catastrophic grandeur of the cosmic process whereby this and other worlds came into being there must exist an omnipotent creative Will. In one of Tyndall's literary masterpieces on the Alps he says: "I stood at the foot of the Alps. I looked at the peaks above; then into the clear blue sky, and lastly into myself. I thought, 'How little we know—but there is One who knows.'" Tyndall, a sufferer from insomnia, the most merciless of all scourges, died in December, 1893, from an overdose of chloral.

The late A. J. (Lord) Balfour concluded the last of his Gifford lectures by affirming: "Belief in God as Creator, Sustainer, and Ruler of the universe is compulsory to every sane mind." Hegel and Kant taught that every plant, every shrub, indeed every organism, was not only related to an intelligence but a manifestation of intelligence. They are not and cannot be of independent or spontaneous origin. Therefore when we pass a tree or a flower or loiter on the banks of a stream we are as near the Divine Presence as if in cloistered monastery or cathedral. Kant and Hegel, two of the profoundest thinkers of all time, firmly rejected materialism. To none of the men quoted above could the vague and conventional term Christian be applied. To their minds divine providence was not presented as something confused and nebulous, but as an inescapable reality. The shallowness of so much that is termed Christian renders it only too susceptible to sneering criticism.

A. BEESON (Rotorua).

Sir,—I find your correspondent "Ipso Facto's" letter interesting and well-pointed. But with what calmness so many people state what Christ thought, or would have said, regarding this, that and the other! One must agree, in the case in point, that Jesus is recorded

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

as having not only gone to church, but also as having delivered some of his most telling sermons from the "pulpit." But whether He ever said or implied that no one could be a follower of His who did not go to church, is quite another matter. For my part, looking over the records in the New Testament—and incidentally leaving out St. Paul, who created the Church—the impression I get is rather that He would have wished to find His followers in every part of daily life. It seems to me the consummation of His teaching and example would be a leavening of love, consideration for others, and selfless service, in home and work place, kept bright and living by communion with Himself by family and friendly groups, and a happy fellowship among themselves. I think what He would wish to see among us is not so much regular church-going, as a building up and beautifying of family life, with the New Testament as guide and reference book. The only stumbling block for a "scientist" (define "scientist" please) would be inability to accept, as true, the existence of Jesus, as a living person, with splendid attributes and sympathies, with whom it is possible for a human being to commune, or converse, by the power of thought. In this way He can still be counted a member of every sincere group of people aspiring to true goodness.

DAUGHTER OF THE MANSE
(Ahititi).

Sir,—I am sure that "Ipso Facto" has made a great mistake by saying, "Christ did not think you could be a Christian and not a member of a church," because sectarianism was not known in His day. The Church founded on the rock statement of the apostle Peter, "Thou art the Christ," is the only one of New Testament proclamation, and if true followers of Christ choose to become members of any denomination they must adhere to other forms of ethics, as required by the articles of the church. It is generally agreed that Christianity is proved by science.

STUDENT (Hamilton).

Sir,—I do not feel competent to discuss dogma and ethics with "Ipso Facto," but I feel that it might have strengthened his argument if he had cited Christian ethics or dogma instead of the pre-Christian Ten Commandments. I should have thought the practice of Christianity would have rendered the Ten Commandments obsolete. It might be the emphasis of the Christian churches on pre-Christian doctrine that makes many of us doubt the presence of a Christian Church.

CARITAS (Dunedin).

Sir,—In deciding whether a scientist, or anyone else, can be a Christian it is surely necessary first to describe the principles on which Christianity is based. It is not sufficient simply to state that belief in the existence of Christ makes a Christian. It appears to be of paramount importance to believe in the holy scriptures, since they are the Word of God.

The Christian, of necessity, must believe in the oneness of Christ and God. He must at once believe that while God is all-loving, all-merciful, all-powerful and all-knowing, He is also vengeful, warlike, jealous, selfish and the creator of peace and evil. But mere belief is not

enough. A Christian must live his Christianity as his Deity advised, namely, by being poor in spirit, meek, righteous, merciful, pure in heart and peaceful. He must love his enemies and give all his riches to the poor.

Belief in these divine attributes and practice of these principles may be difficult, but they are the Word of God and as such, cannot be disputed. Within the framework of what is called Christianity, there is so much dissension that it might be pertinent to ask, not whether scientists can be Christians, but whether Christians can be Christians.

J. S. LESNIE (Auckland).

NEW ZEALAND WINTER

Sir,—Nelle Scanlan has stirred up a bit of feeling among us Canadians. Has she ever lived in Canada? She refers to "stewing" in Canadian houses. Might I point out that the average Canadian is just as healthy as the average New Zealander. A Canadian home is centrally heated (average temperature 68 degrees F.) by necessity—not because we wish to pamper ourselves. In temperatures ranging from 0 degrees F. to 40 degrees F., does Miss Scanlan think a person has any hope of keeping the water supply flowing without some heating? Perhaps a winter in Canada could change her mind. Canadians are not accustomed to wearing numerous cardigans and pullovers indoors, and therefore get full benefit from their out-of-door clothing when necessary. They don't have to sit in front of a heater and freeze on one side while they toast on the other. Also they are proud to say they have plenty of sunshine, even on the coldest of days, and a cheerful day makes a person glad to work. And they do work in Canada, believe it or not.

No doubt I will be considered a poor sport for objecting to what Nelle Scanlan may consider humour, but wrong impressions are often caused by such letters, and it is only fair that Canadians should be allowed to defend themselves.

JOLLY CANUCK
(Motueka).

Sir,—Nelle Scanlan's letter in your issue of August 19 reminds me of a mother bull-dozing her infant to bed. With a series of "tut tuts," "cease your moanings," and some vague general statements, the infant is edged in the required direction. Unfortunately in neither case do the statements coincide with facts. We excuse mother because we admit the desired end. Thick and thin blood, due to cold and heat, are not, I believe, scientifically observable phenomena.

Canadians can "stir themselves" because their sphere of activity is not limited by that jealous god—the open fire. So much time and thought are devoted to discussing draughts, hearths, fuels, chimneys, and smoke that New Zealanders have less time to devote to more serious topics. Even if these latter are discussed, there are the inevitable breaks to stoke up, to close or open a window, to stop a draught, to move away from or closer to the fire, to admit a newcomer to the circle, or to let someone out. If a good fire exists, everyone just sits and stews.

I judge a "civilised climate" as one that has been modified in its effects to suit man, as in Canada. In New Zealand

we leave climate raw and try to place upon the body the task of making the innumerable adjustments to the varying temperatures. Slight help is given by the use of clothes and our ineffective fires. The New Zealand winter is cold. You cannot deny those chill bathrooms, those icy bedrooms, those winter woolies, those masses of blankets, those bake-one-side-at-a-time fires. And why is it that the railway carriage I travel in is always just the one in which the heat does not work?

A. D. KELLY (Palmerston North).

Sir,—Marie Alderson has written an amusing article on the theme that people who are used to central heating don't like New Zealand houses. Like many people, she exaggerates greatly to get her effect. Can't we take the article like that, laugh, admit there is some truth behind the exaggerations, and not be annoyed? After all, not many people are adaptable, most of us liking the things we are used to. I have heard some who have visited the U.S.A. complain that they found American houses to be overheated and stifling. So it works both ways.

The trouble does come in, though, when overseas people read an article like Mrs. Alderson's and, not knowing it to be exaggerated, believe it to be the literal truth, and think less of New Zealand accordingly. I know of a case in which that actually happened.

I wonder if Mrs. Alderson can explain one point that puzzles me whenever I hear of this central heating of homes. Overseas visitors who make this complaint appear to come from either the middle or the wealthy classes. But what do the poorer people do? Can they really afford the enormous amounts of firing required to keep a 24-hour central heating system going? Or do they rely, as we do, on the range, incinerator, open fire, electric heater, hot water bottle and winter woolies? A New Zealand working class household could not possibly afford central heating. Can a Canadian one do so?

U.M.D. (Christchurch).

THE REITH LECTURES

Sir,—I, and many others, cannot understand why such an eminent philosopher as Bertrand Russell should be put on 2YC—a station full of explosions and weird noises, as far as Hawke's Bay is concerned—on a Monday night when Parliament is not using 2YA. I feel sure many listeners, silent though they be, would like a little more consideration shown to speaker and listener alike.

L.E.M. (Napier).

(The Reith Lectures will be heard from the other main National stations in due course, and the dates of presentation will be published in the programme pages of *The Listener* as soon as they have been arranged.—Ed.)

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

Review Fan: Please send your name and address.

Wondering (Dannevirke): Dannevirke is well outside 1YA's service area. Night-time signals from 1YA and other Auckland stations will always be variable and subject to fading. The fact that higher frequency signals such as 12E and 12D are occasionally stronger than 1YA is not significant.

Tempus (Auckland): Time signals are broadcast from the main National stations at the following times: 6.0 a.m., 7.0 a.m., 8.0 a.m., 9.0 a.m., 10.0 a.m., 10.28 a.m., 10.29 a.m., 11.0 a.m., 12 noon, 1.0 p.m., 2.0 p.m., 3.0 p.m., 3.28 p.m., 3.29 p.m., 3.30 p.m., 4.0 p.m., 5.0 p.m., 6.0 p.m., 7.0 p.m., 7.28 p.m., 7.29 p.m., 7.30 p.m., and 9.0 p.m.