



INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS (N.Z.) LTD.,
Eden Crescent, Auckland.



WAKE UP YOUR LIVER BILE—

Without Calomel—And You'll Jump out of Bed in the Morning Full of Vim.

The liver should pour out two pounds of liquid bile into your bowels daily. If this bile is not flowing freely, your food doesn't digest. It just decays in the bowels. Wind bleats up your stomach. You get constipated. Your whole system is poisoned and you feel sour, tired and weary and the world looks blue.

Laxatives are only makeshifts. A mere bowel movement doesn't get at the cause. It takes those good old Carter's Little Liver Pills to get those two pounds of bile flowing freely and make you feel "up and up." Harmless, gentle, yet amazing in making bile flow freely.

Ask for CARTER'S Little Liver Pills by name. Stubbornly refuse anything else. Distributors: Fassett & Johnson Ltd., Levy Buildings, Manners Street, Wellington, C.S.

BETTER THAN A TORCH

ELECTRIC HANDLAMP

A LUCAS PRODUCT—2 1/2 in. reflector—definite on and off switch—long life twin batteries—will stand firmly, or can be carried. Weight with batteries, 1 lb. Price complete 10/11, post-age 8d. Spare Batteries 1/11 each.

SKEATES & WHITE Ltd. 48 FORT ST., AUCKLAND.



"Pigs is Pigs"



"THE LISTENER" recently published a short story, "The Eyes of the Pig," by Peter N. Temm. Correspondents quickly pointed out that details of the pig hunt, which supplied part of the action in the story, were improbable; and allegations were made that violence had been done to factual accuracy. Mr. Temm defended himself by saying that his story was not a report, but was an imaginative work of fiction, and should be judged as such. At this point we thought the subject required fuller discussion. We therefore invited A. R. D. Fairburn and F. J. Foot to prepare cases for and against literary licence. Their arguments (and each seems to have kept his mind open to the last possible moment) are printed below.

PRO (and Con)

"IS a writer of fiction justified in stretching the facts? Or should the imagination be curbed in the interests of accuracy?" The Editor asks these questions, which, as he says, relate to the more general one of literary licence. I think the short answer is that when a writer is trying to convey information he should keep to the relevant facts; but that when he is trying to stir the imagination and the emotions he may use whatever degree of licence may be necessary. Some important qualifications must be made. There is a core of factual reference in even the most imaginative writing—for instance, *Through the Looking-Glass*, or Kafka's novels, or the election manifesto of a political party. And there is such a thing as "irresponsible emotive writing," in which the reader is misled.

Everything depends on this question of what the writer is trying to do, and on the "contract" or understanding he establishes with the reader at the outset. We do not accuse Poe of trying to pull our legs in his *Tales of Mystery and Imagination*. Writer and reader agree to enter the realm of fantasy. And we do not blackguard Lewis Carroll for creating the March Hare.

If the writers of the past had been manacled to factual accuracy, the greater and more valuable part of literature would never have come into existence. The mind of the imaginative writer must be granted the freedom of the cosmos. He must be free to create Othello, Heathcliff, Puck, Don Quixote, angels and devils, anthropophagi, moons made of green cheese, and rose-red cities half as old as time.

The poet enjoys (and not infrequently abuses) a greater degree of licence than does the novelist, who is compelled to draw heavily on the details of common experience in order to create his particular little world. If a novelist offers us figs that grow on thistles, motor-cars that have no forward gears, birds that fly upside down, railway trains that chase dogs, mothers who devour their young, square billiard balls, poets who are modest, he risks destroying the sense of reality he is building up in his reader's mind—unless he is writing fantasy in which such things are given a special meaning.

It would be idle to deny that "The Eyes of the Pig" belongs to a class of fiction in which much of the imaginative effect depends on the vivid depiction of the details of common experience. The real question, in this particular instance, is probably: "How common?" No doubt there are errors of factual reference in every piece of fiction, which the specialist in watch-making, Egyptian history, navigation or stamp collecting will pick up. For him they will be magnified, and become a foreground as obstructive of full vision as a pea held up against the eyeball. He will find it hard to believe that *Moby Dick* is not primarily a textbook on whaling, and *Jude the Obscure* not first and foremost a geographical study of southern England. He will be irritated—just as you or I should be if a writer showed his imperfect knowledge of our pet subject.

Not knowing much about pig dentistry, I did not notice Peter Temm's slip, and my reading of the story flowed on without mental obstruction; just as my dinner would not be spoiled by the presence of a hair in the soup if I were a little dim-sighted, or used to eating in restaurants.

I must admit that I have a divided mind about the matter. I am fully sympathetic with the pig hunters, for

(continued on next page)

CON (and Pro)

ONE hesitates to place fetters on the imagination of writers, but let us indicate some limits, with special reference to the case in point. In "The Eyes of the Pig" a huge wild boar is despatched with one knife thrust, without the aid of a holding dog; and the illustrator depicts the furious animal with its long curved tusks projecting from its upper jaw. Correspondents suggested that Mr. Temm had never seen a wild pig. Mr. Temm with admirable frankness agreed, but made the defence indicated. It has not yet been pointed out that the pig went on feeding after a dog was in full cry after it, and that the hunter, presumably still armed with knife only, broke off a tusk and "slashed off its gory head." The author thus nonchalantly disposes of two difficult operations.

The case is not without precedent. Let us discuss it on a high plane. Doctor Johnson severely criticised Milton's *Lycidas*. "It's form," he said, "is that of a pastoral: easy, vulgar, and, therefore, disgusting. . . . In this poem there is no nature, for there is no truth." He complained of the mixing up of a lot of pagan deities amid shepherds, flocks, and flowers, with conceptions drawn from sacred subjects. Johnson had no time at all for poetic shepherds and, in another essay, he fulminated against "heterogeneous ideas yoked by violence together." When Fanny Burney called on him the following conversation took place:

"Yet there is such a thing as invention—Shakespeare could never have seen Caliban?"

"No, but he had seen a man, and knew, therefore, how to vary him to a monster. A man who would draw a monstrous cow, must first know what a cow commonly is; or how can he tell that to give her an ass's head, or an elephant's tusk, will make her monstrous?"

The plain man will tolerate the abnormal but not the absurd. He admires *Lycidas* not because but in spite of artificial poetic shepherds and fantastic and almost irrelevant heathen divinities. He welcomes, nevertheless (in *Othello*), the introduction of "anthropophagi and men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders"; but not pigs who go into action with their main armament upside down. Is he to accept with undisturbed complacency a boar whose awful tooth is so off-handedly reft?

His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge . . .

"Ah! who hath reft" quoth he "my dearest pledge?"

And the rude hunters of the wild boar are entitled to say that they don't care a fiddler's fee about poetry, but that stories about pig hunting are different.

"It is no skin off our noses" they proclaim in their rough unlettered way "if Bellerophon is said to have killed Chimera; which was shaped like a lion in front, a goat in the middle, and a dragon behind. What we think is the horse's behind is pretending to tell a story about a New Zealand wild pig and then turning it into Chimera."

It may be said on the side of Mr. Temm that pig hunters have been known to refer to "blue pigs." On investigation it appears that these pigs are of a brindled grey colour and called "blue" only by imaginative courtesy. But as the imagination is here exercised by the pig hunters themselves, it may be asked—why not by Mr. Temm also? If, for instance, following the Chimera example he had made the forequarters those of a gryphon, the animal would have had

(continued on next page)