

## THE WAIRAU "MASSACRE"

Sir,—In a publicity article, "Revised Judgment on Te Rauparaha" announcing a ZB talk, an injustice is done to the impartiality of New Zealand historians, and the sense of justice among New Zealanders. It is asked if Wairau was really a massacre, and it is said that "when passions are aroused it is difficult to get a reliable account of happenings that lead to violence, and what we know of Wairau we know from historians whose views of the Maoris could not always have been, in the nature of things, objective." The truth is that from the beginning the overwhelming consensus of opinion among New Zealanders, including their historians, has been that the Europeans were to blame for the affray at Wairau; and it has always been recognised that the killing of the prisoners could be justified, in Maori eyes, by ancient Maori custom. My collaborator in *Maori and Pakeha* which has been used as a text-book for many years, the late A. W. Shrimpton, thus summarised the contemporary condemnation of the party from Nelson: "The fact remains that all persons in authority whose duty it was to pass judgment on the affair—the Protector of Aborigines, the Commissioner of Land Claims, the Acting-Governor, the Attorney-General, and finally the Secretary of State for the Colonies—on sifting the evidence, were unanimous in the opinion that the conduct of the Europeans violated the principles of law, justice, and prudence, and stigmatised the affair as illegal, unjust, and imprudent in the highest degree."

When the new Governor, FitzRoy, arrived, he took a similar line. Te Rauparaha was the senior chief, but Te Rangihaeata was responsible for the killing of the men who had surrendered. Shrimpton says he did this as "utu" or vengeance, that is, he followed Maori custom. Years before Shrimpton wrote, Reeves in his classic *The Long White Cloud*, roundly condemned the Europeans, gave reasons for Rangihaeata's action and referred to "the Wairau Massacre, as it was called." On June 17 last, in the daily series of historical talks from 2YA for which Dr. Scholefield and I are responsible, the Wairau tragedy was treated objectively.

ALAN MULGAN (Wellington).

## "W.G.'s" LAUGH

Sir,—In your issue of November 18 "W. Hiskers" questions my description of W. G. Grace's laugh as "deep." In *The Memorial Biography of W. G. Grace*, edited by Lord Hawke and others (1919), a collection of tributes and reminiscences by friends of the great cricketer, there are numerous references to what one of the writers describes as his "spontaneous, infectious laugh," and to his use of his voice, all of which suggests that, although his voice was high-pitched, it was loud, and that his laughter was deep. Here are a few of them: "W.G.'s stentorian bidding," "W.G. roared with laughter," "Grace thundered to a visiting captain," "his big heart and loud, hearty laughter," "W.G. growled deeply in his beard," "W.G. roared at his fielders," and, most delightful, I think, "Obstruction be damned!" bellowed W.G."

J.C.R. (Auckland).

## ORCHESTRA ON THE COAST

Sir,—May I endorse heartily the letter of your correspondent H. C. Hooper in which he deprecates the remarks of "G. leF. Y." in the recent article "The Orchestra on the Coast." I'm not a Coaster myself nor do I know many

# LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

residents of the West Coast well, but those whom I've met on various visits to Greymouth seem perfectly ordinary, sane people, quite capable of enjoying and appreciating art. No wonder West Coasters are annoyed by "G. leF. Y.'s" implications that they are aesthetically backward people, who sit goggled at the sight of bassoons and double-basses. Surely music is something which all men can understand and enjoy, and as such it is a medium for greater friendliness—through common experience—between peoples of different nations. Yet here we have a writer, in a journal whose policy is democratic and fairminded, insinuating in a condescending manner that one small section of one small country is inhabited by people who are culturally the inferiors of him and his brethren on the other side of the island. There is small hope for the aims and objects of Unesco if we can find such unwarranted snobbishness in our midst.

M.L.S. (Christchurch).

## NORTHLAND STATION

Sir,—I was surprised and disgusted when I discovered that the Northland Station 1XN was not broadcasting the Whangarei races. I am not a particularly ardent race fan but I am interested in all local affairs and sports. When this station was opened we were overwhelmed with nonsense about the marvellous publicity it would give to Northland, how the country listener would take an interest in local affairs, how it would revitalise the district, etc., etc.

What have we got? Just another medium for broadcasting the same old records passed on from other stations plus a more than liberal sprinkling of rather dreary advertisements. If this is how it is going to continue, and if we are going to be deprived of our own football, cricket, races, public functions and affairs of importance, then it would have been a far better thing if this station had not been built. The buildings could have been put to a practical use and the money saved could have been spent to brighten up the Main National stations.

WONDERING (Waipu).

(The hours of broadcasting have been increased by more than 337 per week since January, 1949, when the first X station was opened at Timaru. Consideration will be given to further increases in broadcasting hours from the X stations when the staffing position, particularly on the technical side, is improved.—Ed.)

## FILM CRITICISM ON THE AIR

Sir,—Your correspondent, Beatrice Russell, raises an interesting point. Should men's views be included in a session entitled *Feminine Viewpoint*? My opinion is yes, but I would suggest that the name of the session be changed, perhaps, to *Mainly for Women*.

While agreeing with Beatrice Russell that some women broadcasters are giving us excellent reviews, I find that the male voice, whether it is Mr. Lawrence's, Mr. Gordon's, Mr. Colgan's or Mr. Jensen's, gives us a little relaxation from the somewhat high-keyed, self-conscious earnestness of some women broadcasters.

ALL VIEWPOINTS (Auckland).

## EDUCATION FOR THE WORLD

Sir,—Your admirable editorial under the above heading mentions the possibility of Unesco coming into "collision" with national and private interests."

These interests may quite sincerely oppose some Unesco aim because they are comprised of people born and bred during the currency of the conception of a divinely constructed stable world and the tradition that we must seek self-interest first. Through the painful and long-drawn-out process of destructive recurring wars the Western nations are learning that a system which fails to satisfy the individual's craving for a sense of social worth must be changed for a co-operative effort on a world scale organised to use modern scientific and technological resources to give mankind as a whole the economic and political conditions favouring the full development of individual capacities.

One of the possible hidden obstacles to which you refer may be that a survival of the old conception will lead to those now regarded as "backward" people, striving to follow the unwise path trodden by the Western nations in the past, and that a new phase of competitive rivalries, strife and war may mark their advance towards our present stage. That would be tragic, but not impossible, for a study of evolution reveals that trends accumulate, stability is broken down, again and again until some new order finally establishes itself. Unesco's aim, I think, is to try to avoid a repetition of our melancholy history of politico-economic error with its disastrous consequences, by giving to all the peoples a realisation of what a new productive organisation, based on human co-operation and motivated by the aim of the common good instead of individual and national aggrandisement may do for mankind.

This is necessarily a long job, and as you say, may call for patience. But in due time oaks grow from acorns, and the more we know about our world and ourselves, the more willing we become to abandon attractive penny-in-the-slot schemes and trust in seedtime and harvest.

J. MALTON MURRAY (Oamaru).

## "AND BEHOLD, IT WAS LEAH"

Sir,—Perhaps no one would question Ruth Gilbert's ability as a writer, but who passed the subject matter? Poetry is concerned with the universal, and is it not true that only the heroic and the beautiful are materials for song? *Genesis* is subject for poetry, but with the understanding that it is spiritual truth in a natural covering. Understood as universal inner experience, in which all the characters are resident in one's own breast, the "sordid" disappears and the "earthly" story has its "heavenly" meaning. With this, Ruth Gilbert might have been well occupied and rewarded; and we, too, might have had songs worth the singing.

ROBERT J. STRONG.

(It is not true that "only the heroic and the beautiful are materials for song."—Ed.)

## ECCLESIASTICAL MODES

Sir,—I was interested in the article by "H.J.F." tracing the none-too-obvious connection between a butterfly and a racing commentator. With all due respect to "H.J.F.", he is rather at sea on the subject of the ecclesiastical modes. He stated that the Lydian mode corresponds to our major scale, which is rank heresy.

The Lydian mode corresponds to the sounds produced when we play the white notes on the pianoforte between one F

and the next, but without the B flat of our major scale. Sometimes the B is flattened according to a special licence known as *musica ficta*, but in the authentic mode the B is natural. The mode which actually does correspond to our major scale is the Ionian. The other modes are the Dorian (D to D), the Phrygian (E to E), the Mixolydian (G to G), the Aeolian (A to A), and the Locrian (B to B).

Later in the same article "H.J.F." mentions, "French composers . . . arguing that even the 12-tone scale is outdated and should be replaced by one of 18." I wonder if "H.J.F." has heard of the Moravian, Alois Hába who has written compositions for instruments in sixth tones, i.e., 36 divisions of the octave. This same composer has written quarter-tone music for string quartet and for small orchestra. A quarter-tone piano was patented in 1892 by G. A. Behrens-Senegaldens of Berlin. The practice of playing and composing in microtones is known as microtonality. Whether there is a future for microtonal music is doubtful, but nevertheless it is a significant trend.

STUDENT (Christchurch).

## COMMUNISM IN CHINA

Sir,—Recently I listened to two broadcasts. The first was from 3YA, and was entitled "The truth about ourselves." Reference was made in this broadcast to the "menace" of Communism. The speaker, a retired schoolmaster, advised his listeners to think for themselves in this matter, and he stated that there were just as many undesirable things in America as there were in Russia. The second broadcast was a propaganda talk over the New Zealand network by the correspondent of a reactionary paper, *The Daily Mail*. Many people in this country view with distaste the opinions expressed by this man, because they sow the seeds of another war. The talk about the danger of Communism in China is just so much alarmist padding. The correct attitude to adopt to the Chinese Communists is one of helpful co-operation and respect. We should respect the other man's way of governing himself. Who said that our two-party system, with each side blackguarding the other, is the best? Is France's system with five parties any better? What is the best system of Government? Does anybody know?

THY NEIGHBOUR (Christchurch).

## PROMENADE CONCERTS

Sir,—In a recent article, "New Music in London," Leon De Mauny mentions the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra as playing at Proms. The way it reads to me, it appears that they played at the recent series of Promenade Concerts just concluded in London. If this is so, I'm afraid I must correct him. He must delete Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, and insert London Symphony Orchestra.

WILLIAM AUSTIN (s.s. Somerset).

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

M. K. Fraser (Wanganui): The *Listener* prints the programmes as supplied by the stations, though all reasonable precautions are taken to ensure accuracy. The error of which you complain has been drawn to the attention of the station, and it has now been put right.

H. A. H. I. (Blenheim): The only other books by Gibran listed among translations in the last five years are *The Prophet* and *Nymphs of the Valley*. Both have been published by Heinemann.