

# NEW ZEALAND LISTENER

Incorporating N.Z. RADIO RECORD

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## Wellington to Washington

THE Prime Minister has told us why Mr. Nash is going to Washington. He has told us, that is to say, why Mr. Nash and not someone else is going and why he is going just now. He has suggested also, and it is a most interesting suggestion, that in addition to reducing the distance between Washington and Wellington—his primary task—Mr. Nash may bring Washington nearer to London.

In the meantime it is worth reminding ourselves that Mr. Nash can accomplish his task in the United States only if we help him here. With all his knowledge and all his skill he will fail if we fail. Just as it takes two to make a quarrel it takes two to establish a friendship on a firm foundation, and the first step therefore to the closer fellowship he is going away to establish is a clearer understanding by the people of New Zealand of the people and policy of the United States. Those who think that the United States means Hollywood are about as near to the truth as those Europeans who think that New Zealand means cabbage-trees and cannibals. Those who think that Chicago means gangsters are as ill-informed and as ill-balanced as the Australians who think that New Zealand is continually shaking and the New Zealanders who suppose that Australians go day and night in deadly fear of snakes. The real America has almost nothing to do with Hollywood, or no more to do with it than the real England has to do with Berkeley Square or the real New Zealand with Mitre Peak or the Pink and White Terraces. For every movie star in the United States there are thousands of scholars, musicians, engineers, and men of science doing work that the whole world knows about, and for every gangster there are hundreds of philanthropists and saints. It is curious that so few New Zealanders remember how much of their knowledge is gleaned from libraries built with American money and staffed by American-trained librarians.

The events of the last two or three years, and especially of the last two or three weeks, have made it unlikely that there are any New Zealanders left who do not want a closer association with the United States. But if there should be some who wonder whether we need America spiritually as much as we need her materially, it would be a useful test to re-read Lincoln's Gettysburg address and ask why, though the words are so familiar, they are still so vibrant and so real.

# LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

Letters sent to "The Listener" for publication should be as brief as possible, and should deal with topics covered in "The Listener" itself. Correspondents must send in their names and addresses even when it is their wish that these should not be published. We cannot undertake to give reasons why all or any portion of a letter is rejected.

## MR. MASON'S POEMS

Sir,—May I congratulate you on your notice of R. A. K. Mason's poems? Mr. Mason is an important person in our literature, and you treated him with the space and critical insight that are his due. I would like to make one comment. Your reviewer mentions T. S. Eliot and his effect on Sir John Squire. I doubt if many people are still "enraged" by T. S. Eliot, but I am sure a good many continue to be puzzled. There is one thing that can be said for Mr. Mason that cannot always be said for Mr. Eliot: you know what he means. And there is another thing; Mr. Mason does not write for a coterie.

A.M. (Wellington).

## THE MESSIAH

Sir,—As a regular subscriber to *The Listener* and a very thrilled listener-in to Handel's masterpiece oratorio *The Messiah*, might I suggest that next time the oratorio is to be presented, *The Listener's* announcement may be accompanied by a picture of Our Lord a little less gruesome than heretofore, e.g. Holman Hunt's picture of Him or something to that effect, as He is no longer "The Man of Sorrows," He is now "King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Hallelujah."

W. ERIC COCKS (Ngatea).

## THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

Sir,—Some are not taking that vigorous and warm-hearted interest in the downfall and destruction of the most ruthless foes that ever cursed this earth. When the National Anthem is sung, many miss out the "middle verse." I give it here, sir, because it is not in the hymn book:

O Lord our God arise  
Scatter his enemies  
And make them fall  
Confound their politics  
Frustrate their knavish tricks—  
On Thee our hopes we fix  
God save us all.

At the close of the last Great War, the hymn was sung throughout on Anzac Day in 1920 and in 1921, but in 1922, the middle verse was thought too hard on our former enemies with whom we were now at peace. Many must like myself have forgotten exactly what were the correct words.

BRITISHER (Raglan).

## TOO MUCH MOANING

Sir,—It is clear from the letters that appear in your columns that people will complain about anything that any radio station puts on in this country. They are like the people who complain if their house is on fire and there is no fire brigade to put it out, and then when the fire has been put out, complain that they have lost the insurance.

I have been to concerts given by leading artists, and have watched with interest the people's faces there, and I would not be wrong in saying that 90 per cent go because it is the right thing to be seen there; half-way through they get bored and wish to get back to the radio for a little lively music. The fact is people must be educated to good music. Jazz piano players would not have been playing jazz to-day but for the fact that people must live, and jazz pays the bills. If some of the moaners lived in other countries where I have been and listened to Chinese and Japanese music, they would have reason to complain. Think of the country listeners some 70 and 80 miles from the nearest railway. Don't they want a little in this life after a hard day's work? Their wireless is their only contact with the outside world,

and so they sit and enjoy everything, including jazz. There has been too much moaning by older people. The day is approaching when the coming generation will be moaning for us.

LOFTY (Christchurch.)

## BUSHIDO

Sir,—The writer of the article "What Price Bushido Now?" has fallen into an error common among Englishmen who draw analogies between "bushido" and English ideas of chivalry. "Bushido" does not mean "code of gentlemanly behaviour" even in Japanese, still less in an English sense. It means literally "the war or road of the warrior caste." In her treacherous attacks on December 7, Japan has not only not forgotten her ancient code, but has acted precisely in accordance with it. Such deeds as the attack on Pearl Harbour will be extolled throughout Japan as true to the highest traditions of the Samurai just as was the slaughter of politicians by armed bands of soldiery during the last 10 years.

"Bushido" implies, it is true, absolute loyalty to the death to one's own lord and fellow-retainers, but this is coupled with absolute treachery and slaughter for others. The "bushi" it is also true, scorned wealth for its own sake. When he had money, he squandered it in unbridled debauchery. When he wanted more, he got it by murder—robbery with violence. Ever since Yoritomo Minamoto instituted camp government in the 11th century, "bushido" has involved Japan in a welter of internecine slaughter. Yoritomo's father was killed in his bath by samurai of a retainer with whom he had taken refuge after defeat. They surrounded the room and thrust their spears through the paper walls into the body of the naked guest. This was "bushido." Yoritomo himself escaped, and lived to slaughter the opposing clan to the last baby. He then treacherously slew Yoshinaka, his brilliant cousin, and Yoshitsune, his still more brilliant brother, who had won his victories for him. Similar instances could be multiplied indefinitely right up to the slaughter of Inukai and other Cabinet Ministers in this 20th century, and it was all done by exponents of "bushido."

The illustration of the horse-drawn "Sori" or sledge at the top of the article is also misleading. As one who has thankfully ridden miles over the snowy roads in country districts in winter, I assure you they are no more to be taken as evidence of backwardness than are the sledges the New Zealand sheep farmer uses to haul fertiliser, for instance, across his hilly paddocks. It is no more evidence of backwardness than when the Canadian farmer takes the wheels off his box waggon and substitutes runners to haul his wheat to the elevator in winter.

It is actually, the most suitable and effective method of transport for the conditions.

ALEXANDER ASHTON (Hataitai).

(The New Zealand farmer uses a sledge to haul goods where there are no roads. If he hauls his family to church by the same method, the roads are primitive or he is.—Ed.).

## WHOLEMEAL BREAD

Sir,—In a recent article in *The Listener*, "More About Bread" the writer mentioned "genuine wholemeal bread." Our forefathers ground wheat with mill-stones, as do women in the Middle East (the quern, or hand mill-stones were in use in Ireland and Scotland up to at least 40 years ago), the product being wholemeal with which they made their bread. But through the years, machinery for grinding wheat and dressing (refining), wholemeal, improved so that now, instead of grinding with stones, wheat is degermed and ground with steel rollers, and instead of wholemeal being dressed through horsehair, it is now dressed through silk. When we ask for wholemeal to-day, are we supplied with a genuine wholemeal—the whole grain ground into meal—or is the product we buy processed flour with a portion of bran mixed back into it? What do doctors and others have in mind when they advise "wholemeal"?

ROB (Ahipara).