

Beauty Recipe

famous for 30 years



A Time-tested Recipe for an Alluring Complexion

To help make the roughest skin soft, clear and velvety-smooth—try this recipe. Mix one ounce of pure cream of milk (pre-digested) with one ounce of olive oil. You can have it prepared by your chemist, but making a small quantity is expensive. Crème Tokalon (Vanishing non-greasy) contains special ingredients scientifically blended in correct proportions for helping restore youthful freshness to the skin. Try Crème Tokalon (White non-greasy), the time-tested recipe for an alluring complexion. Successful results guaranteed with Crème Tokalon or money refunded. Obtainable at all Chemists and Stores.

Salmond & Spraggon Ltd., Maritime Building, Customhouse Quay, Wellington.

XMAS TOYS

Six-wheel truck, all-steel construction, 11in. long, 4in. wide, 5in. high. 13/6, post 1/3.

SKEATES & WHITE LTD.
48 Fort Street
Auckland



RELIEVE FOOT AND LEG PAINS CAUSED BY WEAK ARCHES



Tired, aching feet, rheumatic-like foot and leg pains, are all symptoms of weak or fallen arches. Dr. Scholl's Arch Supports give immediate relief and remove the cause, by gently and firmly supporting the arch, and stopping ligamentous strain.

Dr. Scholl's

The Scholl Mfg. Co. Ltd., Willesden St., Wellington.

ARCH SUPPORTS

SHOULD WRITERS BE ENCOURAGED?

(Written for "The Listener" by A. R. D. FAIRBURN)



THE old question of giving encouragement to New Zealand writers came to the surface again recently in the correspondence columns of *The Listener*. I have no wish to take sides in the particular controversy, but I can't resist the impulse to say something on the general question of writers, reviewers and readers, with particular reference to New Zealand.

Consider first of all the idea that our reviewers should give specially favourable treatment to local writers. I know all the arguments in favour of it. "This is a young country, and we are trying to build up a literature. . . . Our writers work under the natural disadvantage of catering for a small public, and should therefore not be trodden on too heavily. . . ." And so on. But when all this has been said, I still find that idea a little offensive. Isn't there something insulting in the adoption of a double standard of criticism? Whenever I have received the impression, in reading notices of my own writing, that the reviewer was conscientiously trying to avoid hurting my feelings, I've always felt as if I were being given underhand serves at tennis. New Zealand reviewers are, in my experience, too generous. The policy of giving everything local a pat on the back is one that does no service to our literature. If it has any effect at all, it is to encourage an indiscriminating public to be still more uncritical in its tastes.

Let Criticism Be Intelligent

If our book reviewers are to be critics—and I am very much in favour of it—then they can make themselves most useful by trying to build up intelligent standards of criticism. If this involves the writing of "bad" (meaning unfavourable) reviews, then this is all to the good, so long as the critics are conscientious and intelligent. I can't see that any real harm can be done by an unfavourable review, so long as it can be related to some respectable standard of criticism. For instance, I have seen some of D. H. Lawrence's writing subjected to penetrating adverse criticism by a Catholic critic. The effect of the criticism was not to demolish Lawrence, but to give me important bearings on his position, and allow me to "place" him more accurately. Whether he was in my opinion demolished or not was dependent on whether I accepted or rejected the Catholic viewpoint. Criticism that has no basis other than the critic's personal fads and prejudices is obviously of little value—for which reason it will have little effect in the long run.

The worst thing our journals can do with New Zealand writing is to ignore it completely. The next worst is to praise it indiscriminately. If they ignore it, while paying attention to overseas

writing, then the growth of a solid body of New Zealand literature will be retarded. I had rather they savagely attacked everything of local origin than that they should take no notice of it at all. If, on the other hand, they praise it immoderately, the effect will be to encourage writers in their vices; and that, too, will retard the growth of a literature. If the public is to be seduced by flattering reviews, into reading a lot of second-rate stuff, then its reaction will be one of disappointment and possibly resentment. It will end by despising all local work.

If New Zealand writers are to be read by New Zealanders, they will get recognition in only one way, and that is by doing good work. This is where good critical standards are important. Public taste can be kept up to the mark to a great extent by intelligent reviewing. One of the necessary conditions of good reviewing is that the critic shall be worthy of the book he is dealing with. Poe said to some reviewer or other that "he knew no more about literature than a poulterer does of a phoenix." Such critics shouldn't be let loose on the public, and it is the responsibility of editors to see that they aren't. But intelligent reviewing, even if it is hostile, will always be useful to writers as a whole, because it helps to maintain objective standards of criticism.

Shoot the Pianist If Necessary

If somebody asks me what I mean by "intelligent" reviewing, I'll try to give them an idea. When we read a review of a book of modern verse in which the writer complains that the poet "has no sense of beauty," or that he "deals with ugly and unpleasant things," or that his verse "doesn't sing," we may be almost sure that the reviewer is a dunce. He is almost certain to be basing his opinion on an inadequate knowledge of English literature. Apart from that, criticism of this sort is usually quite worthless, because it begs all the relevant questions. Perhaps the verse wasn't intended to "sing"; much of the very greatest verse doesn't, you know. And the poet's "sense of beauty" (dreadful expression!) may be based on something other than an appreciation of poetical candy, and a belief that it is the function of poetry to chloroform people. A reviewer of this sort gives himself away by the phrases he uses. He has probably no better critical apparatus than a sweet tooth and a distaste for facts.

Writers don't benefit by being treated as household pets. Let us suppose, however, that we are going to make it a matter of national policy to give them every possible encouragement; then why not go the whole hog? Nearly every local industry in New Zealand enjoys tariff protection. Those who make their living by manufacturing boots, for instance, are given a virtual monopoly of the boot trade by the imposition of a high tariff on the imported article. There are numerous people in the Dominion who are trying to make a living by writing. Why shouldn't all overseas novels carry a heavy tariff, too?

(continued on next page)