

have been good for Carlyle to get before he settled in Cheyne Row. I don't think he would have written better books; but he would have reduced the number of books written about him, and saved himself a lot of money that he afterwards wasted on his sound-proof walls.

WHY do cows fear stable-flies and horses take panic at bots? I know that stable-flies can bite, and that the bite can be painful for about half a second, but if I were cased in cow-hide I don't think it would worry me much if all the stable-flies in the neighbourhood settled on me at the same time.

It does, however, **FEBRUARY 11** greatly worry my two cows if a single fly settles on them, and to be able to milk them in peace these hot dry mornings I spray their legs, bellies and necks with DDT. That is effective while it lasts, though it often means that my ankles and arms provide the blood that the flies can't get safely from the cows. I have to suppose that they do get blood from cows, though I can't think how they do it.

The bot-fly is a different story. It is not a blood-sucker, as far as I know, and has no skin-piercing mechanism at either end. It just lays its eggs where they are most likely to get into a horse's mouth and stomach—on the long hairs under the jaw and on the forelegs. Though it can stampede horses, their fear of it, Jim has explained to me, is protective—a kind of racial awareness of the danger of collecting the eggs. That it is a possible but to me personally a difficult explanation. It implies either that animals know, without any experience, what is dangerous, or that they can combine and register cause and effect in their brain cells. It seems as bold to make instinct purposive as to give animals a sense of right and wrong.

IT is, I suppose, jealousy that makes so many stay-at-homes question the adventures of travellers. We still refuse, after nearly 3½ centuries, to accept

Raleigh's report on the Orinoco. Though Livingstone got a good hearing when he returned to Scotland with the Victoria Falls in his pocket, the Scots had questioned Mungo

FEBRUARY 14 Park 50 years earlier. When Marco Polo told his story—in jail, like so many famous travellers—no one believed it, and we still laugh at Jonah and Baron Munchausen. But it is difficult for little men to keep up with big men. I am waiting with some interest to see what happens to T. E. Lawrence, now that the debunkers are on his heels, and I wish I could be sure that Hillary and Tensing are safe.

In the meantime, I have been reading Brian Fawcett's story of his father, Colonel P. H. Fawcett, who disappeared 25 years ago in unknown Brazil, and I wish he had been a less trusting editor of his father's papers. I don't mean less trusting of his father, but less trusting of his father's contemporaries and travelling successors. It would have been impossible in another 50 years to disprove anything the Colonel had recorded in his diaries, but letting the world have it now is giving it a chance to make a fool of the father and knowing that the world will do it. Take this simple instance. A pack mule falls over a precipice, but on the way to the rocks a thousand feet below its load catches between two trees and it hangs there in space. As rescue is impossible the poor brute has to be shot—a horrible business, since the mule in the meantime is quietly cropping the leaves of the branches from which it is hanging. I don't think it was a filial act to throw that sop to the scoffers.

If I were an explorer, in space or in the spirit, I would not tell my story till all my questioning contemporaries had died. I would be dead, too, of course, but it has never been true that dead men tell no tales. I could tell some hair-raising tales if I were dead—and when I die I perhaps will tell them—but if I told them now some smart Alec would pull them to pieces, point out inconsistencies, and end by proving that I had twice at least exaggerated.

(To be continued)

Young Farmers on the Air

THE Radio Leadership Contest held among members of Young Farmers' Clubs has become an annual event which young farmers look forward to with increasing interest. This year's contest will wind up this month, when the most talented few will find themselves judged for farming knowledge, leadership and Young Farmers' Club activity, and radio voice and personality. The first of the district finals will be held at Auckland on Wednesday, March 10, and broadcast in *For the Farmer* at 7.0 p.m. that day. The Wellington district final at Palmerston North on Monday, March 15, will be recorded and broadcast from 2YA in the *Farm Session* at 7.0 p.m. the same day, and from 2ZA at 10.30 a.m. on Sunday, March 21. The Canterbury district final at Christchurch on March 15 will be recorded and broadcast in the *Country Session* at 12.33 p.m. on Monday, March 29; and the final to be held in Dunedin will be heard in *Country Calendar* from 4YA at 7.20 p.m. on Wednesday, March 17. On Tuesday, March 30, the final of the Radio Leadership Contest will be broadcast from YA and YZ stations—replacing *Radio Newsreel*—at 6.45 p.m.

Loyal Songs

STIRRED by loyal and patriotic feeling during the visit to New Zealand of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, a number of New Zealanders, as well as several people in Australia and Britain, found an outlet in writing songs to mark the occasion. Of those submitted to the NZBS several were accepted and broadcast from various stations during the tour. The songs accepted were mostly simple and melodic and marked by sincerity of thought, and those written by New Zealanders compared more than favourably with songs received from overseas. New Zealanders whose work was accepted and broadcast include K. Keenan (East Coast), who wrote *Hail, Gracious Majesty*; John Ford (Whangarei), whose song was *Welcome and Haeremai*; and Mrs. Lilian Cumberworth (Auckland), whose *The Queen's Welcome Song* had both English and Maori words. *Rotoiti*, a song accepted from Mrs. J. McFarlane (Brisbane, Australia), was broadcast during the Queen's stay at Moose Lodge, Rotoiti. One song sent from Britain—*A Royal Toast*, by Miss Fiona Miller (London)—was also accepted and broadcast. In addition to these songs, several were submitted which had already been recorded commercially.

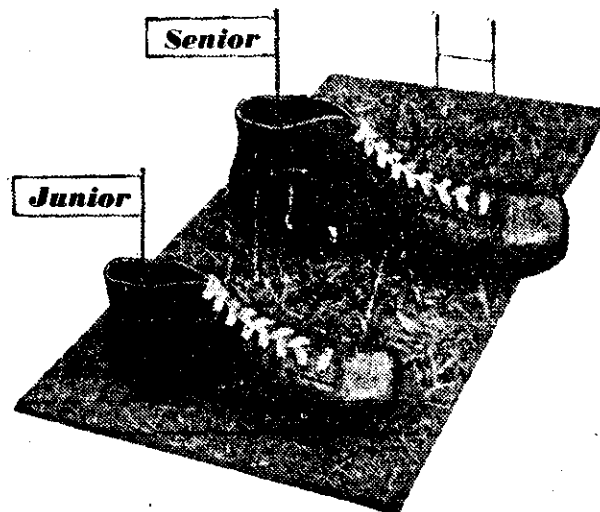
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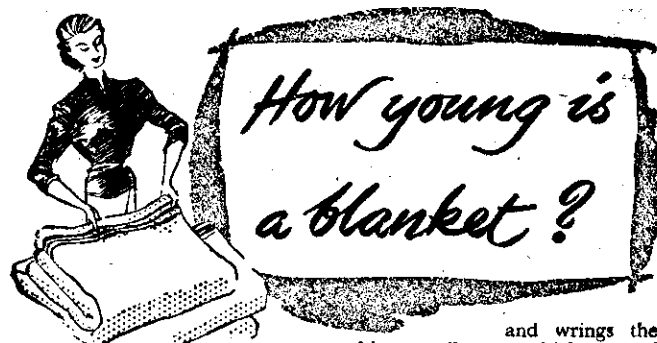
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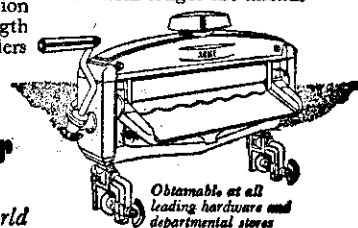
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