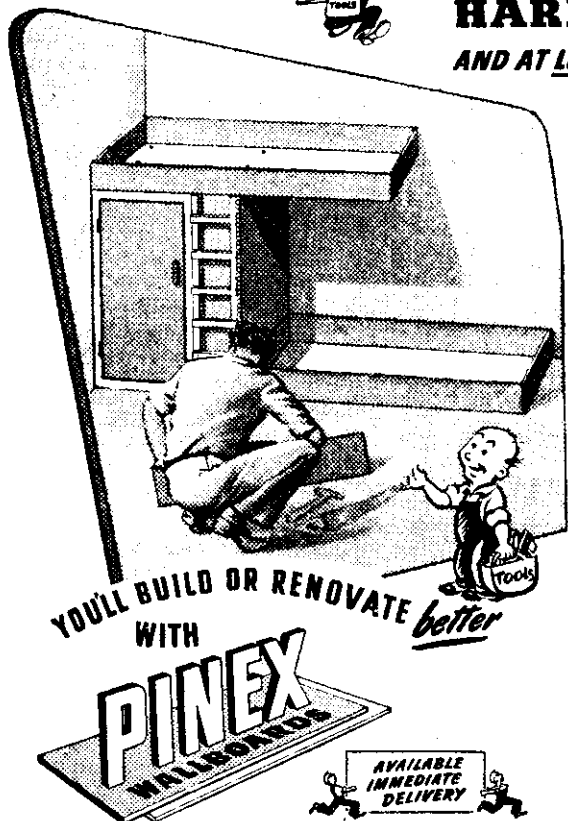


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P.20

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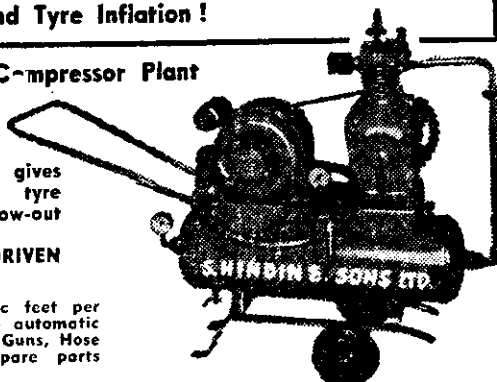
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LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

TE WHITI AND POMARE

Sir,—It would be interesting to know upon what authority your reviewer David Hall bases his statements (*Listener*, April 15) that, "For all his spiritual potency Te Whiti remained the leader of a resistance movement which could not hope to succeed. Pomare led an acceptance movement . . . which meant new life in a real world."

Man of Two Worlds, by J. F. Cody, is, like most biographies by New Zealanders, a picture that is all light and no shade. Sir Maui Pomare and Sir Peter Buck both sprang from the Raukura Movement of Te Whiti. Pomare was elected to Parliament bound by a promise to support Buck's proposals concerning the 18,000 acre block outside the West Coast Settlement Act. He crossed the floor of the House and supported the Reform party in a different proposal that proved disastrous to his people; and was rewarded with Cabinet rank. The few Maoris who remained true to Sir Peter's proposal were the only ones who prospered.

Later Sir Maui made some atonement for his former error by obtaining the Royal Commission of investigation, and compensation for the confiscated lands, but this should have been done anyway. In this he was supported by Sir Peter but the latter never forgave him for his former breach of promise; and, very recently, repercussions resounded throughout the land.

As medical officers both Sir Maui and Sir Peter did great work for their people but, because they never properly understood Te Whiti's teaching, they failed to suppress "tohungaism." In the last two decades the application of Te Whiti's true principles has brought about a co-operation between even old-fashioned Maori people and the doctors and hospitals that the other two failed to attain. This is not to belittle their achievement but to say that they would have done better had they better understood Te Whiti.

The latter had two policies, one to deal with immediate problems, the other his long-term principles which are now being more and more appreciated by Europeans as well as Maoris. One example of their potency is seen in the activities of Te Kotahitanga Tautoru, based on Taranaki, which is very much alive in a real world. Its inter-racial and inter-church, cultural, educational, recreational, and economic welfare work successfully unites European and Maori in building common citizenship. Among other things it was the Kotahitanga which came to the help of the small band of Maori people who wished to honour the promise to Sir Peter Buck that he would be buried in Okohi Pa. and convened the Dominion-wide organisation now building the National Memorial there as a repository for his ashes.

C.R.O.N.Z. (New Plymouth).

POETRY IN NEW ZEALAND

Sir,—If Mr. Thompson has another look at Mr. Reid's criticism of his poetry, he will find that Mr. Reid was careful to remain within the limits of literary criticism. He commented on the "image-stammering and too literary responses," "the verbal leperdmain" and if he quoted the anatomical terms which Mr. Thompson and others employ in such profusion, it was to show how these poets were merely using the current fashionable idiom, with little evidence of poetic insight. He charitably

refrained from applying to the poets concerned the Gospel maxim, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

In transferring the argument to the realm of ethics, Mr. Thompson is therefore drawing a red herring across the track, to divert attention from the question of his literary competence. His suggestion that Mr. Reid is the victim of repression is mere personal abuse. His use of the term "moral McCarthyism" is an appeal to popular prejudice. Would he, I wonder, apply the term to Christ's condemnation of lust (*Matt. 5. 28*)? As for his suggestion that Mr. Reid accepts "the rather irrational belief that the body is the source and symbol of evil," he can disabuse himself of that idea. Mr. Reid is a Catholic, and it is Catholic doctrine that the body and sex are good, and that the source of evil is the will. Sex is good, but it is not, as some of our poets seem to imagine, the *Summum Bonum*.

G.H.D. (Greenmeadows).

THOMAS HARDY

Sir,—Reviewing a biography of the above author, James Bertram asserts that Hardy "was an indifferent artist, in prose and verse" (*Listener*, April 30). This is so patently incorrect as to make one doubt whether the reviewer has ever really read Hardy's novels. No unprejudiced critic could possibly deny that *Far From the Madding Crowd*, for example, contains some of the finest prose to be found in British fiction of any period. I have not read Hardy's verse; but, in my opinion, he was a superb artist in prose.

L. D. AUSTIN (Wellington).

"BORIS GODOUNOV"

Sir,—In his monthly review of new recordings for May (*Listener*, May 7), Owen Jensen finds an "Iron Curtain" that prevents the Russian version of Moussorgsky's *Boris Godounov* reaching the outside world. The U.S.A. is more fortunate, it would appear, in that they have discovered a chink in the "Iron Curtain" through which they have obtained this very opera in its Russian version. Sam Goody's (New York) "Long Player" catalogue for August, 1952, lists the complete opera on three records by soloists, chorus and Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra. I. LEVY (Lower Hutt).

THE DESCRIPTIVE ATLAS

Sir,—One of the reasons why the centennial atlas was never completed was the fact that no adequate draughting staff was ever provided except in the earliest days. Responsibility for the atlas was shared by two departments—the Internal Affairs undertaking the research and letterpress, and the Lands and Survey the draughting. From 1938 until 1952 the Internal Affairs Department maintained a small but highly competent staff of graduates to fulfil its part of the bargain, but the Lands and Survey Department was not in a position to do the same. During the war years draughting on such a project was rightly curtailed, but it is unfortunate that since 1945 practically no draughting has been done. The bulk of the research work is now finished, and many maps are ready for the draughtsman.

It has been estimated that given favourable conditions the research could be completed in about two years. But for reasons never made plain enthusiasm suddenly wilted in high official circles, and the Historical Branch of the Internal Affairs Department was allowed

N.Z. LISTENER, MAY 21, 1954.