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At Auckland,  
11th to 15th MAY, 1956

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**Shepherd's Calendar**

**WARS OF NERVES**

by "SUNDOWNER"

**T**HOUGH I expect flocking at this time of year and not pairing, I saw a cock sparrow this morning attacking other cock birds that tried to settle in a macrocarpa growing a few yards from the water-trough. To my surprise he won all his encounters. He either had, or pretended to have, rights in that tree which were not shared by other birds, and it was sufficient for him to assert his claim to establish it. Those, I thought, were battles of nerves, his victories of nerves, though I could not think why he should have been belligerent in the moulting season. Perhaps he was deceived by our double summer.

**MARCH 8** Whatever accounts for these exhibitions of bluff in nature, they must have been going on since the beginning of time. There must have been wars of nerves thousands of years before there were Russians or Americans or Chinese or British; before there were races or nations or governments; probably before the human animal emerged as a superior being. It is a war of nerves when a dog shows his teeth, when a cat spits and thickens its tail, when a lion roars, or a gorilla beats his breast. My hens are

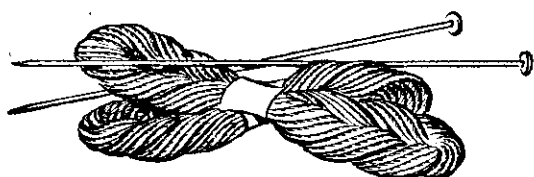
nerve fighters when they charge a dog in defence of their chickens, since they have neither the capacity nor the intention to do anything but make a fuss. Once when I bought a Minorca rooster, and was not ready when he arrived to liberate him, I put him in a small netted coop which was too low for him except in the centre under the ridge. There next morning my bantam rooster found him, and started circling the coop challenging him. At first the Minorca was belligerent, too, but when he attempted to strike he found himself hampered by the sloping netting. In the end this really worried him, and since he had to stay where he was for two days, and the bantam kept running round the coop challenging and threatening him, his nerves at last gave way and panic seized him. Though he recovered when he was moved into a run in which he had freedom of movement, he always gave way afterwards to the bantam if they met in the open. It had completely vanquished him without giving or receiving a single blow.

\* \* \*  
[It was a shock to me some years ago when a woman I had known for a long time, greatly admired, and had

never seen too often, said to me that no man who so despised women as I had shown I did could be just to them or a trustworthy critic of their work. I mean it was a shock when I realised that she was speaking seriously and not making fun of the person I myself supposed I was—a sap with women, soft and sentimental and spineless. I could not think, and I have not been able to think since, what I had said or done or been to leave that impression, which in itself did not distress me. It would have comforted me to think, if I had been able to think, that I was not just the sloppy fool with women I felt in my bones I had always been. But she insisted that my courtesy to women was a contemptuous courtesy, that I had no sympathy with them, did not try to understand them, and as a result knew very little about them.

The woman who gave me that resounding smack was a lecturer in history. Now another lecturer in history, the brilliant but disturbing A. J. P. Taylor, has gone a good deal further. In a note in *The New Statesman* on homosexuality, a sad subject for cynicism, he has recorded it as his opinion that one of the reasons why society makes no headway in dealing with homosexuals is because men despise women.

We say—how can we cure homosexuals? as though it were some sort of disease. . . .  
(continued on next page)



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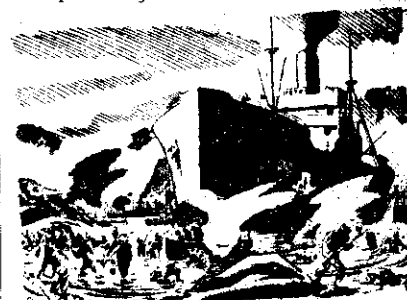
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**Dardanelles Story**

**FORTY-ONE** years ago on April 25—Anzac Day—British, Australian, New Zealand and French troops landed at the entrance to the Dardanelles to begin one of the bravest and most tragic military campaigns in history. The Anzacs alone had 23,000 casualties—among them 10,000 dead.

Most authorities on war agree that the failure of the Allies in this campaign was primarily due to the unsuccessful



naval attack that only resulted in alerting the Turks to their danger, so that they had time to amass their defences. When troops were landed at Cape Helles, Kum Kale and Anzac Cove, a newly-formed peninsular army under the command of the German Marshal, Liman von Sanders, was there to meet them. Even then the landings were almost a success, but only a precarious footing had been gained and tactical initiative was soon lost. In August, 1915, another landing took place, this time at Suvla Bay to the north of Anzac. Again success was near, but it was not to be, and for five more months a state of near-stalemate prevailed, followed by the brilliant and casualty-free withdrawal of Allied troops from the peninsula. "Dardanelles, the Campaign Reconstructed," written by David Woodward for the BBC, will be broadcast from the YA stations and 4YZ at 9.30 a.m. on Sunday, April 22.

N.Z. LISTENER, APRIL 13, 1956.