

The Great Tradition of the Upright

ONCE or twice in our lives, if they are long lives and fate is kind to us, we may enjoy the friendship of a man whose virtues lift him above our own level and keep him there. We are never suspicious of him or cynical about him, and if we are ever jealous of him we are at once ashamed.

MAY 10 It makes no difference at all whether we agree with his opinions and share his beliefs. Character is deeper than belief, and independent of it. We may not know what his beliefs are. I am not sure that I ever knew Sir Howard Kippenberger's beliefs except in broad outline. All I knew was that they were based, deep down, on the foundation on which the upright have stood in all ages—the knowledge that we can explain neither life nor death but must accept both and walk without fear. I do not agree with those who think that Kip was without fear. I think he conquered fear as he conquered the crooked, mean, wobbling uncertainties most of us carry through life. It may have been easier for him than for some of us to be brave, easier to be honest, easier to be humble and just; but integrity is never reached without struggle or held without sacrifice. In a test extending through 40 years his integrity was unshaken and unshakable. That is what made him the good soldier he was, and the good citizen. Since the worst thing anyone can do to a dead man is to say things about him that would horrify him if he were still alive, I speak now with my head only and not with my heart. But that does not prevent me from saying that the longer I knew him the more strongly I felt that he was in the great tradition of the upright—the line of Socrates and Seneca. More and Mazzini and Washington, Grant, Gordon, and Edward Grey.

I SAID the other day in my moral cups that conscience makes cowards of us, fools, and even blasphemers. But I did not know then how soon I would pay for my irreverence.

MAY 11 I know now. I got up this morning determined to work in my overgrown

garden. But Jim apparently got up determined to doctor his sheep; and from my garden to his yards is about 50 feet. I sharpened my spade and decided, after half an hour's deep thought, where to begin. Then Fluff barked, Jim's maid-of-all-work. Though high trees separated us, I knew that Jim had begun. I knew, too, that dosing sheep single-handed is like tying a knot with one hand, or going through the whole process of shaving. It can be done, as a dentist in desperation can fill his own

by "SUNDOWNER"

teeth. But it is not Christian or neighbourly to allow it to be done.

Every time Fluff barked my gardening resolution got weaker. I knew that it was important not to listen to Fluff. For weeks the garden had been too wet to dig, but for three days the sun had shone and a gentle wind had blown. Now was the hour if the weeds were to be killed before winter, the onions

sown, the peas put in, the ground prepared for the beans. But Fluff's barks had become a dull pain. I could see Jim holding a sheep with one hand, reaching for the gun with the other, twisting his back as he filled up again, opening the race gate with his knees, and being too late with his boot when a doctored sheep dodged back again among the undoctored. It would be shameful, if I started to dig, to persist in such circumstances. I must not start.

But if I did not? If I rushed at once to Jim's assistance and away from my long neglected garden? Did not charity begin at home? Was there not a tide in the affairs of gardeners on which they must ride—or sink? Was it not a fact that I liked sheep work and hated garden work? Was not the Devil in Fluff's bark, tempting me to further transgressions? Was it not my duty to resist the Devil? And if I could not help Jim, could I dare to help myself? Would it not be better to return the spade to the tool-shed and think the problem out again free of all distractions? Perhaps Thurber



KIP: "Integrity is never reached without struggle or held without sacrifice"

could help me, or Mr Explorer Douglas. If they were not co-operative there was *Elephant Bill*, just brought out in a Penguin.

I tried *Elephant Bill*—spread myself flat on my back to avoid temptation from my legs, and went to sleep with Fluff still barking. It is the kind of thing conscience likes doing to us.

MY chief consolation when the duck-shooting begins is the thought that two ducks in every three will escape. Our duck population is not large, but it is large enough to survive a month's attack with guns of limited range during the daylight hours of a season of limited duration. There is also, I think, a good chance that it will increase faster in the future than the number of guns arrayed against it—partly because there are more comfortable excitements now available to youth, and partly because many farmers will respond to the appeal of the Acclimatisation Societies to build more dams and ponds and an increasing number of the others declare their properties bird and game sanctuaries.

MAY 14 In the meantime, I never see these "sportsmen" returning with their bags without wondering how many ducks have been hit and not killed and will die in a few days. I admit that I have never seen a wounded duck or found a dead one. But how many dead sparrows and starlings do we see in the course of the year, of the thousands that must die? Cats take some, and hawks; weasels, ferrets and possibly magpies. (I once saw two magpies running along the ground holding a live sparrow which they were tearing to pieces.) Rats remove some carcasses and grass and leaves hide others. But the least common of our small birds must be numbered in thousands and not in hundreds. Thousands die every nesting season, but more thousands survive. If mature birds did not also die in thousands every district would have a hundred birds where it now has one. But no one sees the dead birds. They fall to the ground, and in nine cases out of ten must disappear before even the hawks find them. For all we hear, and often say, to the contrary, New Zealand is by no means burnt, eaten, or scraped bare. Millions of acres of forest have gone, but millions of acres of grass have followed, and it does not take much grass to hide a sparrow.

(To be continued)

COMPOSERS' CONTEST WINNERS

THE results of the first joint APRA-NZBS Composers' Competition have been announced. Winner of the ballad for solo voice is Mrs Dorothy Freed, a music student of Wellington. Winner of the work for solo pianoforte is David Farquhar, lecturer in Music at Victoria University College. No prize has been awarded in the section for brass bands. In all, 95 entries were submitted in the ballad section, 36 in the piano and nine in the brass band.

In commenting on his decision not to award a prize for brass band, the judge of that section, Dr Charles Nalden, Professor of Music at Auckland University College, said: "I regret to say that I am unable to recommend any of the nine entries submitted for a prize. Of these nine, only two merited really close scrutiny. . . While the two works were more worthwhile than the other seven, here again their actual musical worth preclude me from be-

lieving that either would add anything to the credit of band music."

Mrs Freed, who is studying music at Victoria University College, has previously written music for dramatic productions in Wellington. David Farquhar is a well-known young New Zealand composer, among his compositions being music for productions of the New Zealand Players.

A. E. Rolfe, Attorney for APRA in New Zealand, said: "The result has been a happy one in that once again an APRA contest has resulted in the discovery of a new composer—as happened in 1953 when Leslie Jordan won the Art Song Section in competition with composers from Australia." Mr Rolfe also expressed appreciation of the way in which APRA and the NZBS had been able to work together. Later this year a further competition will be held for a full orchestral work, an art song cycle with New Zealand lyrics, and a light orchestral composition.



DAVID FARQUHAR



DOROTHY FREED