

## THE CAVE DRAWINGS

Sir,—I have been most interested in Mr. Theo Schoon's letters in your paper, exhorting public and State interest in the ancient Moriori and Maori cave drawings. While I can claim no artistic appreciation of these drawings, I consider the visual impact of this primitive art most enriching, both mentally and emotionally. They form, as it were, an historical monument and are part of our heritage as New Zealanders.

Throughout other colonised countries of the world, similar drawings have been established as tourist and artistic attractions. The extent of these drawings in New Zealand is not known, and I agree with Mr. Schoon that a comprehensive survey is necessary to enable the enactment of protective legislation.

We are immediately concerned with the impending destruction of the cave drawings along the banks of the Waikato River. I have seen only one of these shelters, which is at a point where the Waipapa Creek joins the Waikato River. A formed road, to permit exploration for the site of the Waipapa dam passes the base of the drawings, and test drillings are being carried out less than twenty yards away. All necessary equipment is on the spot and a private contractor engaged on test drilling estimated that this complete cave could be moved to a safe site, without damage, at a cost of approximately £600.

The formation of this cave or shelter establishes a natural monument which, even transferred, would retain its full perfection. The shelter is some twenty-five feet high and ten feet wide at base. It resembles the interior of a half section of a Maori canoe, in short, a Gothic niche. The drawings in this cavity, in black and red, depict a great variety of motifs, each one of singular interest and beauty. I would imagine the destruction of these drawings would mean the loss of important material for historical research.

It seems ironical that the machinery to obliterate the drawings is at hand and could be turned so easily to implement their preservation. In the concluding paragraph of his letter, May 18, Mr. Schoon has emphasised that destruction of cave drawings is now occurring. The need for action is urgent.

WM. GIRLING-BUTCHER  
(Kaikohe).

## "QUIRES AND PLACES"

Sir,—This admirable session on Sunday afternoons (2YA) is of intense interest, and because of absence of any Cathedral establishment in the North Island, is no doubt welcomed by many people in the northern centres. We have heard on two occasions recently Stanford's magnificent setting of the *Te Deum*—his composition "in C." The "Stanford in A," evening canticles, embracing a particularly effective double chorus for the *Gloria*, were also listened to with pleasure. His *Te Deum* in C, however, might now give place to some of his other work, as it has been broadcast fairly frequently since V-J Day. In the Cathedral libraries of Christchurch and Dunedin may be found other compositions by this versatile composer, the "B flat" setting of the canticles, also one in the key of G. Professor Galway, of Dunedin, has enriched our Cathedral music with his melodious compositions, notably a setting of the *Te Deum* in "G." Is it possible to arrange recordings of some of these? Other suitable music in this category,

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sung in the South Island, concerns such writers as Baisrow, Harwood, Lloyd, Parry, Tertius Noble and Walmsley. Broadcasting the mid-Victorian luscious melodies of Barnby, Gadsby, Garrett, Goss, Martin, Stainer and Steggall, would possibly evoke controversy; and, at the other end of the pole, Mr. Lilburn's "Dorian" conception as applied to the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis, would, at any rate, be interesting.

W. H. WARREN (Christchurch).

## BOBBY CALVES

Sir,—Your correspondent Rewa Glenn (May 18) says of the "bobby calf" trade: "... The majority of us are ignorant of the true facts of this trade," and then admirably illustrates this ignorance by saying: "Is it not a fact that a vein is cut and the poor animal is left to bleed to death in order that veal meat may be pale?"

This is completely untrue. Bobby calves are not bled to death. Veal meat is produced from yearling calves—not from bobby calves. Meat produced from bobby calves is manufactured into meat pastes and into other pastes with more fanciful but less truthful names. Any element of cruelty in killing bobby calves (as distinct from killing any other food-producing animals) lies in the fact that the calves must make the journey from farm to killing works when they are three days old. It is for the individual farmer and carrier to see that the discomfort of these animals is kept to a minimum.

DONALD RAE (Auckland).

## THE WRITERS' CONFERENCE

Sir,—Congratulations for your editorial on the Writers' Conference and for the splendid atmosphere-piece on the same subject written by "Augustus." If "Augustus" conveyed exactly the atmosphere of the conference with its tension and byplay, so did your editorial state the conclusions reached by most writers at the end of the conference. A rift between the older generation and the younger writers there was, but a rift that had begun to heal as the writers got together, found that a younger, or older man, could still be a good fellow despite different views.

To me, this meeting of "the other side," at first with clenched fists, and later with an outstretched hand, was one of the best things to come of the conference, and the development of our literature should benefit by it. With regard to the proposed Writers' Union: the points you raise editorially were realised at the outset by the instigators of the plan, and the idea of a union or society was dropped in favour of more peaceful and unifying tactics.

Writers of all generations of thought and activity met in harmony on the

first north-bound boat from Lyttelton after the conference, and gave ample evidence that there was more goodwill than bitterness in the air, and that writers could work, all together, in a common cause though in different channels.

LOUIS JOHNSON (Wellington).

## OUR NATIONAL CHARACTER

Sir,—With reference to your articles on our "National Character," I note that none of your contributors has written of the New Zealander as a biological animal. Differentiation can be brought about by climate, food (a more or less degree of first-class protein in particular), education, a greater or lesser degree of it, and heredity. Did the old country push its morons on to us, or did the best and most enterprising migrate?

Audrey Cumming gives us a pen picture of an early pioneer who was quite definitely not one of A. R. D. Fairburn's "helpless lot." It would appear from her letter that she is of the opinion that the pioneering period finished fifty years ago. This hardy pioneer seems to have been one of the fortunate ones who got an access road during his lifetime. The one great touch of genius he showed, in my opinion, was to learn a profession, sell his farm before it reverted to scrub, and get into the City. He has my profound admiration. In this district, first settled over eighty years ago and not roaded yet, we are pretty versatile—modesty forbids us to say how wonderful we are.

The toast, "The pioneers, God bless 'em," should, I think, be shorn of the usual humbug, and be extended to something like this for the urban dweller: "Here's to the Pioneers and their Pioneer descendants. Long may they live in the unroaded hills to pay their rates and taxes for our benefit, and to sell their produce overseas to bring us our cars and delightful electrical gadgets, and nearly all the things we use. May they always be there to work their silly guts out for us. Bless 'em all."

J. B. JACKSON (Raglan).

Sir,—It appeared to me that your excellent two-page spread on our national character suffered from the grave fault that it was not national in character. It was the middle-aged intelligentsia holding the mirror up to its own generation—arbitrarily, those born just before and at the turn of the century. The picture reflected of this segment of our national life was pretty close to the truth, but it was not true of the younger generations.

Unfortunately, *The Listener* did not include their views in its symposium. I think they have a good case, too. They

certainly have no inferiority complex, no "hangdog" demeanour because, as children, they were permitted to be seen and heard—even to questioning the judgments of the man-god at the head of the table! They were reared in a more socialised environment that did not produce those stultifying effects on character associated with the family hearth round of instruction and entertainment.

They are not undemonstrative. They show their feelings and their loyalties, not in the lip-service to precepts as of old, but in thoughtful and kindly deeds unobtrusively performed. They do not believe that adversity makes character—that a stone in the shape of a sermon is better than a loaf in the image of a handout. They respect their elders only if they are genuinely worthy of respect; mere increase of years is not enough.

It is true they are not religious and I cannot help but feel that they are the better for that. They are the heirs of that intellectual legacy handed down from the Darwinian era. The spirit of the age is against the old religious beliefs and no tears need be shed on that account. They are sports lovers rather than book lovers. But it is surprising what a good grasp they have on contemporary world affairs; it could not be obtained from newspapers alone.

All in all, the sons and daughters of your contributors' generation present a far finer picture than the one presented in your symposium.

G.R.B. (Auckland).  
(Abridged.—Ed.)

## YMA SUMAC

Sir,—In *The Listener* of April 27 appeared an article, under the heading "Voice of the Xtabay," which described the career and achievements of Yma Sumac. I have refrained hitherto from comment upon this article, because I wished first to hear for myself the recordings made by what is probably the greatest singer the world has yet known. As far as mere range is concerned, Yma Sumac's voice does not quite equal that of the Californian singer Ellen Beach Yaw, whose range was from low F sharp to C sharp in altissimo—slightly over four and a half octaves. I knew this artist in London and quite often accompanied her. But for jealousy and intrigue on the part of Melba, she would undoubtedly have risen to fame, though in musical quality Ellen Yaw's voice was definitely inferior to that of Yma Sumac.

What is absolutely beyond dispute, however, is that—as far as my knowledge goes—there is no singer now living who can even remotely be compared with this new Peruvian star. Not only is her voice astounding and without parallel in range and quality, but as a vocal artist she has no rival. In my opinion she ranks with Heifetz in musicianship, and no higher compliment could be paid her. Of course, this view of mine will be challenged, but I do not intend to pursue any controversy. Facts speak for themselves.

L. D. AUSTIN (Wellington).

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

A.C. (Wellington).—Thanks. The recent change to transmission on 10 kilowatts emphasises your point; and stations will be advised accordingly.

W.A.G.P. (Havelock North).—Your letter much appreciated.

## TOUR OF THE ALL BLACKS

THE NZBS has arranged to cover all matches played by the All Blacks during their Australian tour, starting next Monday, June 11. This was announced as we went to press. For the match against New South Wales at Sydney on Saturday, June 16, and the test matches (at Sydney on June 23 and July 7, and at Brisbane on July 21), Winston McCarthy will give a full commentary by radio-telephone, which will be broadcast by National stations. Results of all other matches (the first of them against Newcastle at Newcastle next Monday, June 11) will be announced by National stations as soon as they come to hand, and a 13-minute description by Winston McCarthy will be broadcast by Commercial stations at the first convenient opportunity after the matches. These 13-minute descriptions will be repeated by the main National stations after the 9.0 p.m. news. Further details of National and Commercial broadcasts will be announced later.