

## USE OF CHRISTIAN NAMES

Sir,—May a New Zealander thank E. H. McCormick for his irony, and J. B. Hyatt for his defence of the English system of addressing people. Changes in social customs in new British societies are inevitable, and some may be all for the better, but I don't think this one is. The Englishman has three grades, "Mr.," the surname, and the Christian name, and I like the practice. He is very chary about admitting persons to the circle of intimacy indicated by the Christian name. Here we are in a muddle. I have known a neighbour of mine well for some years, and like him. He still calls me "Mr. Cholmondeley" (not my real name), instead of "Cholmondeley." I dodge the issue when I speak to him face to face, but I have called him "Majoribanks" over the telephone (not his name, either). It is curious how the two forms of conversation differ. The position is becoming absurd and I'll have to do something about it.

The freedom with which we use Christian names is also absurd. After the first war *Punch* satirised this movement in one of those innumerable jokes that have made it an incomparable mirror of social history. (I wish I could say the same of *Punch* today, with its thin-wire outlines and truncated captions.) A bright young thing is introducing her boy friend to her old-fashioned mother. "This is Tibby, mother." "I'm very pleased to meet any friend of my daughter's, Mr.—er—" "Speak up, Tibby, you ass, I suppose you've got some sort of name!" Easy patter of Christian names is tiresome. It must be bad for discipline at times, and it cheapens what ought to be a genuine sign of intimacy. As Mrs. Snowden said of the eternal use of "Comrade" as a form of address in Russia, it ceases to have any real meaning.

NATIVE BORN (Wellington).

## RETURN OF THE SCAPEGOAT

Sir,—In reply to Mr. Barnard, I have only to point out that the release of the Soviet doctors confirms up to the hilt my statement that in the Soviet Union anti-Semitism is not tolerated. Those who attempted to raise it were removed from their high offices and now face criminal charges because, as the *Pravda* editorial of April 6 put it, they tried "to kindle in Soviet society, welded together by moral and political unity, by the ideas of proletarian internationalism, national enmity which is profoundly alien to Socialist ideology." In the so-called "Western democracies," on the other hand, the racists occupy the highest positions in Church and State and are received in quite respectable society.

To Mr. Barnard colour bars do not exist in the British Empire, "save South Africa." Well, that is a large exception for the millions of blacks who unfortunately have to live there. But, in all fairness to the Afrikanders, it should be pointed out that, according to Mr. Basil Davidson, the restrictions on the natives in the British Dominion of Southern Rhodesia are more savage than in the Union. And what does Mr. Barnard make of Kenya, where already 400 natives have been shot—in the good old Gestapo phrase—"while trying to escape"?

I am twitted with lack of knowledge of the relations between Maori and Pakeha. On the contrary, I see—after the most sordid armed robbery in history—a talented people stripped of their lands and reduced to hewers of wood and

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drawers of water. I see the Maori babies dying at three times the rate of the white ones. I see the Maori Affairs Department boasting, yes, boasting, that there are 48 Maori University students, overlooking that there are 11,000 white ones. I see the Maori people being offered only 100 of the 3000 state houses to be built. I see the most loyal section of our people being represented at the Coronation by one of the great white chiefs.

It is a bit thick for Mr. Barnard to speculate where I stand. That has never been in doubt. Where he stands seems to be a matter of constant speculation in the daily press.

Whether the Soviet Union should be exalted is beside the point. But as a state where men can walk the earth as brothers without distinction of colour, class, race or creed it might well be emulated.

J. W. WINCHESTER  
(Wellington).

## THE KING'S ENGLISH

Sir,—The NZBS sets a high standard in English grammar and pronunciation. (Maybe a bit too high for some people.) But, sir, when we hear two announcements following closely on each other, asking us to "contact the nearest police station," and some good advice in which we are enjoined to "contact" our grocer or baker or car salesman we wonder whether our education is being neglected in the use of the word. We recall a learned judge expressing his distaste for the term. Not alone is the NZBS. I have seen several letters written by senior men in Government service who so use "contact"; and at this moment I have a letter from a head teacher of no small school suggesting we "contact so-and-so."

STANDARD VI (New Plymouth).

Sir,—While concurring with "A.M.'s" plea for simple English, may I point out that the BBC is not incorrect in referring to "medical advisers" rather than to "doctors"? Legally a doctor is a person who has been granted a doctorate by a recognised university, it usually being the highest degree available in any faculty. Doctorates are available within the British Empire in science, music, law, divinity, literature, medicine and dentistry, while the degree of Doctor of Philosophy covers a wider range of subjects.

Originally the honorary title of "doctor" was adopted by those who were Licentiates or Bachelors of Medicine in order to conform in style with those who did actually hold doctorates of the Royal College of Physicians, and the word has been adopted into our language as a colloquialism, meaning one who doctors or treats medically.

In view of the increasing number of persons, both here and overseas, who do hold doctorates within their own faculties, the time is possibly ripe for the clarification of the position regarding the honorary use of the title.

NO FALSE COLOURS (Auckland).

## "PARADISE LOST"

Sir,—In a recent edition of *The Listener* there appeared an article under the caption of "Paradise Lost" by one Gordon Ingham. We, the business men of Oneroa, one of the places mentioned in the article, are rather perturbed at

the effect the publication of it may have upon the travelling public. In the first place, the general nature of the article is quite contrary to fact, and a slur is cast upon one of the finest seaside resorts in New Zealand. In effect it also casts aspersions on the mentality of the many retired people, from all walks of life, who have come here to live because they think it is an ideal place for this purpose. There is a permanent population of approximately 2000 living on the island, and this is indicative of its popularity. During the summer and holiday periods several thousand visitors regularly arrive.

We are very much concerned that you, as Editor of a paper that reaches practically every second home in New Zealand, allowed the publication of an article which made a scurrilous attack on

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certain named towns without taking any steps to verify particulars alleged to exist. A definite wrong has been done to Waiheke Island, and to Oneroa in particular, and we look to you to take appropriate steps to right this wrong. We are business men with substantial interests in Oneroa, and await your reaction to this letter of protest.

THE BUSINESSMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF ONEROA (Waiheke Island).

(We are surprised that so many people—the letter has 20 signatures—could approve the use of "scurrilous attack" to describe a harmless satire. We are even more surprised that their confidence in their community can be so easily shaken. The town is not yet built, or the seaside resort discovered, which can be harmed by a little laughter.—Ed.)

Sir,—Replying to your article entitled "Paradise Lost" I would suggest the writer seek a caretaker's flat on top of a Queen Street skyscraper, there to wield his vitriolic pen and broom to his heart's content. For six long years he drummed into us his belief that we were mostly fools, more especially those in office giving of their time and energy to the furtherance of the island's progress, there being only one wise man—to wit, himself. The bitterness he thus engendered amongst us has now clearly shown itself in the tone of his own words as having rebounded upon its author.

T. M. COPELAND (Waiheke Island).  
(Abridged.—Ed.)

## THE SCIENTIFIC ATTITUDE

Sir,—*"Ipso Facto"* (Hamilton) has a good deal to say, both in *The Listener* and elsewhere; but he is a careless listener and a careless writer, as his recent attack on me shows. He writes at some length on my chairmanship of a book session I did not chair, criticises me for a criticism I did not give on a book I have not read, and proceeds with "scientific" abandon to credit me with views I have not expressed. Your readers have the right to expect more accurate information over so smug a pseudonym.

ANTON VOGT (Lowry Bay).

## "JACK-IN-THE-BOAT"

Sir,—Your April 17 issue includes four verses by Allen Curnow called "Jack-in-the-Boat," a poem suggested to him by a manufacturer's advertisement.

The lines of the advertisement were so clear and understandable that on the strength of their appeal I bought a Jack-in-the-Boat for my four-year-old son. He is so well pleased with it that I would like to thank Mr. Curnow for bringing the toy to my notice.

SATISFIED CUSTOMER  
(Akatarawa).

## EXPLORING NEW ZEALAND

Sir,—John Pascoe's feature on 2YC of April 27 contained one or two inaccuracies. Brunner and Heaphy were not within miles of Farewell. They crossed the range west of Golden Bay and reached the coast at West Whanganui Inlet, where they followed the coast southwards.

The name of the lake as I heard it sounded like Rotorua. It should be Rotorua, meaning "long lake." There is no need to call it *Lake* Rotorua, as the Maori word *Roto* means lake, and such a name would be equivalent to saying Lake Lake. No one talks of Lake Loch Lomond or Lake Lough Neagh, so why the duplication in the Maori name?

When Brunner was on the summit of Victoria Range, surely he could not see over the main range to view the foothills bordering the Canterbury Plain; the Spenser Mountains would be too high to see over.

CANTNEL (Gisborne).

## NEW RECORDINGS

Sir,—When I read Mr. Jensen's article on new recordings in your issue of April 17 I was thoroughly delighted, but since then my enthusiasm has sadly decreased. For the last two weeks I have been haunting the gramophone shops, only to find that they have never heard of the delicious morsels Mr. Jensen tempted us with, and furthermore, have no hope of ever receiving them.

May I suggest that Mr. Jensen confines his articles to recordings which are available here? I do feel that it is only adding unnecessarily to the vexations of life when he urges us to buy recordings which, surely he must know, we can never hope for. C.C. (Wellington).

(All the recordings reviewed by Mr. Jensen in our issue of April 17 are available in New Zealand.—Ed.)

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

Satisfied (Wellington).—Many thanks.

D. G. Thompson (Hamilton).—No other way is practicable.

Blimey Charlie (Dunedin).—Verified, and very much regretted.

G.R.W. (Wellington).—Compiled from lists based on sales in Britain and the United States, not in New Zealand.

A Christian Man (Gisborne).—It is understood that your letter has been acknowledged by the Director and that you are aware of action that has been taken.

M. B. Harding (Christchurch).—It is hard to understand your question, as the programme entry for April 30 in *The Listener* does not advertise a repetition of the programme on May 3, nor is a repetition included among the programme entries for May 3. If the question remains, will you please put it to the station?

Bandspan Kiwi (Napier).—(1) Yes, something "more appropriate" could no doubt have been found; but the impropriety, in degree, hardly seems to be astounding or disgusting. Kaiser Frederick has been a long time dead. (2) All sources of British band music are drawn upon. Current recordings are freely used, with older ones. Repetition of both is unavoidable.