

FRENCH BROADCASTS

Sir.—The material for the French broadcasts to schools, as provided in the broadcast books, even if rather earnest, is on the whole good—lively, contemporary, and calculated to make boys and girls feel that French is a language used as they use English. The songs are popular and the recordings good, but the delivery of the body of the lesson seems to argue either a complete indifference to the receiving end, or at least a lack of contact with it, as well as being a waste of good French voices. As each line drags its interminably laborious length along, with perfect enunciation, completely stripped of life and personality, pupils have leisure to wonder, "Do French people speak like this? If so, I'm not interested; if not, why have the broadcasts?" and the result is ridicule or boredom, or both. M. Jourdain, to a teacher hoping that Form 6 will find *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* fast-moving and amusing, was definitely a last straw, and the New Zealand counterpart of Marie would rather stay at home than be accompanied by so tedious a companion on her trip on the underground. Ten years of listening to such delivery would be no equipment for speaking French to French people or for seeing and understanding a French film. After all, the lessons are meant for senior pupils with the text in front of them, and should surely accustom them to the rhythms and tempo of French speech, even at the cost of a word missed here and there.

K. F. McLEOD (Lower Hutt).

BOOKS FOR ANGLERS

Sir.—Your correspondent "Tapered Cast" refers to Charles Cotton. There is a treatise not much known, *Charles Cotton and His River*, by G. G. P. Heywood (Manchester, 1928), which is a study of Cotton's Dove and Cotton's practice. It is useful also for understanding the neighbourhood of Beresford where Walton sometimes fished with his "adopted son" and where, of course, the celebrated fishing lodge was placed—the lodge is illustrated, I think, in the recent reprint of Major's edition. Heywood's is one of the two books about Cotton, and a copy is available in New Zealand through library interloan service.

As anglers are fond of claiming Cotton for their own it is perhaps timely to remind them that he also wrote a handbook of "instructions for the raising, planting and cultivating all sorts of fruit trees," *The Planter's Manual* (1675); and a larger part of our public may also claim him as a pioneer in another field. His work, *The Compleat Gamester* (1674) is—or one would expect it to be—less authoritative than his studies of angling or pruning, and must have been little consolation to him when he had eventually to surrender his various estates.

KENDRICK SMITHYMAN
(Auckland).

"CLOCHEMERLE"

Sir.—I was in London when, in March last year, *Clochemerle* made its unobtrusive appearance on a scene then conspicuously adorned with—for instance—George Hoellering's *Murder in the Cathedral*, and a revival of what some of us think the best film of all time, Marcel Pagnol's *Fanny*, with Charpin, Pierre Fresnay, and the late great Raimu. *Clochemerle* was coolly received by the critics, a common opinion being that its appeal was to the innately vulgar and/or intellectually immature.

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LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

Some of these critics can hardly be dismissed as squeamish or mealy-mouthed—Dilys Powell, for example, later was so little puritan as to put the harsh and brutal Mexican *Los Olivados* among the four best films of 1952.

W. HALL (Wellington).

CLASS-CONSCIOUSNESS

Sir.—It is encouraging to read of activity in the field of social research in New Zealand, but a pity that *The Listener* reported Mr. Congalton rather than have Mr. Congalton report himself. The article on class-conscious New Zealanders contained no definition of what Mr. Congalton means by "social class," and it is on that account difficult to comment on his report. It does appear, however, that Mr. Congalton too closely ties occupation and "social class."

That a group of persons rated occupations in a certain order can be readily understood. But no certain conclusions regarding social class can be made therefrom. (It would be interesting to know just how Mr. Congalton "put across" the exact meaning of "social status" to his subjects in the short time that must have been available with each one.) No doubt prestige attaches to certain occupations in the order in which they are listed in the report. But occupational prestige is again not sufficient indication of social class.

We are told that the survey was based on the replies of 1033 people, and that "a considerably larger and more representative sample would be required to give a firm result." Yet no "firm" result regarding "social class" can be obtained by pursuing this method of occupational analysis alone, no matter how many thousands of persons are included. Class distinctions do not rest solely on occupations.

There will be broad groupings within the list of occupations rated, but to illustrate "class-consciousness" Mr. Congalton must show that between these broad groups social intercourse is limited by considerations of social status, by feelings of being "higher" or "lower." And, of course, within these broad groupings themselves, there are bound to be numerous differences of status that will depend only in part, if at all, on type of occupation.

There is a danger in Mr. Congalton's approach of equating status and occupation and of projecting social classes on that basis, whereas, conclusions on the nature of the status and relationships of groups must be sought in the attitudes which groups hold concerning one another. Research conducted on the present lines is apt to be misleading.

GILBERT JOHNSTONE
(Whangarei).

Sir.—It is disturbing in such a widely-read magazine as yours to find such an arrant piece of snobbery as the article on Mr. Congalton's survey. The contention that we are as class-conscious as some of the older countries I find hard to believe. I am sure that New Zealanders have their roots firmly in their native soil and traditions and consequently are too closely connected with the old pioneering stock from which our principles have derived. New Zealand children are taught from an early age that all occupations, dirty or otherwise, are interwoven. We are cogs in a machine, each one utterly dependent upon the other.

I think, too, that the practice of taking polls of this nature in schools is

to be abhorred. It is not constructive and can only confuse a youth's mind at a time when he is struggling to adjust himself to the very complex world which is opening up to him. As the mother of three children I feel that there is so much worth while that we can do for our young people without bewildering them with harmful inanities of this type.

DANA (Auckland).

Sir.—We New Zealanders do indeed deceive ourselves if we think there are no class distinctions here. Mr. Congalton would have been interested in two experiences of my own. One was at an afternoon party of about a dozen second and third generation New Zealanders, one of whom was being congratulated on her daughter's engagement to a young farmer. "He's a sheep-farmer," she replied, "not an ordinary farmer!" The second occasion was at a wedding. On one of the guests asking for tea without milk, a remark was passed about the number of country people who did not like milk. Quick came the reply in an offended tone, "We're not cow farmers—we are sheep farmers!" (though no one had mentioned farms). Here is the surprising thing: scarcely one person in either "audience" agreed with me that both these women were unconsciously humorous, or that they were even mildly snobbish.

TOWNIE (Napier).

COMMUNIST CHINA

Sir.—In your July 17 issue "C.H." writes: "When freedom is taken away, as it undoubtedly is under Communist rule, then happiness in life goes too." It appears to me that "C.H." has little knowledge of Chinese history or he could not write such nonsense. Bertrand Russell wrote in *Foreign Affairs* in 1921: "Japan is more hated in China than any other Power; we come next, as the allies of Japan, the possessors of Wei-Hai-Wei (the latter in explicit contravention of our Treaty rights), and the aggressors in China's first wars with modern nations."

Does "C.H." know nothing of the imposition of the opium traffic upon China? I would advise him to read *Black Opium*, by the Rev. Eric Lewis. It may possibly be an eye-opener to "C.H." to look back over history and read reports by men like Dr. Arnold, Lord Elgin, W. E. Gladstone, J. A. Brailsford, Professor John Smith and Sir Henry Pottinger (British Representative in China).

Again, your correspondent makes a grave error when he states that "Happiness is a thing of the spirit." It is the common approach of the philosophical idealist to separate the spiritual from its material basis, not understanding that anything spiritual can only arise from a material basis.

W. R. CARSON (Huntly).

Sir.—Wrong thinking is dangerous. "C.H.'s" letter is ill-informed. Let him study and digest the work of Robert Payne on Mao, and Jack Belden's *China Shakes the World*. These men know of what they speak.

The Chinese national polity was disrupted by the influx of foreign profit-seekers. If missionaries stayed at home and tried to teach their own people to be decent Christians they would do more good. Chinese landlords were quick to fall into step with the Christian Mammonists. The condition of the peasantry, owing to pitiless taxation, became pathetic in the extreme. Mao, an able and lovable peasant, is their

saviour. He has to govern 400 million people. He received help from Russia, which for selfish reasons Russia was glad to give. Therefore his Government is called Communist. But it is different from Russian Communism.

We, of course, won't have atheistic and terroristic Communism on any consideration. But we had better leave Mao to govern his 400 million as he thinks best. He is a far superior ruler to Chiang. The hard-working Chinese peasant does not bother his head about freedom: what he wants is enough food and clothing for himself, wife and children; and rescue from the vicious practices of heartless landlords.

If we want to keep our country secure, we had better help Mao in his difficult task, instead of, as hitherto, thinking chiefly of profit.

C. T. WILD (Timaru).

Sir.—In his letter protesting against the "championing of the Communist Government of China" in *Lookout*, "C.H." says that "when freedom is taken away, as it undoubtedly is under Communist rule, then happiness in life goes, too." However true this may be in the experience of "C.H.," it is not true in my experience. However, my experience of Communist rule in China is admittedly small, and I would therefore draw his attention to Rewi Alley's book *'Yo Banfa* ("We Have a Way") and let that speak for me. In the 11 weeks I spent travelling in China at the end of last year I saw more "happiness in life" than in the whole of my life before. Nobody who has not moved about in China recently can, I believe, have any idea of the "cause there is for optimism at the present time," which your correspondent doubts. The remark that "there is no room for optimism while a large section of mankind is living in bondage" is utterly irrelevant to New China.

MARGARET GARLAND
(Wellington).

PASTEURISATION

Sir.—In reply to "Sheba" (*Listener*, July 10), I would like to explain to her that in the discussion on "Raw versus Pasteurised Milk," time was very limited and interjections were not allowed. Dr. Kennedy used many trite and well-worn arguments in favour of pasteurisation. I myself had so much evidence to show why raw milk was so much better than pasteurised milk and so many points to make that I was able to bring only a few of them to my listeners in the time at my disposal. Even so, two of my main points were cut from the tape before being broadcast. Judging by the numerous letters and messages I have received from one end of the country to the other over this broadcast, it would be safe to say that I have the support of a very large number of the listening public. This question is one of the greatest national importance today, and it is high time that the public generally awoke to the seriousness of it, and gave practical support to those who are fighting to preserve their freedom and the British way of life.

W. B. CROWLEY
(Christchurch).

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS
Goffo Ma Non Troppo (Dunedin).—The possibility has been considered and will be again.

T. P. Hogan (Christchurch).—Would have liked to use it, but long letters are hard to fit in.

Paul F. Thompson (Dunedin).—Letters should be related to broadcasting or to topics raised in *The Listener*.