

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## DEER HUNTING AND CONSERVATION

I AGREE with Cleveland Amory's opinion of bullfighting [TRADE WINDS, Sept. 18], but I cannot agree with him about deer-hunting, particularly with his statement about its proving the inadequacy of conservation and the hopelessness of leaving such matters to the individual states. I speak only for Wisconsin, where I lived for twenty-five years. I have never hunted, nor has anyone in my family, but I feel there is no better solution to the deer problem. There just would be too many deer if some were not killed; many would starve to death. Hungry deer can do terrible damage. Valuable crops would be destroyed if the number of deer was not controlled.

Wisconsin is very aware of the problem of conservation. Deer season there is a means of conservation, which we define as being the *wise use* of resources. It is very carefully regulated so that the deer number is kept at the optimum level. As for that streak of sadism in man that makes him enjoy deerhunting, most of us have a bit of it in us, even if its only outlet is in reading murder mysteries. As for the hard death that the deer die, have you ever seen a goose butchered on a farm? Nature itself is a bit inhumane sometimes.

MARY STIMERS.

LaPorte, Ind.

## DEBUNKING DE BULL

I HAVE JUST READ Cleveland Amory's column on bullfighting. It's not only the horses that are blindfolded—it's all those normal persons who have deluded themselves into thinking they like bullfighting.

Four years ago in Barcelona my husband and I went with an English friend to a bullfight. Curiosity dragged me there, for I knew I should dislike it. I was not prepared to be so utterly sickened and saddened as I was. I had been born and reared on a ranch in Montana and until my late teens was accustomed to see a great many terrible things happen to animals—accidents, illness, and violent death, but never, never wanton cruelty. Our friend, an English country gentleman, sat with bowed head after the first bull went down. The thing that stuck most in my mind and something that for a long time I could not speak of or recall without a stab of pain was the look in the eyes of the first bull when he was let through the gates. His eyes were not red and wild; they were gentle and expectant as if he had been let out among friends. Fifteen minutes later his tail was hacked from his body, a rope was quickly attached to his horns, and behind a galloping horse he was dragged from the ring. After the third bull we could take no more. It took courage to get up and pardon our way out through abusive comments and laughter. Just outside my husband handed three, still-good tickets to a wistful idler who probably never had had the price of a seat in the *torrero*. His stupefied stare after



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"And see that this gargoyle is replaced immediately!"

us was the only funny thing in a ghasty afternoon. Someone said to me as we went by, in a soft taunting voice, "No gusto?" Now I know very little Spanish; my reply must have been instinct born of loathing. "No me gusto!" said I in a loud, clear voice and I say it again, "No me gusto."

MRS. C. E. SUNDERLIN.

Washington, D.C.

## BRAVE BULLY BOYS

CONGRATULATIONS on Cleveland Amory's column. He gave the bull-throwing crowd a well-deserved blast. I have been doing it, in a small way, for some time and so I feel that I should tell him that this is not going to make him popular. As a member of the staff of Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, I opposed the purchase of that wretched book "Matador." The female members of the book committee hooted at my objections and the book was bought. One woman friend of mine, a woman of considerable taste and refinement, stunned me the other day by telling me that she had attended a bullfight this past summer and had enjoyed it. I very quickly, and with some heat, expressed my opinion of bullfights, bullfighters, and persons who attend. She somewhat lamely told me that she thought the men in their tight trousers were "exciting." There you have it. The fact is, there is only one way in which a bullfight would be acceptable. Let a matador enter the ring unattended, and with such natural equipment as the Almighty gave him; that is to say, his bare hands.

I have long been an admirer of John Muir, but I never encountered, so far as I can recall, that fine passage from his

journals with which Amory closed his article. What can the hunters say to it? I am pleased to note each year a marked increase in accidental deaths among those brave fellows. Do they shoot each other?

G. S. WEIGHT (Capt.)

Valley Forge Military Academy.

Wayne, Pa.

## PRO MATADOR

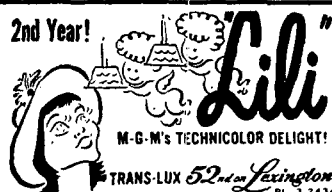
WHILE I WOULD NOT take arms against Cleveland Amory for his quips about bulls, I do believe he should be corrected on a few points. More than two nations practise the art of the *toro*. France (in the south), Portugal, Peru, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, some cities in North Africa, and even on the West Coast in the Portuguese settlements of Canada. I believe you can also find bullfighting in several other South American nations. I don't understand what Amory means when he implies it is smart to be an *aficionado*. Some people like red ties, others blue and green. Isn't that what makes this little ol' world go round?

Another point: No woman has ever become a matador! Much less American women. The closest Ava Gardner got to a bull was in a first *barrera* or on the arm of Luis Miguel Dominguin. Only one American became a matador. His name was Sidney Franklin and it took him over twenty-five years to do it! Bette Ford did have a few fights early this year, killing her first animals at that time, but she is not a matador. As far as Pat McCormick is concerned, she started about two years ago under the egis of one Alejandro del Herro, a second-rate *banderillero*.

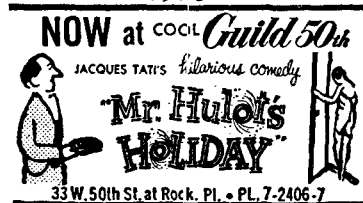
J. L. HARRISON.

Beverly Hills, Calif.

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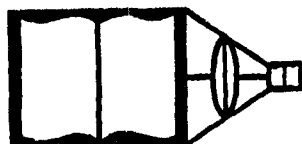
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## BROADWAY POSTSCRIPT

### Hope Springs Internal

**D**ONALD WETZEL'S short novel "A Wreath and a Curse" would not seem a likely prospect for stage adaptation. It is a pale, internal story told in the first person by a young man named Don who has been crippled in a college dormitory fire. Deprived of a normal future, Don gains a special reflective view of life around him. He watches his family as they live under the threat of having their house washed away unless they build a wall to prevent the river from undermining it. There is his father, who becomes obsessed with doing small things such as electrocuting his neighbor's chickens or writing his Congressman rather than comprehending the true situation; his mother, who uses God as an excuse for inaction; his sister, Ruth, so concerned with her own prettiness that she has lost all capacity to understand anyone else; and his sister's husband, Harry, who drowns out the real world in the noise of his machine shop. There is also Willie, a ten-year-old kid brother still blessed with his youth's vision, who is freshly sensitive to the realities of the world around him, particularly the river's erosion, and who attempts to build a wall. The novel ends in despair and tragedy; the house is destroyed, Willie drowned, and Ruth miscarries when she falls downstairs trying to salvage an armful of dresses.

Certainly the struggle between man and the river—the book's most dramatic element—is difficult to present on the stage. What can be shown is the less dramatic comparison between the sensitivities of the older members of the family and young Willie.

But Robert Anderson (before writing "Tea and Sympathy") found a great deal of himself in the novel, and courageously adapted it into a play entitled "All Summer Long." Choosing the path of interior drama, he made it the story of an older boy who begins a summer of teaching his young brother, and ends up learning from him. What he learns is that instead of criticizing others he should have swallowed his pride, taken a mechanical job, and put his salary towards the building of a cement wall. This is an alternative not offered to Don in the novel. Mr. Anderson has softened the tragic ending to permit Willie and Ruth to come through the flood unscathed. He has rounded the characters by giving each a claim for sympathy absent in the book.

Moreover, Mr. Anderson has

strengthened the wider implications of the play for a civilization preoccupied with a number of insignificant things while the threat of total destruction comes closer. After praising Willie for having done his utmost to fend off disaster—even though he knew it probably wouldn't work—Don says, "But you remember that even if we try in different ways to ignore it, to bury our heads in books, or chickens, or God, or motors, or just being beautiful, when the time comes and the river rises we will still feel the trembling of the earth beneath us, and we will be afraid."

To aid the author, Jo Mielziner has designed a poetic set with a river that changes from a silver-blue to lavender, from reddish-bronze to gold. Between each of the nine scenes he subtly reminds the audience of the water's imminent victory by projecting the rippling surface of the river against a full curtain. Albert Hague's background music is equally poetic and helpful. Under Alan Schneider's thoughtful direction, the acting is extremely true. Every character is completely involved in whatever is going on and there are no false notes. John Kerr as Don, Clay Hall as Willie, and Ed Begley, June Walker, John Randolph, and Carroll Baker in the other roles all give such authentic and internal portrayals that there is little showy enough to arouse individual comment. These performances faintly touch rather than stimulate or excite.

"All Summer Long" sacrifices impact for being as lifeless as life itself. Little that happens urgently commands our minds or our attention. Maybe that is its point. Maybe it challenges us to ignore it as Willie's parents did him. It is poetry without "poetry," acting without "acting," and drama without "drama." Certainly, for a play so short on vitality, "All Summer" is too long. But it is impossible to see it without gaining an increased respect for everyone responsible for its making.

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The problems of home preservation are also the subject of Walter Macken's "Home Is the Hero." While the title might seem to be a poetic way of announcing the return of the play's leading character, it actually is a simple declarative statement to the effect that a home is more important than any individual in it.

This theme is borne out by a poor