

School for Grown-Ups

THERE are two reasons why we hope our readers will examine very closely what H. C. D. Somerset has to say in this issue about Community Centres. One reason is Mr. Somerset himself, who is increasingly our foremost rural philosopher. The other is the number of people who confuse Community Centres with Civic. A Civic Centre is a convenience—a grouping of administrative offices in or about a central site for economy and efficiency. It may also of course be an architectural adornment, and would be this invariably if all citizens had good taste; but whether it is or is not something that adds dignity to a city, it has almost nothing to do with the development that we asked Mr. Somerset to discuss with our readers. Community Centre may be an unfortunate name. It certainly leaves a little more to the imagination than will be filled in accurately by those who know nothing in advance. But most names do that. University is a fairly precise name to those who have attended lectures, but it means very little to those whose education ends in Standard VI. and far too much to those who think they are educated when they graduate. It is important to get the significance of Mr. Somerset's remark that he went to Feilding to provide further education for those who want it and can take it. A Community Centre is therefore a place where the community further educates itself. It may or may not become in another centre the same thing externally as Feilding now has, but it will be the same thing essentially: a place where education continues. Under Mr. Somerset it will tend to continue in a particular direction. His roads end, or are always likely to end, in closer fellowship and co-operation. Under leaders of different types there could be developments in different directions, but all would have this in common, that they would lead men and women along a continuous pathway of learning—helping them forward when they wanted to go, and round the corners when they felt ready to turn them.

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

VISITORS AND OURSELVES

Sir,—I am a regular reader of *The Listener* and enjoy every issue. I must, however, say how sorry I was to read your comments at the foot of "British Visitor's" letter in the April 5 issue. Such comments ill-become an Editor and considerably lower the tone of the magazine. Surely you can disagree with a correspondent without telling him he is foolish and ill-mannered. Even though you and I disagree with "British Visitor," we have to admit that thousands of New Zealanders agree with him regarding the broadcasting of Parliamentary debates. You owe "British Visitor" an apology.

D. P. GREEN, B.A. (Auckland).

Sir,—I read with interest the letter of "British Visitor" in this week's *Listener* asking that the BBC "Brains Trust" be restored to the programme, and I noted your retort, which to me sounded childish and petulant. Whether or not the Brains Trust had finally disappeared from the programme I don't know, and I don't agree with "British Visitor" that the substitutes provided by the NBS are poor ones. I do however support "British Visitor" and others of like mind in asking that the Brains Trust be restored as soon as possible.

I think the feature is an excellent one, and to my mind we need more of this kind of thing. There is plenty of both wit and humour, and it is interesting to hear the views of people who are well known, and, some of them, famous. Finally, it is at times an instruction in English diction and pronunciation. Aren't we New Zealanders big enough to learn?

"MORE IMPUDENCE" (Wellington).

Sir,—I applaud your reply to "British Visitor," Havelock North, who reveals not only impudence but ignorance. The people of all nations have different methods of expression, whatever their language.

Let "British Visitor" remember that those whose speech is described as brawlings have been the instigators of what has been termed "advanced and humane legislation" by as recent visitors to our shores as Brendan Bracken and Mrs. Roosevelt, to name two only.

P. M. CURRIE (Christchurch).

Sir,—Your notes on correspondence are usually welcome for their urbanity and good-temper. The acerbity of the editorial snub to "British Visitor" is therefore surprising. Is it impertinent to remark that there are "brawlings" in the House of Representatives? I've heard many fellow-New Zealanders use this and much more abusive epithets to describe the manners of our M.P.'s in conclave. As for the Brains Trust, "British Visitor" has missed its truncated appearances in Dunedin and to this extent is at fault. But must he be so stuffily chidden for overlooking a detail in a programme he probably cannot hear successfully in Havelock North? His comments on this admirable half-hour are, in the opinion of many listeners, exceedingly just. You call him, Sir, a guest in this country. Presumably, in common with other visitors, he is a paying guest. Surely he is at liberty to

criticise the management. I find his manners at least as good as those of your rejoinder.

E. N. MARSH (Christchurch).

Sir,—I would point out that "British Visitor" is not alone in his contention that "brawlings" should not be broadcast. He has had the courage of his convictions to respectfully express his opinion through the official organ of our National Broadcasting Service and by doing so has expressed the opinion of very, very many New Zealanders and visitors other than himself to these shores. It is astonishing that his opinion was replied to by you with the assertions that he had committed a "folly," that he was "ill-mannered," that he had committed an "impudence" and that he was not at liberty to "insult" the legislature. Whilst as a matter of fact his remarks were made in a most moderate vein, it is very much to be regretted that you considered yourself free to reply in the astonishing manner which you adopted. The usual courtesy of the Press was far from apparent.

MARK LEVY (Wellington).

MORE EAVESDROPPING

Sir,—Though the following partakes also of "Kid Cracks," perhaps your excellent Eavesdropping contributor E.H.W. would like to add the middle of it to his valuable pieces of choice remarks from parent to child:—

Scottish child: "Mither, look; a dug."

Parent: "Not a dug, Willie; a dawg."

Child: "Weel, Mither, it's awfu' like a dug."

(Loc.: Kirkcaldy tram, Scotland.)

I am tempted to tell him of the woman heard saying that when she was very sick she put on "hot vomitations," but remembering Polonius re soul of wit, I am

E. DOUGLAS PULLON (Christchurch)

HOW ARE YOU KEEPING?

Sir,—In a recent issue a correspondent, "Seventy," expressed dissatisfaction at the query "How are you keeping?" Several people have complained to me about the same expression, and I have endeavoured to sooth them by pointing out that it was merely an old-fashioned use of the word "keep" in accord with its early meaning of to live or dwell. Students at Cambridge still ask each other "Where do you keep?" meaning "Where do you live," and old border castles, on the further side of the Tweed, at least, are still called "keeps," or were when I was young.

"DUNDAS" (Auckland).

POINTS FROM LETTERS

"Onward, N.Z." (Wellington) thinks that there is much local talent in New Zealand that is not fully used. She also asks why the artists in NBS productions are not named and "made more of."

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

Alexander B. Scott (Osborne): Too long. Also you cannot tell a contributor that he is not speaking the truth.

Murdoch B. Riley (Nelson): Thank you. Our misprint.