

AUGUST 4, 1944

The Day

THIRTY years ago The Day was *der Tag*—the day on which Britain would go down to Germany. Now it is the day (we hope) on which the menace of Germany will be ended for ever. And we believe that it is near; perhaps very near; a date in this year's calendar. It may be dangerous to be so hopeful, but it is a risk that most of us are taking. The question is: Are we risking anything else? Have we prepared ourselves for the day when the earth and the sky and the sea will become suddenly silent; when millions of men and women will be asking where they go next; when tensions ease and disciplines slacken; when servants will be riding on horses and princes walking in the streets; when doors are shut in factories and the sounds of grinding cease; when no one will want guns or bombs or land mines or depth charges; when some of us will be too weary to think and some too frightened to change our clothes and our jobs? It is not to be expected that peace, when it comes, will see even the victors go delirious with joy—unless perhaps in Russia, where it will be easier to rejoice than anywhere else because it will be clearer what peace means. In most countries, including Britain and the United States, one cloud will go and another descend—less terrifying, of course, but real enough to moderate the sunlight. It will not be just a case of coming into port after stormy seas. The port will be entered; it is now in sight; but showers and gusts of wind will follow, too. For we are wiser and sadder and more realistic than we were twenty-five years ago; not too sad to rejoice when the time comes, but not foolish enough to think that we can then eat our bread and drink our wine as if Providence had already finished with us. When Providence has finished with us we are dead; but if we want Providence to stay on our side during the next twenty-five years we have things to do that will tax all our wisdom and all our courage and our strength—and it is time to begin thinking about them.

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

NEW ZEALAND SPEECH

Sir,—The discussion on pronunciation began with a letter in your columns from an ardent Little New Zealander signing himself "J.L." It was in the best bantam-cock style. He objected to any attempt to correct mispronunciations which tend to make our speech a dialect. He was proud of his New Zealand-ese. A pretty name for a pretty dialect!

I think that it is a serious mistake to encourage local shibboleths and differences within our community of English-speaking nations. The only result will be to encourage petty national conceit and parochialism which might end in dividing the Empire into a number of hostile and suspicious units with a core of jealousy and bad-feeling. If that comes, our Empire will be as transitory as the Greek Maritime Empire, which soon dissolved because of the selfish, short-sighted policies of the daughter colonies. Surely this war has taught us that only in unity lies our hope of continued existence and strength.

Then, too, it would be a pity to try to standardise our speech in its present form (if indeed that were possible) when our standard of education and culture lags so far behind our standard of

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material comforts, and so far below what we may hope to attain if we are allowed a long period of peace to cultivate the higher arts of living.

My own pet aversion is the inability of many New Zealanders (and most NBS announcers) to pronounce the sound "oo" in words like two, improved, typhoon, and so on. Why must it always be "ee-oo." It is a curious defect—I think really of Cockney derivation—you might hear it in the Old Kent Road. And yet woe betide the unwary newcomer who calls a tul a TEEOOEY!

In conclusion, why is it that nearly all Maoris speak much better and more melodious English than their Pakeha fellow-countrymen?—K. E. CROMPTON, M.B. (Havelock North).

"TENDER COMRADE"

Sir,—Who but a Tender Comrade of hoarders, coupon scroungers, squander-bugs, etc., would lament the patriotism of the above film?

GINGER (Auckland).

(Who did?—Ed.).

"UP A TREE"

Sir,—Your interesting and entertaining article "Up a Tree" in a recent issue contains evidence of a wrong impression that is common even amongst orchardists. I am an orchardist of nearly 30 years' standing, and during the whole of these years have freely advertised and sold my apples and pears as well as other fruits direct to consumers. Since the I.M.D. began (at the urgent request of an overwhelming majority of growers) to handle the sale and distribution of apples and pears, I have been prohibited from selling to shops or any

other reseller, but have a shop at my own gate and freely advertise and sell by mail order all over this island, and at times even to the South Island. The fact is that any orchardist is free to sell at his gate or by mail order, but because some are willing to blackmarket, we are limited to the number of cases that may be sold to one purchaser at one time, and we may not hawk our fruit.—COMMERCIAL FRUIT-GROWER (Hastings).

MODIFIED RADIO PROGRAMMES

Sir,—I was astonished to learn from the papers that the Dominion Federation of School Committees Associations intend to urge upon the Government the "considerable" modification of the evening radio broadcasts in order to make them more suitable for children. I was under the impression that excellent children's sessions were already provided by our various stations, but evidently I am mistaken. Doubtless the federation has in its mind's eye the pleasing picture of happy families—father, mother and the children, down to the toddler sitting round the fire in winter, and the fire screen in summer listening in to the "completely revised" programme! Truly gratifying, but has the federation realised the amount of revision needed to produce a programme really suitable for children? Apart from the "sensational serials," there would have to be a clean sweep of the "Camp Concerts," "Bright Horizon," "The Stage Presents," etc., and most assuredly there would be no "Kapers"—"Krazy" or otherwise—all these being too vulgar for "Johnny and Gladys"! The series talks, Symphonies, and Opus would have to go, and even the "Brains Trust" might have to leave us—and what a loss that would be! These items would prove boring, and our modern child must never be bored.

Surely it would be possible for the anxious parent to send the children out of the room during an unsuitable item, or they might even sacrifice themselves to the extent of turning off the radio. If the federation wants to do a worthwhile job, let it continue to wage war on the abominable pictures often shown at the matinees. After the horrors that children sit through at these programmes the most "sensational serial" over the wireless must strike them as decidedly tame.

This is a conversation I heard between two children emerging from a matinee: "Well, Ivy, how did you like the picture?"

"Oh, it wasn't up to much—there weren't no murders in it!"—LET WELL ALONE (Feilding).

"THAT MAN AGAIN"

Sir,—May I have a little space to express appreciation of the new YA feature "It's That Man Again: The Tommy Handley Half-hour." This is undoubtedly the fastest and brightest session ever to hit New Zealand radio, and I hope we will continue to get it as long as the BBC are transcribing it. Unlike American comedians, Tommy Handley has no long periods to recover his breath and glance over script while the audience breaks into a primitive concert of raucous laughter, whistles,

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