

LISTENER

Incorporating N.Z. RADIO RECORD

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EDITORIAL AND BUSINESS OFFICES:
115 Lambton Quay, Wellington, C.I.
G.P.O. Box 1707.
Wellington, C.I.
Telephone 46-520.
Telegraphic Address: "Listener," Wellington.

A Hundred Days

WE are writing this on D-Day+99. On June 6, British and American troops landed on the beaches of Normandy. To-day, September 14, they are over the German frontier headed irresistibly for Berlin. This does not mean that all the German troops are already out of France. There are still strong detachments in the south-east corner, in Atlantic and Channel ports, in the east and the north-east. But France is free. Frenchmen administer it from Paris, and French troops in increasing numbers are taking over its vital points. Nor has it happened, as the Germans hoped it would and many, even on our own side, feared it might, that the French have proved ungrateful or difficult. There has been no friction that posterity will remember. What will be remembered is the delirious joy of a crushed, half dazed, and wholly bewildered nation restored, almost in the twinkling of an eye, to full liberty and sovereignty again. For whatever was known at Supreme Headquarters, there was neither knowledge nor expectation anywhere else that events would move at such incredible speed. It has been a sensation to their friends all over the world, and to the French people themselves it has been something for which they were not even capable of preparing themselves and now can hardly believe. They do believe, but they are still, like the father of the afflicted child in the Gospels, looking round for support for their faith. They believe, and they are grateful. Let us not forget the moving words of the spokesman of Fighting France in London (quoted on this page) the day Paris was freed.

There will still be stresses and strains. Forty million people do not emerge from years of humiliation and hopelessness without recrimination and bitterness. But the cure for that is time — time and the thought that all the Germans still in France will in a day or two be captured or killed.

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

THE STATUTE OF WESTMINSTER

Sir,—It is to be hoped that the admirable review by Willis Airey of *New Zealand and the Statute of Westminster*, will be very widely read—especially his comments on Professor Leslie Lipson's contribution. That Britain and America "will definitely cling together" is a very dangerous assumption indeed. The War of Independence I have read, is still being fought in every school in the U.S.A. The well-known publicist, J. L. Hodson, wrote from St. Louis, to the *Spectator* (17/3/44) that a soldier said to him: "It begins in our schools. Every year we have the revolution over again—you're the red-coats—King George III. is resurrected—you're the traditional enemy." When he lunched with a group of distinguished business and professional men in Chicago, a banker said: "I hope we are going to co-operate. But you'd be wise to regard us as a

bog, a glimmer of the lucidous is apt to lead the fancy into an indelicacy, I feel some honest pride in remembering that the reproach of impurity has never been cast upon me by my judges. It has not been my delight to exhibit the muse high-kilted." If ever Hood admitted temptation, we can perhaps afford to be lenient with an occasional lapse.

As to boredom in features like "The Brains Trust," here again "Let Well Alone" has the support of the children: my nine-year-old son adored the only session of "The Brains Trust" he was privileged to hear, while I recently heard a senior secondary school child refer to it as "childish" or "weak." As regards classical music, my six-year-old son home from school for the day tuned into a programme of classical music followed by semi-classical. After 45 minutes he came in great distress because he was enjoying the music, but it wouldn't stop, and "he wanted to go outside and play." He wanted to know why it was different: he hadn't had to turn the noise off once.

What parents object to is that all the programmes they regard as suitable take place after eight o'clock, while the earlier part of the evening is either taken up with serials or talks which have no interest for a child. My children seldom hear the children's sessions for the simple reason that they are either at school or outside enjoying the last of the daylight. I am looking forward to the time when I can get my grandchildren up in the early morning by calling "Get up quickly! There's an 'Arthur Askey' on," or "If you don't get up at once you'll miss 'Wild Life.'"

"AN ADULT" (Dunedin).

GOBBLEDEGOOK

Sir,—Some of your readers may be interested in this Leader Note I saw recently in the *Manchester Guardian*.

NO JARGON (Wellington).

[We hope they all will be. Here is the quotation.—Ed.: Mr. Maury Maverick, chairman of the United States Smaller War Plants Corporation, is a man deserving of praise. He has just been denouncing long memoranda and what he calls "gobbledegook language." He has told his subordinates that "anyone using the words 'activation' or 'implementation' will be shot." He does not like "patterns," "effectuating," "dynamics," and he begs that he should not hear any more about "pointing up" programmes and "finalising" contracts that "stem from" district, regional, or Washington "levels." Not all these have yet taken hold among us but, given time, they will. And the others we know too well. Is there anyone in our own civil service, temporary or permanent, who will follow Maverick? It is one thing to plead with the Prime Minister for simple English; it is another to expose the offending words. For the sad thing is that many of those with most love for the horrid jargon of war government really think that they are writing simply.]

POETRY PUZZLE

Sir,—F.S. has not only amused himself with his "Poetry Puzzle." His "few wisecracks and groundlings" had some excuse for being disconcerted. His puzzle is not so very puzzling, and perhaps justifies more or less the opinion of Auden's work given in *The Long Week-end* (Graves and Hodge) that "Auden was a synthetic writer and perhaps never wrote an original line." This "new poetry" is no longer very new, and I, and I think many others, too, fail to find that it is poetry. An example I came across lately in "Introduction to Poetry" had but one intelligible line: "a black goat wandered lookingly." Interesting perhaps... for the goat.—P. R. Mills (Eli Bay).

FRANCE REMEMBERS

"On the day which sees the liberation of Paris at the moment when the liberation of the whole of France and then of Europe is near, our thoughts go back to the country and to the men without whose tenacity and heroism there would be no possibility of liberation for France or for Europe or, perhaps, for the world. It was neither at El Alamein nor at Stalingrad that there began the series of victories of which we see to-day the wonderful results. No Frenchman will ever forget that it all began with the Battle of Britain. Without that battle, fought over the skies of England just four years ago, there would have been no battle fought yesterday outside Sainte Chapelle."—M. René Massigli, French National Commissioner for Foreign Affairs.

question mark—you can't count on us." Hodson adds: "I think he spoke the mind of the rest to a considerable degree."

The astonished indignation of Wendell Willkie—firm co-operator in fighting the Germans—at the "world-shaking" statement of Mr. Churchill, that he did not propose to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire, might well give pause even to so cheery an optimism as Professor Lipson's.

F.A.C. (Mapua).

AN AUTHOR'S ROYALTIES

Sir,—J.T. and X.Y.Z. have both missed my point about the royalties on D. Sayers' religious plays. Twelve plays broadcast in every Christian country must net a fortune, yet a truly sincere Christian must surely find it difficult to use this for personal use. Dramatising the Gospel is not new, but making a private fortune out of it would be. If D. Sayers is sincere, she is not "fighting for the recognition of her work" but of Christ's, so again I ask what does she do with the royalties?—K. ANNABELL (Upper Waiotara).

CHILDREN'S SESSIONS

Sir,—Your correspondent, "Let Well Alone" fears that radio programmes are going to be ruined if modified for children. Perhaps I can allay that fear by assuring her that her taste in programmes probably coincides with that of most intelligent children, and that most parents, though perhaps regretting, would not ban a comedy programme because of an occasional lapse from the decorous. Hood writes somewhere: "In a species of composition where, like the *ignis fatuus* that guides into a