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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.

Lloyd George

THE death of Lloyd George—it would be unreal to say "Lord"—removed the last of the great leaders of the last war. It is a temptation to say that it ended an era; but the era came to an end before the outbreak of the present war, and Lloyd George himself had ceased for some years to pay a central part in world politics. But he had not ceased to be a great name. Once or twice after the fall of his Government in 1922 he seemed like going into eclipse altogether, and once or twice like coming back as the leader of the progressives; but neither one thing nor the other actually happened. He remained in the House until his acceptance of an earldom a few months ago, but he never saw a revived Liberal Party, and the nation never saw him as the creator or leader of any kind of Popular Front. It saw him gradually draw aloof from party politics, and gradually recover the respect and admiration of Parliament and the country, but as an Elder Statesman. It is doubtful if he ever had the affection of the country, and certain that he never recovered his power to beguile and thrill either the Commons or the people; but if he lost his magic he remained an influence, and outlived everybody of comparable fame. If he did not outlive his reputation for "smartness" he almost did, and it has never been denied that he made a magnificent use of the opportunity he gave himself when he displaced Asquith. He was of course always tough; tough and resilient. For a man so brilliant he was also surprisingly and safely insensitive, or he would not have come through so many trials untouched; especially the last misery that came on him at 77, when Hitler made him look completely foolish and impotent. But he survived that too, retained his serenity and his dignity, and lived to see a new world taking shape that will bear the firm mark of his hand.

NEW ZEALAND LISTENER, APRIL 6

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS**WET WEEK-ENDS**

Sir,—There must be "a nigger in the woodpile somewhere" causing all the wet week-ends mentioned in *The Listener*.

Are you sure the war in some way is not to blame, or is it that the meteor-what's-its-name is far too liberal with the rain at week-ends? I am glad to say we have our local weather-man trained somewhat and so have more wet nights than wet days, which is very handy.

However, something ought to be done about so many wet week-ends throughout the country. As we have already mixed our days and nights up into a system that our grandparents would not be able to recognise, and having given ourselves Sidey time, summer time, winter time, full time, half time, overtime, overtime and a-half, double overtime, wet time, full days, half days, late nights, long nights, short nights, Saturdays off, Sundays on, Sundays off and so on, surely we may give ourselves fine week-ends!

It's not a new thing to move days about, for instance, New Year's Day was moved out of March to its present place, and once 11 whole days and nights were dropped out of the year altogether, so why should we keep to wet Saturdays and Sundays and that Monday-morning-feeling that follows them? I suggest we move the week-ends into the middle of the week and so do away with all wet week-ends for ever!

PROGRESS (Kaitiaki).

RACE BROADCASTS

Sir,—Intelligent persons realise that "almost hourly records of stale news" as "Backfire" calls them, are necessary because we do not all work the same hours. Not having a radio in the cowshed, the 8.45 a.m. news is the first I can hear, and although it may be a repetition of earlier broadcasts, it is not stale to me.

It is nice to know that "we got through the last war quite well without news broadcasts"—also race broadcasts I would remind "Backfire"—but a million of the flower of manhood did not "get through the last war" at all, and millions more will not get through this one. What of the next 25 years?

I say definitely that as long as the people of the United Nations consider sport of more importance than world affairs, we shall have recurring wars.

C. P. MORCOM (Tokoroa).

"PRIDE AND PREJUDICE"

Sir,—It is a pleasure, in place of voicing a complaint, to state how much my family, many friends and myself have enjoyed listening to *Pride and Prejudice* from 2YH during a number of weeks. We heard with regret that the last number has been reached. I hope that this really excellent adaptation will be broadcast by another station.

J. BLAIR (Gisborne).

THE FRENCH AT AKAROA

Sir,—If "Marguerite" wishes to know the full story of the Nanto-Bordelaise Company and the French Settlement, she should read *The French at Akaroa*, by T. Lindsay Buick. It is a most interesting book and the result of intensive research. British sovereignty over the South Island was proclaimed at Cloudy Bay in June, 1840, two months before the arrival of the French settlers. There was therefore no need for a race between the Aube and the Britomart. It is safe to assume that Captain Lavaud, of

the Aube, was told by Captain Hobson at the Bay of Islands that France had no hope of acquiring a new colony, and that the Britomart was sent to Akaroa only to assert British authority. A comparison of the voyages of the two ships will show that Captain Lavaud, if he had wished, could have arrived in Akaroa before the Britomart. He chose to wait, and to allow the British magistrates to raise the flag at Akaroa before he entered the harbour.

Captain Lavaud was in a most difficult position. He was now thrown on his own responsibility until he could receive fresh orders from France. He must tread most delicately in order not to come into conflict with the British, and, perhaps for this reason, and perhaps in order to avoid trouble among the French while he was waiting for his instructions, he kept the settlers in ignorance of the fact that they were not on French soil, nor were they aware of this until three years later.

RUTH FRANCE (Lyttelton).

STUDIO BAND CONCERTS

Sir,—I have to compliment the National Broadcasting Service on broadcasting the number of Studio concerts by the Woolston Brass Band and the Christchurch Municipal Band from Station 3YA; and the St. Kilda Band and the Dunedin Highland Pipe Band which was heard recently from 4YA.

An objection I have to raise is that these programmes (the best put over the air in the way of good music on many occasions) are usually interrupted by some 15 minute programme such as the one from 3YA at 8.45 p.m. on Monday nights.

Surely when we get so little real good music these short intervals of ten minutes and longer could be eliminated.

I agree that a record as a three minute interval in these programmes I refer to is acceptable. I think many listeners will support my objection.

LISTENER (Timaru).

BREAD STANDARDS

Sir,—I was glad to read Dr. Muriel Bell's clear explanation of the bread standards published in a recent *Listener*. The regulations in themselves seem excellent, but in practice they are still working out very poorly for the housewife, because the average shopkeeper and baker's roundsman has no idea of the weight or composition of the various loaves he handles. I studied the regulations a year ago, and put in a standing order for the 2lb. wholemeal loaf. It took me four weeks of strenuous argument to have the first one delivered, and over the past year I have had it delivered only about half as often as I have ordered it. We frequently have a new roundsman, and each one in turn denies the existence of such a loaf; the battle begins afresh with every change, and the 6d I leave in a box at the gate for my ordered 2lb. wholemeal is often taken in exchange for a Vienna loaf weighing only 1½lbs. Few roundsmen or shopkeepers seem to know which loaf is "brown," i.e., 60 per cent. wholemeal, and which 90 per cent. and 100 per cent. wholemeal. The firm that serves me, one of the largest in Auckland, makes only one type of full-weight 2lb. wholemeal loaf, and this is definitely inferior in quality to every other type of loaf it bakes. It is often so badly shaped and

cooked that it cannot be used for cut lunches. Besides these troubles there is a chronic and widespread shortage of wholemeal bread and rolls, compared with white, and for this I have never heard any reasonable explanation. There are still many practical difficulties to be overcome before the housewife can buy satisfactory wholemeal bread in Auckland as easily and as cheaply and as regularly as she can buy white bread.

WHOLEMEAL (Auckland).

BEFORE OR AFTER?

Sir,—May I endorse the suggestion of J. Arnold, of Nelson, that the titles of recordings, particularly of classical items, be regularly instead of occasionally broadcast at the conclusion of each work? But, please, may it be as well as, and not at the expense of, a preliminary statement. It is tantalising enough to be left wondering, if one has been unfortunate in missing the opening announcement, but how much more so if, having tuned in in time for the complete performance, one has to wait until the end before being enlightened—quite apart from the fact that one could not derive the same intelligent pleasure and satisfaction from the work. Reference to the programmes in each current edition of *The Listener* is very helpful, but printed space will seemingly not allow of detail sufficient even to give titles and names of performers to every record or studio performance, apart from the possibility of last-minute changes in the advertised broadcasts. So that if time permits the announcers to carry out the "before and after" suggestion, it would probably be appreciated by many listeners.

A.M.H.S. (Lower Hutt).

THE NEW ZEALAND SHORT STORY

Sir,—T. V. Hindmarsh's letter met with my whole-hearted approbation. I, too, had always thought a plot a definite necessity in a short story. In fact, in my opinion, the plot's the thing—though of course one needs to be able to present the plot in a polished style, and round it off properly. However, I would prefer the plot to the style, if one had to be missing.

Contrary to some heavy readers, I enjoy short stories and have read a great many, both good and bad. Sometimes, after having read one, I have sat back and thought, "If only I could write like that! If only I could think of a marvellous plot like that, present it like that, and so hold my reader's interest to the very end!" and then sighed, knowing I could not.

But I have never felt like that about the stuff T. V. Hindmarsh criticises. I usually wade through it ("wade" is the word) thinking, "Well, there must be something more in this further on, or it would never have been printed," and at the finish said to myself in amazement, "Well, how *did* it get printed? Is that person a personal friend of the Editor so that he did not like to turn him down, or what?"

The only point at which I differ from the previous writer is that I think that even the literary style he mentions is not always sufficiently polished to justify publication! — "SHORT STORY READER" (Taranaki).

CORRECTION.

The misplacing of one letter and of the signature to another created some confusion on this page last week. The fourth letter in our first column should have been the first letter in our last column, and the signature "Raconteur" (Wellington), should have followed the letter immediately preceding this.