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Anzac Day

THE thirtieth anniversary of the Anzac landing raised more questions than we can answer in three or four hundred words. We risk absurdity by looking at two or three. One of them many people have already answered, and answered wrongly: Should there ever have been a landing? History we think will say yes. The mistakes and failures of the succeeding weeks—indecision in the field and in London—brought the expedition to complete disaster; but Gallipoli was never a gamble with lives. It was a boldly conceived and carefully drafted plan, and one important factor in the failure was an excessive regard for lives—Britain's traditional lack of ruthlessness in driving through obstacles. Nor is a negative answer the right one to the other obvious question: Was the war itself worth while? It does not often happen that nations have a clear choice in such matters: but even if it had been possible for Britain to pause and ask in 1914 whether four years of war would be worth while, it is a shallow and short-sighted view that the answer would have been a clear No. It is just as certain that the 1914-1918 struggle was the beginning of the end of all wars as it is that Germany's two defeats are the beginning of the end of the desire for conquest. No one is wise enough to say when the end of such things will come, but it requires no great wisdom to see that it is coming and is indeed well on the way. The cost of Anzac was heavy—very heavy by the standards of the present war. Those who paid (as victims and as relatives) might not have paid so readily if they had been able to see 30 years ahead; but they might if they had been able to see twice or thrice 30. Anzac Day, therefore, can be a mockery and it can be a sign. It is a mockery if we have become the whited sepulchres of the faith that gave it to us; a sign if we still believe.

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

NEW ZEALAND COMPOSERS.

Sir,—What is radio in New Zealand doing for the New Zealand composer? New Zealand dance bands and soloists play and sing only songs plugged by films and people like Bing Crosby, Dinah Shore, Vera Lynn, and the rest. There are many New Zealanders who consider that they can write songs as good as many that are published in America or England, but no publisher will touch our songs because they haven't had radio backing. Here is a sample rejection note from a New Zealand publishing firm:

"I might tell you that we were very impressed with this number . . . which is considerably better in every way than many big song hits, but because it is not featured in a talkie or sung by Bing Crosby or someone like that, it is very hard to find a demand here; . . . very few numbers that are composed in New Zealand, without overseas background and without overseas featuring, have any chance of being successful sellers on this market, etc., etc."

The policy of New Zealand radio is to foster home talent. This is being done for singers and instrumentalists, as well as for actors and playwrights. But is anything being done to foster song-writing? We have no films or big radio stars of our own and the music publishers will not consider printing a song that hasn't a big name tagged on to it. Will New Zealand radio help? I know that many New Zealand-composed songs are too terrible, but there are many that would be hits if we could get them heard on the radio. Surely this is a branch of radio that could be exploited. Wherever my songs have been played and sung they have made an instant appeal and people say: "It will be a hit." This is encouraging, but it doesn't get the songs published. With radio backing there would be a chance. Is there any help for us?

"AMBITIOUS" (Wanganui).

[The Broadcasting Service gives the most careful consideration to any compositions submitted by New Zealand composers. If any of these are reasonably near broadcasting standard broadcasts are arranged after an agreement has been reached with the composers as to the fees to be paid by the Service for the broadcasting rights.]

SUNDAY LEISURE.

Sir,—It is about time we faced up to the question of Sunday leisure. Your correspondent makes a plea for the Continental type of Sunday and I can see no objection to it.

For the great mass of people, Sunday as a weekly commemoration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and the subsequent reverence of that day as a holy day has no meaning; it is a holiday which is placarded with restrictions. I for one would welcome the opening up of Sunday as a day of recreation and amusement and I would hope that many who are now indifferent might thereby be drawn to keep the day quietly, and that they might even find their way back to church to get away from the hum-drum of continual pleasure-seeking.

If there is any truth in the Christian Gospel it will hold its own in any kind of society. Compulsory closing of places of amusement on Sunday is in the same category as compulsory church parades in the army, and every returned man will know how much good they did. If there is no truth it will disappear.

The judgment of Gamaliel is applicable.

Let all places of amusement be open on Sundays and let the times of these amusements be the same as church time. If the competition of the "world" is too great for the Church, then let her close down as an ineffective and useless instrument. If, on the other hand, the Church believes that the "gates of hell shall not prevail," then let her face competition in that assurance.

The Church is a spoilt child, and it is time she had a good spanking and that she should take her place in the world, proclaiming the Gospel with cheerfulness, not sulking because some will not play. She need have no fear that in a busy world there will be some who have ears to hear.—(REV.) KENNETH LIGGETT (Opoitiki).

V DAY SUGGESTION.

Sir,—How would it do for each station in each centre at a specified hour to broadcast a similar programme of appropriate items—say, the National Anthems and National Music of the Allied Countries, when all licensees of radios and those possessing loud speakers would be requested to adjust their instruments full blast or double forte and to open their windows to create a national link up to give the effect on the streets of a universal rejoicing. CORRIE A. McLAREN (Christchurch).

"CHORUS GENTLEMEN."

Sir,—May an old music-teacher say what a pleasure it is to have "Chorus Gentleman" back on the air. Their voices blend so well and their work is so artistic and so much better than most studio offerings that we have missed them. How grateful we are, too, that 12M has returned to the type of programme that made it our favourite station. But must we suffer longer from the performances of the "Programme Announcer" with his tedious tinkling of his ridiculous property telephone.—VICTORIAN L.R.A.M., A.R.C.M. (Mapua)

NEW ZEALAND CALLING.

Sir,—Your correspondent Jessie Harrison says her son in the Pacific praises the programmes sent out there from New Zealand. He is quoted as saying among other flattering things, that ". . . the New Zealand production was super. . . Even the sound of Aunt Daisy was welcome. . . Somebody is certainly deserving of thanks."

Now by way of a contrast, and just to show how tastes differ, read what my son says, in a letter just received:—

"The NBS has prepared ready-made programmes, and, pardon my French, they stink! Imagine feeding men whose whole existence revolves round a radio and a handle of cold beer—just imagine giving us Aunt Daisy!! telling us that she loves us, and then giving us a recipe in which a kiss, a hug, and a lot of sympathy make a good wife! . . . Not a sound of any of the fine New Zealand and British bands which are what we want to hear. . . These programmes present New Zealand to thousands of Americans, and I'm almost ashamed to be an Enzedder."

Well, there you are, Mr. Editor—so many programmes, so many opinions. My son's opinions are somewhat lurid, but he says his unit is of the same mind. As an ex-serviceman of the last war I can at least sympathise with what

he says about Aunt Daisy's recipes for "love at home." Men serving overseas away from wife and family, don't like to listen to a lot of artificially sentimental tosh about home and hugs and kisses. A.S. (Wellington).

BAGPIPE MUSIC.

Sir,—Allow me to congratulate the different stations on their attempt to introduce more bagpipe music. Different New Zealand bands have proved themselves to have plenty of ability and I feel it is the hope of many that the recent broadcasts were not flashes in the pan. But when allowance is made for the scarcity of records and the fact that those who compile recorded programmes may not be well versed in pipe music, there could be a vast improvement in the selections. It is a common thing for "Cock o' the North," "Hundred Pipers," and "Bonnie Dundee" to be heard time after time, while other tunes must still be in the library.

The main fault I find is the broadcasting of records by the Boston Caledonian Pipe Band. I have not heard any small band in New Zealand do so badly. The tone is poor; the band is not tuned; technique is almost non-existent.

Pipe music has always been popular in New Zealand. This is borne out by the fact that larger crowds of people are attracted to Pipe Band contests than to Brass Band contests—and that in our so English city of Christchurch.

The broadcasting of music by such a hack band is neither fair to our local bands nor a tribute to the compilers of programmes. — CAMPBELL MCKINNEY (Orangapai).

VISION AND TELEVISION.

Sir,—It is interesting to recollect that one of the first television performers (the "make-up" was a performance in itself) in London was a Christchurch pianist (later vocalist) Gladys Lorimer. In an island home perhaps it will benefit us considerably in getting a glimpse of visitors arriving by submarine, plane, and the usual ocean liner and more unusual rocket. Meanwhile could we have a breakfast session at the aerodromes and other sessions at various points of call whereby some travellers could give three to five-minute talks on their own subject? It would entertain those at the microphone as well as the listeners. — CORRIE A. McLAREN (Christchurch).

DAD AND DAVE.

Sir,—How long will the interminable story of "Dad and Dave" continue? It is some years since I unintentionally switched on to 3YA when one of the episodes was being given. Since then I have occasionally heard the dreadful voices of the illiterate poet and the "adenoid" girl, whose vocal chords seem to have been strained in early childhood. But the point is not how long have they been going on, but rather how long will they continue? It would be some comfort to know that in 1948 this particular serial will have ended. It seems strange that educated men such as the Director of Broadcasting and his advisers should continue to insult the intelligence of listeners with the undiluted rubbish that comes over the air in serials of the "Dad and Dave" type. FED-UP (Waimate).

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.
Marquette thanks Ruth France for the information given in her letter in *The Listener* of April 9-15.