

LISTENER

Incorporating N.Z. RADIO RECORD

Every Friday . . . Price Threepence

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Day of Wrath

ALTHOUGH it is certain as we write that Mussolini is dead, it is still not certain that Hitler is. Nor do we know what has happened to other leading Nazis. But two or three million who fought for them are dead, and twice as many wounded and maimed. The day that all these millions so confidently looked for did not come, but another day did—that day of destruction whose thunder we are now listening to. It is one of the appalling moments of history: a world dissolving, a world being born. Those even who saw the end of the last war, who saw it not as children but as mature men and women, lived through no days comparable with these. They experienced as much tension; perhaps more. When peace came they felt as much excitement. Far more than they or anyone can to-day, they saw in the armistice the end of darkness and the beginning of light; for they did not doubt at all that what they had fought for had been achieved. To-day we are incapable of their glowing faith and leaping optimism, and now that victory is here do not feel that we are rushing into a brave new world. In truth we are not; but we have arrived at the boundary between two worlds and two periods of world time. We are there not because a handful of tyrants are dead, but because their hopes are dead, their philosophy, their faith, their whole fantastic fabric of race leadership. All that has dissolved in ashes and is now being swept into oblivion. The fire that has consumed it is now consuming all their works, and those who are not sorry for Germany to-day were born without pity or have suffered so much at German hands that they are incapable of pity. For this time it is not just victory and defeat and the defeated paying, but annihilation turned back in its tracks and utterly destroying its makers. It is *dies irae, dies illa*—that day of wrath that poets talk about and ordinary mortals now see.

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

FAULTS IN TRANSMISSION

Sir,—So many faults have been noticeable in transmission of programmes from 2YA of late that it is causing a good deal of unfavourable comment among the listening public. The following is my own recent experience.

On Sunday night, April 12, Station 2YA advertised a programme by the NBS String Orchestra featuring the Handel Viola Concerto in G Minor. The programme was scheduled to begin at 8.5 p.m. and at 8.10 we were told that 2YC had taken over the broadcast; by the time we switched over to 2YC we had, of course, missed the beginning of the Concerto. It was not until the second movement was well in progress that an alteration in the control room made it possible to hear the solo instrument clearly—until then the balance was completely wrong, 'cellos and bass predominating. During the broadcast the station went off the air, I think, six times.

I was listening with five others who were all particularly interested to hear this work and we were all very disappointed. It was impossible to gain any idea of what the performance was like and we could only feel that all the work put into the preparation of the programme was entirely wasted.

It would appear that the control room staff lacks a member who has a knowledge of instrumental music and the requisite balance of stringed instruments.

I hope that we will have an opportunity soon to hear this Concerto under favourable conditions.

N. G. SEDGWICK (Wellington).

[This letter was submitted to the Acting Director of Broadcasting, who said in reply:

"Your correspondent is inaccurate in his facts and in his deductions. Presumably the broadcast by the NBS Orchestra to which he refers was on Sunday, April 15, and not as written by him, April 12. The first announcement regarding the transfer of the Orchestra's performance to 2YC was made at 8.5 p.m. from both 2YA and 2YC and not at 8.10 p.m. as stated by your correspondent. At the latter time a second announcement was made.

"The balancing of the orchestra and soloist at the microphone was carried out prior to the broadcast in conjunction with and to the satisfaction of the conductor, who has 'a knowledge of instrumental music and the requisite balance of stringed instruments.' The disturbing of this balance during the performance was not due, as suggested by your correspondent, to the lack of musical knowledge by the control room staff, but to the development of a fault in the microphone circuit which was being used for the soloist, which could not be foreseen and which had not been apparent during the hour's test period. This fault was corrected during the performance by the technician. Neither the transmitter nor the control room logs at 2YC make any report of the station going off the air at all between 8.0 and 9.0 p.m. If his reception was interrupted six times, it is possible that a fault developed in his own set.

"It is realised that inconvenience must have been caused to some listeners owing to the programme changes which were made. Announcements of such changes were necessarily made at very short notice, since the station staff had only the short period between the closing of the church service at 8.5 p.m. and 8.15 p.m. to make the arrangements necessary to enable the Main National Stations to broadcast the description of the passing of the funeral cortege of the late President Roosevelt to White House."

LITERARY RECITALS

Sir,—Why is it that we must only hear recorded readings of such all-round favourites as "The White Cliffs" and "This My Son" when Wellington surely can produce someone who would give us some of the fine recitals from literary works that all listeners know and

appreciate? At competition time we rarely hear anything of the elocutionary section relayed—a ballet or a tap is far sweeter! Nor can I ever recall having heard a studio performance by an elocutionist. Surely, sir, the National stations can afford us such a pleasure. If not, we shall be like the late Malcolm McEachern "Coming Up from Somerset"—we shall come up from Taranaki! G.A.B. (Hawera).

SUNDAY LEISURE

Sir,—Where will this widespread modern indifferentism eventually lead us? The plea for Sunday leisure, as put forward by Returned Soldier, is a perfect example of the shallow and confused trend of modern, irreligious thought.



Spencer Digby photograph

PROFESSOR JAMES SHELLEY,
Director of Broadcasting, who has just returned to New Zealand after attending the Commonwealth Broadcasting Conference in London.

One need only deal with the monstrous claim made in the last sentence, that of "exercising their Democratic right." Does R.S. understand that he is claiming equality with God by confusing democracy with the Moral Law—and claiming it for 94 per cent. of the people? If the "overwhelming majority of the people" prefer to reject the Third Commandment, then let them at least be honest about it. If 100 per cent. of the people elected to stay away from Church, they would never have a democratic right to do so. Democracy does not apply where one is a Creator and the other a creature. One is a Law-Giver, the other is, or should be, a law-keeper; there can never be any question of equality, and democracy, between God and His dependent creatures. Whether 94 per cent. of the people desire to worship or not is not really a matter for the correspondence column; it is simply a matter between each individual and God.

Sunday evening entertainment is not unknown in this country; I have enjoyed many such evenings, having first paid my debt to my Creator on the day set aside. I think the greatest objection to any organised Sunday entertainment will come, not from the Church-attenders, but from that cross-section of the people who never darken a Church

door, and yet spend their time in criticising the motive of Church-goers, and holding them up to ridicule. This superior cross-section can tell you what is wrong with Christianity, and why it has failed; they are the real "dog-in-the-manger" class, exceedingly "touchy" about the Sabbath, and most emphatic that it should be religiously observed—by others.

The section referred to is of course contained in the 94 per cent; it might even represent an overwhelming majority of same.—A.G.W. (Taoroa).

Sir,—After reading "Returned Soldier's" letter, I wonder if the 94 per cent, who, according to your correspondent, do not attend Church, would have the courtesy to tell the poor 6 per cent just why.

PROUD 6 PER CENTER (Hawera).

"DAD AND DAVE"

Sir,—After reading "Fed Up's" attack upon our old friends "Dad and Dave," I feel that I should like to speak in their defence. The fact that I enjoy many of the more serious programmes does not prevent my listening with pleasure to these members of the "Snake Gully" circle, and I think that their adventures are much more credible than many others that we hear. There is no sickly sentimentality, no underworld gangster jargon, but clean and wholesome humour that is a tonic to many of us in these days. "Mum's" large, kindly heart is typical of countrywomen the world over, and as I know that the natural speaking voice of the girl who plays the part of "Mabel" is one of the loveliest in Australasia, I find her drawl in this role rather intriguing. The fact that "Dad and Dave" topped a popularity poll some time ago proves that many listeners enjoy hearing the feature, and if "Fed Up" tuned in only unintentionally to the programme, I do not see how it would matter to him how long it might continue.

Personally I'd find "Fred and Maggie" and other serial characters, especially a few of the American ones, hard to listen to, but there are other stations, and as I know many others enjoy them, I do not feel moved to suggest that they should be forced to end their long, long trail of radio adventures. Many other listeners must feel the same, and as to the suggestion that the Director of Broadcasting is insulting the intelligence of the listening public, I think that "Fed Up" might find that the task of pleasing all of the people all of the time is no sinecure. The choice of programmes does not reflect the personal tastes of the Director, and it seems to me that, with all the fare available, it is not hard to choose an evening's entertainment to suit any taste. After all, it's such a little thing to turn a radio knob.

"HORRY" (Wanganui).

Sir,—"Fed Up" infers that he is an educated man whose "intelligence is insulted by the unadulterated rubbish" of "Dad and Dave." Surely one of the dominant characteristics of the educated man is tolerance—tolerance of others and of others' tastes. Surely he can see some good in bringing to listeners an insight into the lives of others—in this instance a typical Australian farming family. Could this story be portrayed in any other but the typical Australian backblocks accent? Even the Immortal Bard bids us hold the mirror up to nature!—TOLERANCE (Cashmere).