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LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

(continued from page 5)

PROGRAMMES

Sir,-May I comment on the letters of "Audio" and "Farmer" in a recent issue of The Listener? First, in spite of your remarks to "Audio," I think there is a lot in what he says, though I do not for a moment contemplate action as drastic as that which he has chosen to take. I consider that The Listener contains some very excellent articles, and in my humble opinion has improved out of all recognition since its inception. But I do agree with your correspondent, that there should be more articles on music (and by that I do not mean the rubbish we hear so much of, in many cases ad nauseam), and drama for the radio. A few years ago, we had a series of good radio plays, which, though not high class, were well produced and provided good entertainment, which after all is, or should be, the main purpose of broadcasting. I refer to such plays as "North of Moscow" and "Paul Clifford." Though I am sure it is difficult to make supply meet demand, and that you wish to appeal to the majority of readers, I consider one article per week on music or drama by a recognised authority. would be of sound educational value to us all.

Second, I heartily agree with "Farmer" in his complaint about the lack of good drama, as much of the foregoing testifies, and I should like to endorse his suggestions. I should also like to add that it is good to read so much criticism, the vast majority of which is, I am pleased to note, constructive.

M.F.G. (Marton).

FOOTBALL COMMENTARIES

Sir,-I would like to express my appreciation of the Rugby football commentaries relayed from Athletic Park. Being keen Rugby fans and seldom able to attend matches, we tune in on most Saturday afternoons to one of the YA stations for the commentary. We find the description given by the 2YA commentator most interesting, as even if the match is dull or slow the commentary is always thrilling. We consider the com-mentaries from 3YA and 4YA very fair, but none of the commentators seem to put the "pep" into it that the 2YA man does. Would it not be possible to send this man to other centres when provincial and other important matches are being played?

"RUGBY FAN" (Taumarunni).

WRITERS AND REWARDS

Sir,—I have read A. R. D. Fairburn's article "Pass the Jam Please." The chief merit of free-lance work, I have slways thought, lay in its being written by people who earned their living in other ways. Mr. Fairburn thinks that at £2 an article a writer of articles could have jam as well as bread and butter. I suspect that his idea of a living wage is nearer £12 than £6, but being unable to face the idea of six articles a week by one writer I shell suppose three articles at £6.

At times I have read most New Zealand periodicals. I have frequently read an article that interested me and have perhaps mentioned it to a dozen people who have read the periodical and have found that they had not read that contribution. Now if we limit the argument

to, say, one periodical, a fairly literary or intellectual one—Mr. Fairburn will probably say there isn't any such—probably fewer than half the population see the publication at all, and one out of 12 will read any one article. It seems to me that if every free-lance writer turns out three articles a week, readers are going to have an awful strain thrown on them. I consider myself a tought.

My reaction would be to restrict the output by paying seven guineas an article, but my racial conscience rebells against reduction and the stifling of production. I am afraid the free-lance writer will have to be satisfied with bread and butter without jam, because in a land full of frustrated statesmen and hand-tied reformers who would work for a crust if they could get their ideas and messages into print and to the public, and willingly forgo recompense, I see no hope that free-lancers will be paid more.

SATURATION POINT (Dunedin).

Sir .-- With regard to A. R. D. Fairburn's article "Pass the Jam Please" the free-lance journalist or artist is paid according to the demand for the fruit of his labour. If he prefers to wield a pen or brush in place of a pick, or scalpel, or whatever other instrument would adorn a doctor's coat of arms (if he had one) he does so with his eyes widopen. If he cannot see the limited horizon clearly defined by popular taste he is a fool. If he says he must write or draw, what is there to stop him? Must the results be foisted on a public which is expected to pay exorbitant rates for something it doesn't want? If a man flatters himself he is a creative artist must someone part out his hard-earned cash to foster that illusion? After all what happens to this stuff that is written? It is printed. Nobody but a few egocentrics read it, and then it is confined to the waste-paper basket. Place for it no doubt! If these people must write why not do so and keep it to themselves? After all, you do sing in your bath, but you don't expect to be paid Bing Crosby rates for it. It seems to me that some free-lance journalists are grossly over-paid, whatever brief is held for the others. Witness the appalling drivel that disgraces some of our periodicals—especially women's. The writers ought to be fined, not paid! Then perhaps they might be induced to turn the brain-power expended on these vaporous nothings to a more profitable and certainly more useful occupation

M. MOODY (Auckland).

NATIVE MUSIC

Sir,—In the article in a recent Listener about Oswald Cheesman it was stated that he suggests that the South Sea islands native singing originally had no set form, but was a series of extempore chants. From the book Ancient Tahiti, by Teuira Henry, based on material recorded by J. M. Orsmond, it can be seen that this was the case in Tahiti and other Polynesian Islands 100 years and more ago. The Rev. J. M. Orsmond, of the London Missionary Society, who worked among the natives of these islands from 1817 to 1856, was intensely interested in their welfare, both material and spiritual. He found that

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