

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

(Continued from page 5)

PICASSO.

Sir,—Mr. Fairburn has essayed the task of stating why Picasso should be regarded as one of the six great draughtsmen of all time. With a volume of impressive quotation he has probably put the best case possible. It would be interesting to know the names of the five others to whom Picasso would make a sixth. It is true, of course, that Picasso was a thoroughly equipped draughtsman whose early work would have taken its place in any academy, but he made no attempt to develop his obvious gift in drawing. To claim him as a great draughtsman argues, I think, a sad misunderstanding of the significance of the great Spaniard.

Surely Picasso, in all his phases, has been absorbed in the structure of the picture and the relationships of forms and colours. He has probably less interest in the visual aspects of things than any other artist. How then can we define draughtsmanship to include Picasso as one of the greatest exponents.

Picasso is an individualist. He is a designer of great power and is possessor of rare ability to organise colour. He is a tireless experimenter and a magnificent entertainer. He is alert, ingenious, intriguing and stimulating. He is always news. He is sometimes sad though never deeply moving; he may be amusing but is never gay. He may be one of the great artists of the 20th Century; but I cannot conceive of his ever being regarded as great or outstanding amongst the draughtsmen of this or any other age. VELASQUEZ (Wellington).

COUNTRY DRAMA

Sir,—Judith Terry in a recent 2YA broadcast on the Country Drama Movement made a kindly but very impractical suggestion. It was that town repertory groups might adopt the country groups giving them the benefit of their experience. But since there are really hundreds of country drama circles, say a hundred to every city club, it couldn't be done. What would happen to the Tawa Gully club when it learned that Wellington Repertory had adopted Fern Tree Flat!

Another thing which makes the giving of practical help difficult is that the country clubs exist only to entertain their members, excepting for six weeks of the year, when they are preparing for their festivals. Yet the fact that these clubs exist in their hundreds is important to New Zealand culture, and it's time some official encouragement should be given them. Something run by the Education Department is indicated, for it is a pity to allow strongly organised bodies of people with artistic leanings to waste their energies for want of experienced advisers. Since the clubs get few opportunities to see good theatre, subsidised visits from leading city clubs would nearly fill the bill. They would at least get a standard of comparison, the lack of which Mrs. Terry deplored in her talk. Her own contribution in lifting the standard of choice of play, performance, and improved speech is anything but negligible. She seems to be one of the few people who realise the urge of the countrywoman to express herself in an art which, with a little help, can become an achievement of great value in the cultural life of the country. THESPIS (Auckland).

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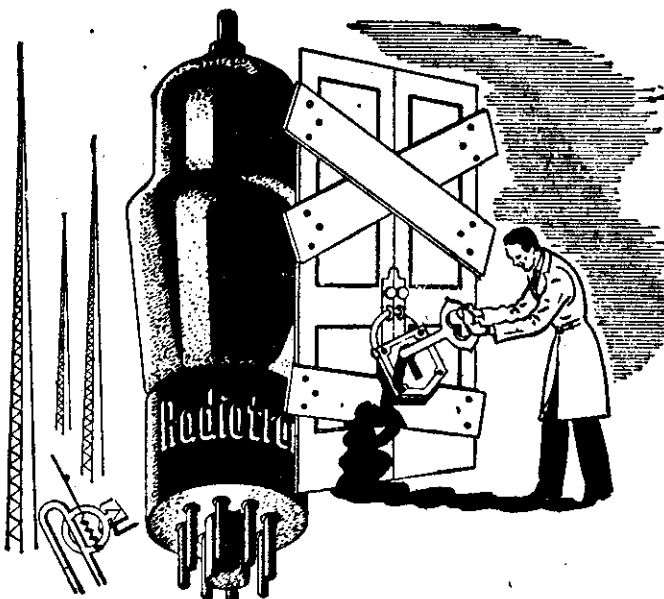
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