

the mike are blatant and self-confident, safe from contradiction and from physical assault. In fact they are oracles. That is a real danger.

Then there is the press. Opinion should be quite free, but never anonymous. News, information and facts are another thing. They should be above suspicion. The freedom which is given to the press and the privilege accorded to radio are both betrayed by the publication of false news, however trivial and insignificant. Every lie begins somewhere, and most wars began in lies. Today the library is more than ever the sanctuary and fortress of the individual conscience. Almost alone in a strident world, it offers to men and women of goodwill, hospitality and comfort and freedom to think as they wish. It gives both sides of every question, and encourages individual judgment. Yet we are selective to some extent—and I hope Mr. Priestley will appreciate that. While providing free every worthwhile book on any subject, we tend to leave the lighter and less substantial literature to the commercial libraries or put it in our pay collections. No library that I know of makes any effort to canalise the opinions of its readers. The library is an oasis, free from oratory and trumpets, where the individual can arrive at his own judgment. And it is just these people who in the long run swing the balance between opposing schools of thought.

I am satisfied that though the common man, about whom Mr. Priestley and I are equally concerned, may know nothing of the intricacies of law, or economics or psychology or political science, yet if he is told the truth of the case in four cases out of five he will know right from wrong. Democracy simply cannot survive if people are not told the truth. Not just now and again, but all the time.

—G. H. Scholefield

(Librarian, General Assembly Library).

It is a little diverting to see the author of *The Good Companions*, once regarded as the chief exponent of anti-highbrow sentiment, expressing in his

own way views that, differently phrased, might have come from Clive Bell. One question always raised by this talk of cultural dictatorship—the alternative, I suppose, to cultural democracy—is: Who will do the dictating? After reading this article, one has the uneasy feeling that

our spiritual and mental welfare is to be in the hands of the Priestleys and their kind—an uninviting prospect.



Ranting about other people's bad taste is futile and Pharisaical. If the Englishmen of our time prefer pin-tables (whatever they are) to Shakespeare, we may well reflect that the ancestors of these same people were Shakespeare's audience and go on to ask why it is that there is so wide a gulf between the popular taste of Elizabethan times and that of our own day. From this point, if we have the necessary faith and energy, we may proceed to change the conditions in which the Hollywood film flourishes and Priestley becomes an authority on culture. My own feeling is that he underrates the taste and intelligence of the common man, but his judgment is perhaps sounder. After all, it is the common man who has given Priestley wealth and transient fame.

My limited experience as a librarian leads me to believe that it would be useless in a public library to cut off the supply of Edgar Rice Burroughs, Dorothy Sayers, and J. B. Priestley; if you did that, people would merely go elsewhere for their daily or weekly injections of light fiction. It is essential, however, that librarians should safeguard the rights of the serious reading public and do what they can to prevent the confusion of standards that is a more serious menace than a liking for the obviously and unequivocally bad. In other words, librarians are called upon to exercise taste and to make democracy work.

—E. H. McCormick

SHORTWAVE HIGHLIGHTS

The Armed Forces Radio Service

THE Armed Forces Radio Service—"the voice of Information and Education"—is being received at very good strength at present, during the afternoon and evening. Listeners who have a 13-metre band on their radios may like to try for these programmes during the afternoon and early evening in the 21 mc/s band.

The following is a list of A.F.R.S. Stations that are on the air at the same time as our own broadcasting stations (i.e., 1.30-2.30 and 6.30-10.30 p.m.): KRHO, 17.80 mc/s, 16.85 metres, 1.30-2.30 p.m.; KGEI, 21.49 mc/s, 13.96 metres, 1.30-2.30; KCBA, 21.46 mc/s, 13.98 metres, 1.30-2.30; KNBI, 17.85 mc/s, 16.81 metres, 1.30-2.30; KNBA, 21.63 mc/s, 13.87 metres, 6.30-7.0; KGEI, 15.13 mc/s, 19.83 metres, 6.30-8.45; KCBR, 17.78 mc/s, 16.87 metres, 6.30-8.45; KCBA, 9.70 mc/s, 30.93 metres, 9.0-10.30; KWID, 11.90 mc/s, 25.21 metres, 7.0-10.30 p.m.

Headlines in the Programmes: 1.30-2.0 p.m.—Jack Benny (Sunday), Fred

Allen (Monday), Bob Hope (Tuesday), Fibber McGee (Wednesday), Bing Crosby (Thursday), Hit Parade (Saturday).

2.15-2.30 p.m.—Sunday Serenade, Sports Round Up (Monday), Hoagy Carmichael (Saturday).

6.30-6.45 p.m.—Concert Hall (Sunday), Show Time (Monday), To the Rear March (Tuesday), Command Performance (Wednesday), Jubilee (Friday), Jill's Juke Box (Saturday).

8.15-8.45 p.m.—Charlie McCarthy (Sunday), Ginny Simms (Monday), Red Skelton (Tuesday), Allen Young (Wednesday), Frank Sinatra (Thursday), Dinah Shore (Friday), Duffy's Tavern (Saturday).

8.45-9.0 p.m.—Dick Hames (Sunday), Personal Album (Monday to Thursday), Spotlight Bands (Friday and Saturday).

9.15-9.45 p.m.—Jack Benny (Sunday), Fred Allen (Monday), Bob Hope (Tuesday), Fibber McGee (Wednesday), Bing Crosby (Thursday), Jack Carson (Friday), Hit Parade (Saturday).

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