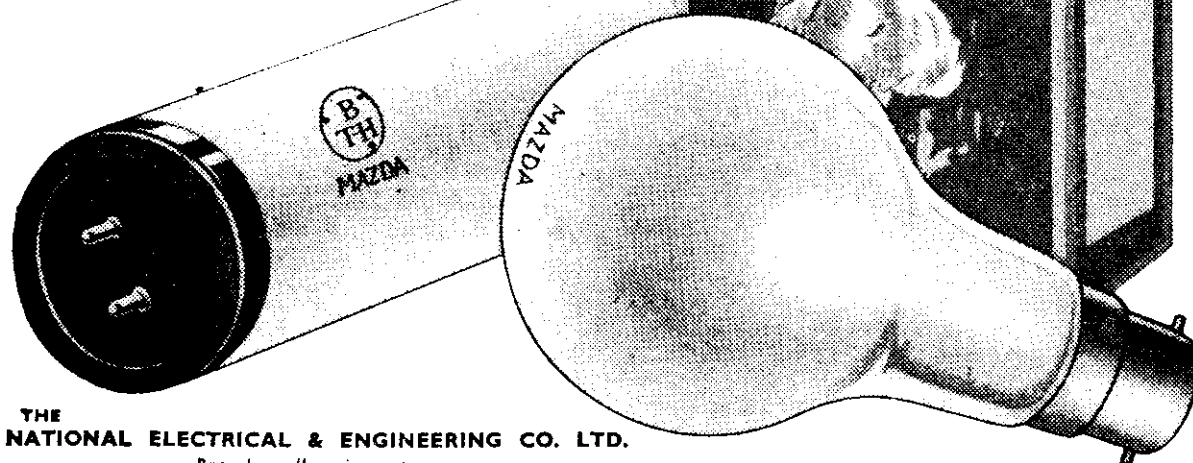


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LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

(continued from page 5)

SPOKEN ENGLISH

Sir,—M. H. Atkinson makes a good point in saying that articles about our speech are unsatisfying, increasing the doubt of the doubtful. The articles try to tell us what we should say, but they are far from clear, and I say that until we have a phonetic alphabet, one which provides a separate sign for each sound used, it will be next door to impossible to teach pronunciation by exposition in black and white. R. G. B. Lawson also is to the point with the idea that we should simplify the matter of New Zealand speech by refraining from speaking of standard English, educated English or any other classification of English speech. Let us not say that our standard is Educated New Zealand Speech. Let us call it New Zealand Speech, and see to it that that means correct grammar, correct pronunciation and correct enunciation. But we must have a phonetic alphabet. I may speak the horrible New Zealand O which offends Gordon, but how can he print in *The Listener* that which will enable him clearly to express the horrible sound and the correct sound. If we were to create New Zealand Speech it would not be anything strange or novel. It would be almost entirely the same as English speech—all that would be done would be to eliminate undesirable words and incorrect pronunciations. To eliminate the use of undesirable words might be the work of several generations: I believe that almost immediate results in the matter of correct pronunciation could be achieved with a phonetic alphabet.

ALPHA (Stratford).

WOMEN POETS.

Sir,—Harold Vinal, of the American journal *Voices*, has asked me to edit the New Zealand section of a special issue he is devoting to the work of contemporary women poets in the British Empire. It will not be a large section, but I should like (naturally) to get the best work that is available. Will you allow me space to invite the submission of poems? These should be sent to me at No. 7 King Edward Parade, Devonport, Auckland, N.I. I cannot promise to return manuscripts that are not used unless a stamped and addressed envelope is enclosed.

Since it is easy to overlook good work, I should be grateful also for any suggestions your readers may care to make as to the inclusion of particular poems.

A. R. D. FAIRBURN.

SOIL AND HEALTH

Sir,—I listened with interest to the recent Lincoln College Talk by L. W. McCaskill and I. D. Blair. Here at last would be the evidence I have waited for, to allow me to sprinkle artificial fertilisers on my vegetables with a light heart.

We had an entertaining talk, some ridicule of opponents, a great many personal opinions, but where was the evidence? The "compostors," they say, accuse these "artificial" of killing the

(continued on next page)

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