

SEPTEMBER 26, 1947.

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Life Without Subsidies

WE are tempted to label this article "Peace Comes to the Kitchen," but with difficulty resist. Peace is coming to the kitchen next week, but it is not the peace that passes understanding. It is the theoretical peace that starts a practical war. On Monday morning the housewife will lose the war privilege of subsidies on meat, bacon, and sugar, and at least her sense of security with tea. She will emerge suddenly from the umbrella that has sheltered her for more than three years and shop, technically, under a wide and starless sky. And she will like it about as much as her husband liked his cold shower six or eight weeks earlier. She will complain for a day or two, look round for victims for a day or two, then settle into the new era and start looking ahead instead of backwards. But she will have her compensations. She will discover in a week or two that her coupons are beginning to annoy her less, and one day perhaps she will find herself forgetting them altogether. She will no longer buy everything that her book tells her she is allowed to buy, but ask herself how much she can afford. If the roast that now costs her 5/- every Friday goes up to six shillings or seven, she will not care very much whether the chops on Tuesday meant three coupons or five, or whether her husband on Wednesday wasted a coupon over his lunch in town. She will even begin before long to feel a vague sense of triumph and power, since the answer to all table complaints will rest in future in her husband's pocket and not in the coupon book in her shopping basket. If he wants more he will have to pay for more. If he accepts what he gets it will be because she, his loyal and competent wife, is keeping him as happy on one spoonful of sugar as he used to be on two.

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

WILD LIFE

Sir,—I think it high time someone supported H. W. Endicott's most sincere article on the preservation of game in New Zealand. He was not, as has been interpreted by so many of your readers, advocating a policy of laissez-faire in the multiplication of various species of game in New Zealand. He was trying to convey to us an idea of what a country is like from a sportsman's point of view (and there are many hundreds in this country) when he must apply for a permit and compulsorily hire guides and outfits for the privilege of shooting only one buck per season. The greatest attraction this country has to offer to New Zealanders and travellers alike is its natural beauty and wide varieties of sport, including the hunting of numerous species of wild life. H. W. Endicott has already stated that we have animals common only to this country, Europe, and Asia. Surely this is something to be proud of and a privilege to preserve—not destroy.

I would suggest to F. K. Tucker that he re-read H. W. Endicott's article and find out exactly what he was trying to tell us. From his opening paragraph an intelligent person could see that he was most sincere and that his writings merited not disgust, but rather some deep thought. F. K. Tucker talks about hunters as slaughterers glorying in the sight of fallen mobs. That is not our policy. We shoot for the thrill of a kill. It is useless to try to explain this feeling to a non-shooter, but it is common to every hunter. The possibility of the "glorifying sight of slaughtered animals" would not be great enough incentive to tempt deer stalkers, in furtherance of their ideal, to hardships greater than those experienced by trappers. It is not an "industry" as Tucker suggests, but a sport—a man's sport and right—something that should be recognised and preserved, not thoughtlessly destroyed.

I would refer N. Atkinson to Endicott's statement in which he said, "Once our prairies teemed with buffalo—countless thousands . . . once it looked as if they could never be cleaned out—but they are." This also could and will happen to our own herds unless some thought of conservation is given to the matter.

LOVER OF OUTDOOR

(Masterton).

LATE ARRIVALS

Sir,—I disagree entirely with L. D. Austin's remarks. I think that the most admirable feature of Boyd Neel's concerts, apart from the glorious musical treat, was his insistence that late-comers should not be admitted during the performance of an item.

There is rarely an adequate excuse for unpunctuality. Reasons may be offered, but very few of them will stand the light of enquiry. The fact is that a number of people are careless in this matter and arrive late because they could not take the trouble to start early enough. Punctuality is a virtue, and Mr. Austin is the self-appointed champion of the vice that is the reverse. I know from many years' experience that in all good class concerts in England the doors are closed as soon as the conductor is ready to start and are not reopened till the first item is finished. The audience know the position and try to get to the hall in time and are quite ready to accept the consequences if they are late.

In New Zealand there are many who will not make the effort and a few who like to come in late so as to make an effective entry. Mr. Boyd Neel gave us a lesson in manners as well as in music.

A. S. ANSTISS (Auckland).

Sir,—L. D. Austin's letter is an example of the level to which people will descend in order to try to justify their own mistakes. The writer of this letter mentions "the delays and hold-ups inevitable when a large concourse of persons converges upon a single point." One would imagine that Mr. Austin, being so well aware of these "delays and hold-ups," would practise the simple expedient of leaving home a little earlier. However, when he goes on to cite "the human element which by long custom

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has acquired a certain latitude in the observance of punctuality," it would seem that he does not even try to be punctual, but merely hopes that Mr. Boyd Neel will join him in discourtesy and be unpunctual too. When this hope fails to materialise, he seeks to justify himself by saying that strict punctuality is an offence. When Mr. Austin sets out to catch a train scheduled to leave at 8 o'clock, I suppose he arrives at 8.10 and then blames the driver of being "unduly and unnecessarily precise" in leaving and for failing to observe a "certain latitude in punctuality."

L. WILKINSON (Wellington).

Sir,—The protest from L. D. Austin under the above heading was written on the same lines as the algebraical catch that purports to prove that 1 is equal to 2. In other words, starting from a false assumption we are asked to believe that bad manners are good. Travelling artists have often found that audiences in different cities or towns possess certain distinguishing features in character, and the Boyd Neel orchestra may have found that Wellington audiences are not as punctual as they should be. I was present at a concert in the Palmerston North Opera House at which there were music-lovers from Wanganui, Masterton, and Palmerston North. The packed house was ready by 8 o'clock, but the orchestra was delayed and the curtain did not rise until 8.15, when Boyd Neel apologised for the delay and gave the reason. It is therefore an extraordinary proceeding to attempt to excuse late arrivals by blaming the punctuality of the artists.

"PUNCTUALITY"

(Palmerston North).

POEMS FOR U.S.A.

Sir,—I read with genuine alarm that A. R. D. Fairburn was proposing to hand over to Mr. Harold Vinal the best work of our women poets. Is there any assurance that America will not use these for her own ends? I know, from personal experience, that America does not recognise World Copyright. There are many in New Zealand who do not know this!

After the abominable hash they have made of many of our beautiful old traditional songs and ballads we would do well to look ahead and safeguard ourselves. Has Mr. Fairburn read the latest American effort, i.e., the Bible in comic strip? Has he heard that glorious

Chopin's Etude in G Minor swung over the air and made into a cheap love-song?

I sincerely hope that if we women poets are not strictly covered by a genuine assurance that we are not to have our best work stolen, mauled, or mutilated that our answer to Mr. Fairburn will be No.

VIVIENNE DOWLING

(Timaru).

SINGER AND ACCOMPANIST.

Sir,—Having reached the age of three score and 10, I can remember the time when an accompanist really did accompany a singer. But listening to a recital from 2YH recently I thought it sounded like a competition between the piano and the singer, with the singer trying to make herself heard through a jangle of notes and sound; more of an obstruction than a help to the singer. If this is a trend of "modernism," then I call it a case of retrogressive advancement. Yours in great anguish.

OLD TIMER (Hastings).

NAME THE INSTRUMENT.

Sir,—While in Australia a few years ago I listened on several afternoons to Professor Bernard Heinz "Walking Through the Orchestra" with the children of the various towns which he visited. While demonstrating the oboe and the bassoon he mentioned an obsolete member of this family with a voice of intermediate pitch. This instrument has probably been superseded by the Cor Anglais, though the name (also French, but a single word) escapes me. Could any listener identify it, please?

ALTO (Hamilton East).

ORCHESTRA PROGRAMMES.

Sir,—This is not criticism of the Orchestra, of which we all ought to be proud, but of the programmes presented. Approximately a quarter of the people, listeners and audiences—the minority—prefer classical music. Three-quarters—the majority—prefer lighter or more melodious music. Examples of lighter music could be the Strauss waltzes, Eric Coates's compositions, "Warsaw Concerto," "Jealousy," and many of the records listed and played by the Boston Promenade Orchestra. Primarily the Orchestra is a broadcasting one and supported from listeners' license fees. If the above averages are at all correct, I suggest that three-quarters of the Orchestra's programmes should be suitable for the majority of listeners.

The Orchestra plays in the main centres to "record" audiences. Does it play to record "listener" audiences? Opinions of listeners on this latter point might be interesting.

Meanwhile let me answer in advance those who say that this means a lowering of standards, of failing to hitch one's musical wagon to a distant high-brow star, that best is best and only the best is good enough, and that the Orchestra can't be expected to play low-brow music and then be called upon to perform some major work with understanding and brilliance. Well, the Boston Symphony Orchestra is one of the best in the world, but the Boston Promenade Orchestra is the centre section of the Boston Symphony. Likewise, Benny Goodman, the jazz and swing band clarinettist, plays also with the Budapest String Quartet.

A. C. MUDFORD (Public Works, Kaitawa).

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENT

"Much Preached At" (Dunedin): Too hard to follow.