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MORE LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

(continued from page 5)

ANTHONY TROLLOPE

Sir,—In your issue of January 30 I am afraid you do less than justice to Anthony Trollope in the matter of pillar-boxes. To him we owe, not merely the colour, but the pillar-box itself. T. H. S. Escott, a contemporary and friend, who gathered much information from Trollope's Post Office associates, says Trollope recommended the installation of these useful innovations after seeing them in France, and that the first on British territory was erected at St. Heliers, Jersey, in 1853. I am not aware that this statement in Escott's biography has been disputed. Other information concerning Trollope in the same article appears to have been set down without checking the facts. He tells us himself that he started work at 5.30 a.m., not 4 a.m., that he spent half an hour in reading the previous day's work, and 2½ hours in writing. Again, Trollope may have written his Autobiography when "his fame was at its peak," but it was not published until 1883, the year following his death—it did not appear, in fact, until several years after the peak period of his fame.

A. H. REED (Dunedin).

Sir,—In a recent note on a radio adaptation of Anthony Trollope's *Orley Farm*, *The Listener* says, "When his fame as a writer was at its peak, he dismayed a large section of his readers by writing a most revealing autobiography." This is not quite correct, as Trollope wrote the autobiography in 1875-76, when his popularity was already declining, and it was not published until 1883, that is, in the year following his death. One of the latest commentators claims that the decline had already commenced in 1869, and Michael Sadleir is of the opinion that Trollope himself was aware of it in the early seventies. It is therefore doubtful if the autobiography was, as is generally thought, a major factor in the loss of his popularity, although it was of course seized on with glee by his detractors. The autobiography, however, remains as one of the finest in the language and certainly is the most manly and modest.

As for *Orley Farm* itself—some lovers of Trollope consider it the best of his many books. Algar Thorold, for example, says that "Cardinal Newman's favourite relaxation was the reading of Trollope's novels, and among them all, he is said to have preferred *Orley Farm*."

R. L. ANDREW (Kelburn).

(The view taken in our columns of Trollope's Autobiography is supported by Dr. Ernest A. Baker, of London University, author of *The History of the English Novel*, who describes the Autobiography as "an extraordinarily candid book that had a disillusioning effect on too fervid admirers by giving away the secrets of his workshop. It probably caused the long eclipse of his fame, which has recently been followed by a striking renewal."—Ed.)

"WHOM THE GODS LOVE."

Sir,—In the BBC Brains Trust session from 1YA recently, the usual interpretation of "Whom the gods love die young" was given, young being taken to mean young in years. If that were the correct interpretation it would be reasonable to suggest that if the gods were a bit tardy it would be prudent to seek

one's own demise while still young in years and consequently in their favour.

Surely, on the contrary, it is one's duty to live out one's allotted span, however long it may be, and young in years is not to be understood, but young in spirit. All start out young in years and in spirit, but individual experiences in life and our interpretation of them, sooner or later, blight the youth of spirit in most of us and we leave it behind for maturity and senility of spirit. Ageing in spirit, therefore, is independent of ageing in years. One is the more fortunate the longer in life one can retain youth of spirit, most people losing it before death. Only the fortunate few whom the gods love die young, though attaining the 84 years of the questioner.

These few must have arrived, consciously or unconsciously, at a way of life that works right up to the end. My observation of those it has been my good fortune to know, who are old in years, but young in spirit, is that in addition to the attributes of unwarped childhood which they display, they also retain a lifelong interest in the rising generation.

A. G. GOULTER (Kaitieke).

CLASSICAL REQUEST SESSION

Sir,—I have frequently listened to the excellent Listeners' Classical Request Programme broadcast on Friday evening from 12M, and I may say, have never tuned in without hearing at least two works of which I am particularly fond. Unfortunately, however, on all but the more powerful sets, 12M presents some reception difficulties, and as a result I have often had to miss a favourite work owing to the poor reception. No doubt other listeners have had a similar disappointment. I am certain that there are sufficient music lovers in the Wellington district to warrant the institution of a similar two-hour programme at a station such as 2YC.

At present the Wellington music lover has the misfortune of being flooded with the so-called "popular" programme or having to take what he is given in the way of classical music. So, I am sure I am not on my own when I say a Listeners' Classical Request Session would not go unappreciated.

J.B.U. (Lower Hutt).

AUCKLAND AND WELLINGTON STATIONS

Sir,—I have often wondered why the alternative week-end radio service in Auckland is so much ahead of Wellington. On Saturday 12M comes on the air at 11 a.m. with a bright programme, while 2YC does not open until 3 p.m. Then 1YX opens at 5 p.m., while 2YD does not wake up until 7 p.m. On Sundays it is even worse for listeners to Wellington stations. 12M opens at 10 a.m. compared with 5 p.m. for 2YC, while 1YX is an hour ahead of 2YD.

Unfortunately, 12M and 1YX are not strong enough to give good reception at any distance so that listeners out of their range can only look at their programme arrangements in *The Listener* and gnash their teeth with envy while they listen to the funeral YA stations. Surely it should be possible for 2YC to give the same service as 12M.

"LISTENER" (Hawera).