

LISTENER

Incorporating N.Z. RADIO RECORD

Every Friday

Price Threepence

APRIL 30, 1948

EDITORIAL AND BUSINESS OFFICES:
115 Lambton Quay, Wellington, C.I.
Box 1707, G.P.O.
Telephone 46-520.
Telegraphic Address: "Listener," Wellington.

For Children

EVERY day next week, and for some weeks ahead, programmes will be interrupted to allow an appeal to be made to the people of New Zealand for food and clothes and shelter for child victims of the war. For reasons with which most people are familiar the appeal has come later to New Zealand than to some other countries, but if that means anything now it is only that we have had some weeks longer in which to brace ourselves for an effort worthy of our resources. If we are not the most fortunate community in the world to-day it is difficult to imagine what other country is more fortunate—better fed, better clothed, and even, all in all, better housed. We are in any case so much more comfortably housed than the parents of millions of children in Europe and Asia that comparison is just a mockery. Not one of us will go hungry this winter or short of warm clothes. No one will sleep out or, of necessity, sleep wet or dirty or cold, as tens of thousands have done during the winter from which the Northern Hemisphere is just emerging. The least fortunate of us has a dry home of some kind, and sufficient food of some kind before he goes to bed. So have all our children without exception. And in return for all this well-being we are asked to give the earnings of a single day—a fraction of one week's wages or salary or profits—to help the United Nations to do the one job on which they still are united. It is true, and it is very good news, that New Zealand has decided not merely to send gifts to some of the distressed children of Britain, but to bring some shiploads of them here to share our plenty in perpetuity. No appeal is more certain of a prompt response than the call for foster-parents for these future New Zealand citizens. But if charity properly begins at home, it must not stop there when home is such a comfortable place as New Zealand is to-day and so large, a part of the world is a wilderness or a slum.

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

CHURCH BROADCASTS.

Sir,—It may interest your readers to know that Church broadcasts came up for discussion recently by the Wellington branch of the Church Music Society and that the following points were recommended for further consideration:

1. That a proportion of the church services broadcast should be specially designed for broadcasting, and that the best atmosphere is to be obtained in the church itself.
2. That the time limit of 65 minutes be strictly adhered to as far as church broadcasts are concerned.
3. That there should be better preparation of both music and form of service in respect to "timing" of the broadcast.
4. That an audition under service conditions before the church is rostered to broadcast would be very desirable.
5. That relays of actual services should be made during the choir recess period between Christmas and the New Year.

JOHN H. BOOTH
(N.Z. Church Society).

MAIRZY DOATS.

Sir,—Your commentator cites "Mairzy Doats" as a recent example of exasperating doggerel. It is very probable that mediaeval mothers were deaved by schoolboys who considered "Mairzy Doats" very smart and funny.

In most reasonably comprehensive collections of nursery rhymes there is the old mediaeval latin doggerel verse:

In fir tar is,
In oak none is,
In mud eel is,
In clay none is,
Goat eat ivy,
Mare eat oats.

It would be interesting to know if this old rhyme has never gone out of circulation in America, and if it had already been altered to its present form before it received a tune. I still laugh at my stupidity at not recognizing it for what it was and at my owlish solemnity in trying to extract a meaning from it for various infantile members of my family.

IVY (Dunedin).

COLIN McCABON'S PICTURES

Sir,—"Artist" (Dunedin) would have enlightened us and given us to believe in his own judgment had he been able to question J.C.B.'s estimate of McCabon's paintings in the same rational way as the original article was written. In all aesthetic judgments personal and objective standards intermingle in a curious and sometimes contradictory manner. Thus men who were once honoured retire to the history books, and some neglected for centuries emerge because a whole age is sympathetic to their feelings. How often does one hear of Delacroix or of Vasari except in regard to their influence or historical importance? On the other hand the brilliance of Vermeer did not save his 40 or 50 canvases from being confused with works of others, while Grunewald, who painted very little, has consistently held his place.

"Artist's" rhetorical questions only prove that his own ideas about art are radically different from those of J.C.B. J.C.B. has assumed that "strength" and "experiment" are important. The assumption is not unwarranted when one considers that for decades these words have been used in connection with paintings. It should not be necessary for a critic

to return to the origin of these words to explain their validity. I refer "Artist" to Roger Fry's essay on Aubrey Beardsley (*Vision and Design*—Penguin) for a clear understanding. Beardsley was a giggling and therefore weak designer.

Without experiment art becomes repetitive and finally ceases to be worthy of the name. An artist without something new to communicate is a contradiction in terms. But a new vision implies some kind of new arrangement of the colour and form in paintings. Consider the implications of the static art of the Nile Valley compared with the variety, novelty, freshness and importance for us of the art of Europe since the year one. Concretely the value of those many centuries in Egypt may be compressed into a single volume, but many volumes of reproductions are necessary before the glory of Europe is spilled at our feet.

JOHN SUMMERS (New Brighton).

HELP FOR BANDS.

Sir,—The Government has sponsored a National Orchestra and I have no doubt that the cost of maintaining it will run into many thousands of pounds annually. The orchestra is certainly a move in the right direction, in that interest in good music is encouraged.

But I feel that there is another way in which our Government would assist the cause of music, and that is by granting a certain annual sum to be divided among those brass bands of the country which are affiliated with the N.Z. Brass Bands' Association. The bands have provided music for all sorts of functions, parades, and concerts, under a vast variety of conditions, and the smaller town bands—most of which are "C" grade—have a very hard struggle to maintain themselves without the benefits derived from radio concerts, etc., which are the biggest providers of cash for "A" and "B" grade bands of the larger cities.

R. G. SIMPSON (Rangiora).

MINIMUM FOR BRIDES

Sir,—Is it too late to express sympathy with "A.M.S." who wrote a week or so back on "Absolute Minimum for Brides" (prompted by an "A.C.E. Talk"). Who that has not lived in a tiny flat can tell anyone of the endless contrivings and scrapings (of goods!) to fit in? The necessity beggars the imagination of those who have grown up in spacious rooms and gardens. One just can't imagine how brides do it. What becomes of their wedding presents—often running into hundreds? A practical talk on how to be happy in a flat though married might be of some assistance to the bride, who has entered into a life for which she is fortunate if she has had even one wise talk from a mother or friend. A sponge bag or a tooth-brush seems the only practical trousseau for present-day conditions, and how to manage on that would prove of some assistance.

GRANDMOTHER (Hastings).

JAZZ BROADCASTS

Sir,—Why is it that programmes for jazz-lovers should be held so late at night? Sessions of classical music are broadcast throughout the day until 9 or 10 p.m. Very few jazz programmes are broadcast before 9.30 p.m. Stations 2YH and 4YZ used to close down at 10 p.m.

and both played jazz from 9.30 until 10 p.m. When their closing time was made 10.30 their jazz programmes were pushed forward half-an-hour. With most stations the weekly jazz session is placed almost last on the programme.

I am, however, indebted to the NZBS for their frequent playing of jazz records unavailable to the general public, especially records by Stan Kenton, the King Cole Trio, and Ted Heath. Also congratulations for the broadcasts of New Zealand dance bands, especially Martin Winiata from 3YA and the John McKenzie Trio from 1YA.

MODERN MUSIC LOVER
(Palmerston North).

OUR BRAINS TRUST

Sir,—New Zealand has done well to form a Brains Trust. With Donald McCullough as its father, counsellor, and friend, it cannot fail to acquire a large circle of staunch supporters. But I am hoping that as New Zealand is a young country she will perhaps suggest some new ideas as to the avenues from which brains might be put in trust for the benefit of this country, and indeed for the benefit of the world at large. Many of our difficulties, both at home and abroad, arise from a lack of understanding of each other's problems, viewpoints, and ways of life. Often those problems are the same and unity of opinion could be achieved by discussion. I would, therefore, suggest as a new departure in Brains Trusts that on occasions the Brains Trust should add to their number representatives of several different countries, and, with the aid of interpreters, if necessary, questions of general interest should be discussed, each giving his different point of view, and each suggesting where and how such points of view might be brought into better harmony. Due notice should be given to the speakers of the questions they are asked to discuss. Those unable to attend on account of distance might post their opinions for reading and discussion at the meeting.

G. De L. BAYLIS (Campbell's Bay).

TIME FOR A CHANGE

Sir,—I think it is time the tune played before and after the chimes of Big Ben on Sunday night was changed. Why not put on a few bars of some music by Bach, the greatest composer of religious music? That would be better than hearing the same dismal tune over the air every Sunday evening.

"HOW ABOUT IT?" (Wellington).

Sir,—I wonder when that awful record we are subjected to every Sunday p.m. at two minutes to nine could be considered to be fit for "the discard"? Such a melancholy wail of weird sounds is not conducive to quiet, restful, or inspiring thoughts.

"DIRGE" (Bay of Islands).

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

A.R.D.F. (Devonport), and "Succoth" (Blenheim): Discussion closed.

"Augustus Secundus": The whine you complain of is probably heterodyne interference from an Australian station. There is nothing you can do about it.

"Interested" (Timaru): It has already been explained by the Minister of Broadcasting that the Citizens' Forum enables a wider range of speakers to take part.

Christchurch Listener: We understand that the play is being withdrawn from the programmes and re-auditioned. If it is found to be unsuitable for broadcast it will be withdrawn permanently.