

LISTENER

Incorporating N.Z. RADIO RECORD

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Seeds of Liberty

NOW that the Commonwealth Conference is over it is difficult not to feel some regret that Britain has been so successful in sowing the seeds of liberty. It has cost her an Empire and, temporarily at least, seems likely to forbid a fully effective commonwealth. Eire is as good as out. India seems committed to getting out. South Africa remains in chiefly for her own advantage. We are poor Britons if that does not depress us. But we can also be proud Britons. The Empire has taken these jolts because it has practised liberty as well as preached it. There have been necessities too, of course, which it would be fatuous to ignore: two wars, weariness, impoverishment. It would not have been easy for Britain to bear the burdens of Empire to-day if that had been her purpose and policy. But it would not have been impossible. The only impossible thing was to try to bear them, to forget all the preachings and promises and argue that the time had not yet come for carrying them out. This she has not done. She has not once been near doing it. She has agreed that people fit for freedom should have it and has accepted all the consequences, some of them clearly very grave. For we must not suppose that generosity infallibly begets generosity. We may hope that it will, but to be sure that it will is to have seen little and understood less during the last 10 years. Britain has not moved from one safe place to another. She has moved with high courage into the unknown and New Zealand goes with her. If it would be humbug to say that we all go gladly there is something seriously wrong with us if we go grudgingly. We should realise that Britain has never needed us more than she needs us to-day, that the fewer we are in the Commonwealth the more closely we must co-operate, and that we can share the glory only if we share the risks.

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

THE NEWSPAPERS.

Sir,—Messrs. Gapper and Melville (whose innocence is too pure for this vile world) ask for "concrete examples" in support of the charge that newspapers sometimes "slant" news to lead readers to certain conclusions. Let me put this question to them. Is it not a fact that at the height of the controversy about Auckland's sewerage scheme an Auckland newspaper was given two statements made by eminent men — statements made with reference to the scheme itself, not mere generalisations; and that the two men were Sir John Boyd Orr, then head of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, and Viscount Bledisloe, sometime Governor-General of New Zealand and an ex-president of the Royal Agricultural Society of Great Britain; that both statements were flatly opposed, in their implications, to the policy of the paper; and that both were refused publication? More recently, were not full publicity, and editorial approval, given to a report on the same question by the engineer of the Drainage Board? And was not a statement signed by a university professor of law expressing the view that quotations from authorities in the report had been garbled, to such an extent as to be misleading, was that not refused publication? I could supply other examples if space permitted.

Our newspapers are not as bad as they might be. Some of them show a high sense of editorial responsibility. But there are one or two of them that will go to extraordinary lengths, on occasion, to suppress important information about matters on which they have taken a strong line of editorial policy. I think nearly everybody in the community is aware of this. Hence the general distrust (in some cases largely undeserved) with which they are regarded by the public. All this is regrettable—for the integrity of the press is of vital importance in a democracy.

A. R. D. FAIRBURN (Auckland).

BAND MUSIC

Sir,—As the son of a bandsman—in my infancy my father lulled me to sleep in my cradle by muting his cornet—love of brass band music has been with me all through my long life. I follow all through the week such programmes in *The Listener*.

Now, then (as Mr. Savage used to exclaim): This morning 2YA's 10 o'clock session by the Wellington Citadel Salvation Army Band was so good that I would suggest its recording, not only for use throughout our Dominion, but for exchange overseas. The half-hour was as good as any provided by records imported. The cornet and euphonium solos graded high.

TOM L. MILLS (Feilding).

MEDTNER AND THE MAHARAJAH

Sir,—On Page 10 of *The Listener* for October 8 an article is published on the interest taken by the Maharajah of Mysore in the music of Medtner. As an old Mysorean, I was interested, and on reading the article find that the Maharajah of Mysore mentioned is obviously the present ruler, whereas the photograph is that of his predecessor, the late Maharajah. I have seen both rulers personally, and no mistake arises on my part.

I hope the mistake will be rectified in the interest of your public, and that

of His Highness the present Maharajah of Mysore. MYSORE (Kirikopuni).

(Our correspondent is correct. The photograph published, which was supplied to us in good faith, was that of H.H. Sir Sri Kanthirava Narasimharaja Wadiyar Bahadur, who was succeeded in 1940 by the present Maharajah, H.H. Sri Jaya Chamaraja Wadiyar Bahadur.—Ed.)

ORPHANAGES AND ORPHANS

Sir,—In all the comments on Mrs. Mirams's interesting article on "Orphanages" some vital points are missed. Granting the disadvantages of institution life for children, there yet remain some positive benefits that are, now more than ever before, missing in many private homes.

On the physical side, thanks partly to discipline necessary with large numbers:

- (1) Regular and adequate rest and sleep.
- (2) Good food, especially milk and vegetables, eaten as a matter of course, without argument.
- (3) A quiet regularity of life, whose comparative lack of excitement is more than compensated for by the endless variety of play possible only to large groups of children.

On the psychological side, in any Home worthy of the name, there is the immeasurable benefit of learning, while young, to be part of a community, in sharing both work and play.

In the Home known intimately to me the children are noticeably helpful, friendly with strangers, and cheerful work and play is the usual thing, discontent and quarrelling quite the exception.

Most Homes must have a small proportion of children who, by reason of unfortunate early environment or habits, are not likely to be happily boarded out. For these especially, the Cottage Homes are the ideal, and it is to be hoped that it will not be long before all Homes are in that form. Naturally, no institution can compare with a good home, their justification lies only in taking the place of a bad or non-existent one.

ALISON ATKINSON
(Eastbourne).

Sir,—May I touch upon several points raised in this discussion? First, I consider there should be adequate provision of finance and to leave this to private organisations—however well-intentioned—is to invite the abuses pointed out by your original contributor. The present structure is merely a continuation of the out-moded Victorian conception of well-doing. Why should the children have to rely upon the "charity" of committees of private persons.

How little are the needs of youngsters understood by middle-aged and elderly committee folk who live in the world of the past and do not realise that the children, unlike themselves, judge on existing standards. Is it appreciated for instance that the spotlessly clean buildings and well-kept gardens too often represent hours of drudgery for the youngsters who would normally be playing with their fellows at school or home? Or that in many (but not all) cases the visit of an "old boy" to the Home is not a cause for self-congratulation as it represents the poverty of institution life in that he was unable to make normal contacts and friends, and consequently the Home is the only place

he can look to that gives any connection with his boyhood. Incidentally, I am an "old boy."

M. YOUNG (Waimate).

THE NEW ART

Sir,—I was much interested in your article "What Does the New Art Mean?" Art and intellect appear to occupy to a large extent incompatible spheres, as Mr. Woollaston expresses it. He has neglected like other artists to develop the art of explaining his pictures.

Dr. Carrel, the eminent worker in medical research, in his book *Man the Unknown* advances the theory that in human development the artistic faculties make their appearance first, and are dominant up to about the age of eleven. As the reasoning faculties begin to develop this artistic faculty declines (note the high standard of art in the primary schools compared with the indifference in the secondary schools). In a case of arrested development, where the reasoning faculties fail to develop normally, the emotional and creative faculties of the artist continue to be dominant.

It appears to me that the more extravagant forms of the new art are the outcome of a childish desire on the part of some artists for public notice and recognition. Instead of being content like the old masters with the natural satisfaction which the exercise of creative and emotional powers brings with it, they create something different in the extreme from accepted standards, call it a new -ism, and intimate that it is progress in art. The public react by taking notice and talking about it, they try to find a meaning (like solving a crossword puzzle), but this does not add to its aesthetic value.

H. M. HELM (Pangatotara).

NEW ZILLAND AND NEW ZILLANDERS

Sir,—The other Monday night, when four literary men were discussing their craft from 2YA, two of them repeatedly spoke of "New Zilland" and "New Zillanders." Listeners have every justification for believing that people of such literary eminence would use standard pronunciation, and by copying them are in danger of spreading a hideous and incorrect usage.

W. H. GRAHAM (Mangere).

VICTORIAN SUNDAYS

Sir,—Allow me to protest at the unutterable dullness, and Victorian scrap-piness, which now pervades our Sunday afternoon programmes. When New Zealand's intelligentsia have effective microphone voices their facile arguments may be worth listening to.

G. A. McCracken
(Pukekohe).

NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

Mrs. Sylvia Henderson: Please forward your address.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

R.J.T. (Epsom): Actionable.
R.C.A. (Taupaki) and others: Letters sent to the Editor for publication under a nom-de-plume must carry the name and address of the writer.

"Listener" (Te Aroha): The frequency of 1YD has been changed temporarily from 1250 kc. to 1280 kc., while adjustments are made to eliminate interference with certain commercial telegraph channels. This interference arises from combination frequencies between 1YA and 1YD. As soon as the adjustments are completed 1YD will return to its scheduled frequency of 1250 kc.