

Summer "Don'ts"

EVERY summer it becomes the unpleasant duty of the Broadcasting Service to issue warnings against summer sins—driving too fast or too carelessly, lighting or leaving fires, indulging in acts of vandalism, strewing litter on beaches and picnic grounds, feeding and breeding flies. It is unpleasant because it makes the Service a kind of nagging parent without any of a parent's resources in meeting complaints. But he is a bold listener who would say that it need not be done. The parent who refuses to nag may have a better technique; but the parent who does nothing at all gets the gratitude he deserves and the children he deserves. So does society. If we will behave like children we must be treated like children if that is the only way of checking our dangerous habits. There is certainly a limit beyond which nagging must not go—if nagging is permissible at all; but there is no present indication that it is safe to leave us to our own thoughtlessness. The alternative to verbal warnings is sharp, very sharp, penal visitations for every offence, and public opinion will perhaps come to that. But if we find it an affliction, as we so often do, to endure these wearisome "don'ts," the man who must listen to them is not nearly so tired of them as the men and women whose duty it is to repeat them. Nor is the limit beyond which they must not go so soon reached as the limit to human ingenuity in devising variations on them. It is easy enough to criticise the department, the station, the announcer whose "do this" and "don't do that" bursts on us, or may burst on us, as often as we turn a knob; but it is not reasonable to complain of them unless we are aiding and abetting them when they are not talking at us. It is mere petulance to shoot the pianist if we demand music and have no substitute for him. And it is petulant to complain of the tedious repetition of fire warnings, driving warnings, and health warnings, unless we know of a better way of making the careless careful at this generally careless season of the year. If we must shoot, our target should not be the unfortunate announcer.

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

NEWS BULLETIN

Sir,—For selfishness I think J.W.B.'s letter in your issue of December 31 takes the cake. He may have newspapers and reviews ready at his hand and knowledge and money to know what books to buy on the world's troubled state. Does he ever think of those people who live far away and are most anxious to hear the daily news? They may get papers once or twice a week. As for the Sunday commentary, I know many people who think it is the most important item in the news and is necessary for a clearer idea of world affairs.

G.J.R. (Fendalton).

NOTE FROM RABAU

Sir,—The note from Rabaul was a faraway call, But wouldn't it be more fittin', If the title of same Had been given the name— "A Letter of thanks from New Britain?"

A. L. WHELDON (Kelburn).

(Yes, it would have been.—Ed.)

"NOO ZILLAND"

Sir,—I am writing to differ respectfully from your correspondent Isabel M. Cluett on the current political pronunciation of the name of our Dominion. It is, I submit, not exactly as she indicates, but actually "Ner Zillum." The final consonant is a bi-labial, and not a nasalised linguo-palatal; this would be made clear by visual, as well as by closer oral, observation.

In the case of any controversy arising in the matter, I shall request a photographic finish.

PARSON (Christchurch).

Sir,—Your correspondent Isabel Cluett is quite right: "Noo Zillan" is a sort of political sound which is spreading among the uneducated. I would like her to listen to 3ZB station and hear one of our announcers direct us to places in our city we have never heard of—firms in "Snasf Street, or "Snal-bans" or even in "Har Street Craschurch." It is about time some of these people had a refresher course in English if radio announcing is not going to degenerate into a veritable slang.

R. CHAMBERLAIN (Fendalton).

APPRECIATION AND GRATITUDE

Sir,—May I express my appreciation and gratitude for the efforts of both performers and broadcasters in connection with a recent work.

New Zealand composers have sometimes complained, perhaps rightly, of neglect by the broadcasting authorities, and of indifference of performance when a composition was finally brought to hearing. If one has something to express, it is stultifying to suffer such disappointments and setbacks. But whatever was the position in the past, nowhere in the Broadcasting Service have I received anything but the greatest help and courtesy. The fact that each department so willingly gave its time and assistance to an unknown artist shows that a different attitude towards New Zealand music now exists.

The creation of a National Symphony Orchestra here also means that a higher level of performance will be available

for chamber music. That this work seems to have been appreciated by its radio audience was, I feel, largely due to the excellent playing of all performers and to intensive rehearsal. I understand that reception of the music was not equal on all sets, in some cases the strings being a little in the background, especially in the muted second movement. This may explain certain comments in a recent review in *The Listener*. Having been present at rehearsals and performance may I emphasise that the string playing was neither matter of fact nor ever intended to be.

I have already expressed gratitude to the Director of Broadcasting, but I should like to suggest to the New Zealand radio public through your columns

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that if it so readily ventilates grievances and complaints in letters to *The Listener*, it is but fair also to return due thanks when one is very well satisfied.

H. J. FINLAY (Karori).

Sir,—I am a very constant listener to radio programmes and I want to say how much I appreciate the very popular records, request sessions, and other music that Stations 3YZ, 1YD, 3YA, 2YZ, give us in the mornings and evenings. I like cowboy songs and band music, and I also have a lot of time for old dance orchestras.

TOM TITREE (Far North).

ASK THE CAT

Sir,—I did not hear the *Speaking for Ourselves* panel discussing whether cats purr when alone (mentioned by your *Viewsreel* commentator), and I am therefore unable to say whether any of them gave the obvious answer—"ask the cat." He is the one who should know, after all. We have no cat in our household at present, but our Wilkins Micawber, who passed over some months back, could certainly have told me if I had thought to inquire. Unfortunately I never did. But it is not too late for those whose pets are still with them to find out. I am sure Micawber was not unique, extraordinary though he was.

DENNIS McELDOWNEY

(Papanui).

GOD'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Sir,—Your devout correspondent F. J. Hooper is sure that "God is not responsible for the King's or our own illness," and reminds us that God "created man perfect." If the account in *Genesis* is true we must accept the statement "God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good." How, then, are we to account for the "illnesses" of many kinds that afflict vegetables and animal life in the primitive state? Are volcanoes, hurricanes, waterspouts, and other violences of nature "very good?"

Just a hundred years ago Francois Guizot, French statesman and historian, was Prime Minister in France. He also was a devout believer in God. In his *History of Civilization in Europe* he wrote: "European civilization has entered, if we may so speak, into eternal truth, into the plan of Providence; it progresses according to the intentions

of God. This is the rational account of its superiority."

Now if that be true, are we not driven inevitably to the conclusion that all that has happened in Europe since 1848 occurred because God planned it—including the first World War, Mussolini, Hitler, the Russian Revolution, and the second World War and the atom bomb?

Those who insist on regarding our universe as the product of one mind in a sort of superhuman being cannot escape the uncomfortable conclusion of allocating responsibility to the Creator.

J. MALTON MURRAY (Oamaru).

GRAND OPERA SEASON

Sir,—Your correspondent M. T. Stewart (*Listener*, December 24) may be interested to know that a few other members of the present Italian opera company have made recordings. The dramatic soprano Germana di Giulio has recently done arias from *Forza del Destino*, *Gioconda*, *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Thais*. The young tenor Aldo Ferracuti has recorded the duet from *Cavalleria* with the soprano Sara Scuderi. (It is Ferracuti, by the way, who contributes a few offstage shouts of "Butterfly!" at the end of Adriana Guerini's recent disc of the finale from that opera!) Baritone Leo Piccioli made some standard arias, also for Italian Columbia, some years ago, and the bass Agostino Romani was rumoured to have done at least one recording when he was in London with the San Carlo company late in 1946.

As a pendant to the *Turandot* discussion, it is interesting to note that Franco Ghione is the conductor of the complete recording of this opera.

JOHN GRAY (Dunedin).

PRONUNCIATION

Sir,—Like your correspondent Isabel M. Cluett I have my own pet aversions, two of which are kept alive by radio announcers. They appear never to have heard of such a word as "medicine"—its place is taken by the slipshod "medsin." Another word which I detest is "exquisite," with the emphasis definitely on the "quiz." Or am I like the old lady who objected to slang, and who told her granddaughter there were two words she never wished to hear her use. They were "swell" and "lousy." "Oh Gran," said the modern miss, "Do tell me what they are!"

E.S. (Onehunga).

(The slipshod "medsin" has the support of Oxford.—Ed.)

CLIMATE IN DUNEDIN

Sir,—"Sundowner" will be glad to hear that he has made a mistake when he says, "If puriris will not grow in the South Island, or pohutukawas. . . ." This does not hold good for Dunedin, as there are a number of flourishing pohutukawas growing about Dunedin, and at least three puriris that I know of. Until they are three or four years old one gets better results by protecting them from frosts, but after that they "can take it" and flourish.

JOHN ADAM NASON (Woodhaugh).

("Sundowner" asks us to convey his thanks.—Ed.)

NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTOR

K. J. Ashton: Would you please send us your address?

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS
I. Kerridge (Auckland): Try again.