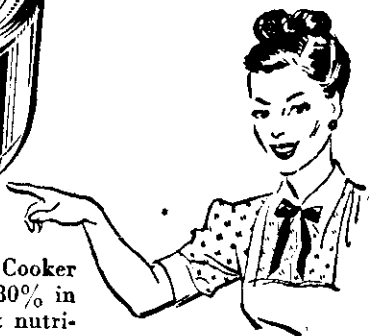


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RADIO REVIEW

Are We Too Refined?

BRITONS, notoriously, hug their chains. Tommy Handley did more than that. He danced them up and down in front of the microphone and made them positively glitter. Trying to dissect the reason for *Itma's* almost universal success, and disregarding for the moment the obvious appeal of such genuine comic creations as Colonel Chinstrap, one remembers that the main bursts of spontaneous and appreciative laughter came from the current comments and the vulgarity. From everything in fact that stemmed from life itself.

Tommy Handley's references to anything from the meat ration to the price of coal, the jokes about, say, Sir Stafford Cripps or Mr. Aneurin Bevan, brought an immediate and almost rapturous response. Comments on these men and these affairs were so greeted because they were concerned with the daily business of living. If that business had its grim aspects, there was a certain relief in being able to laugh in company with others who were experiencing the same circumstances. The men we can laugh at come automatically nearer to heart and affection. We become more sympathetic and therefore more understanding of their particular difficulties. The man of destiny who from his pedestal commands only respect or fear, has nothing in common with the common man.

Our own radio, however, has adopted a different policy and our men of affairs are kept aloof. The freedom of the newspaper cartoonist, the writer,



and even the vaudeville artist is denied the broadcast programme. *Itma's* occasional excursions into the vulgar scored because they took the innuendo or the involved double entendre in their stride, calling for the sudden burst of laughter, never the snigger behind the hand. There is nothing intrinsically bad about the so-called low joke if it is seasoned with wit and good humour.

The BBC accepted this as they accepted the fact that maturity is not attained through successive layers of cotton wool. It is surely useless, then, to assume that New Zealanders are more, or less, than other men. If a Tommy Handley were to grow up in our midst, would he be given the opportunity to develop his own very special brand of comic genius? Ted Kavanaugh, *Itma's* script writer, is a New Zealander. Would he get a job in an organisation where any suggestion of indigenous comment

(continued on next page)

"THE LISTENER" CROSSWORD

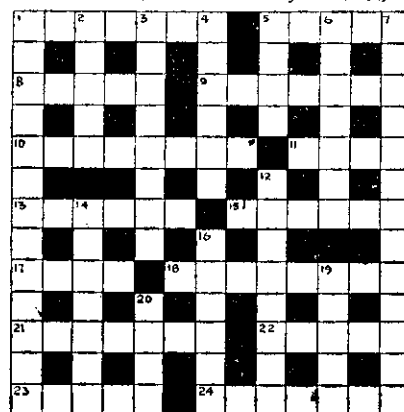
(Solution to No. 465)

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Clues Down

- Suffering from morbid, causeless depression.
- Stir with a toast?
- Forty-five inches in Burma; you'll need it if it rains.
- Wipe out.
- "Since nought so stockish, hard, and full of—
But music for the time doth change his nature."
("Merchant of Venice," Act V, Sc. 1.)
- These sewing implements are almost unnecessary.
- Tie not remnant—this should amuse you.
- Parts of the whole The trade retails At Spring and Summer Bargain sales.
- Refrain.
- This railway has its ups and downs.
- Did Mr. Jones the architect say
"—and out I come?"
- "But Shakespeare also says, 'tis very silly
"To gild refined gold, or paint the—"
(Byron)

No. 466 (Constructed by R.W.C.)



Clues Across

- Her suit may be, if it's tweed, and anyway it sounds like it.
- Would a siren perhaps do this to her hair after combing it?
- Sound—and nothing to do with 22 across.
- G-men in a fit? It's only imagination.
- Merciful treatment.
- Stigma.
- Boat of skin-covered wicker loses one end and displays an infallible guide.
- Nothing but praise for this country.
- It ran away with the spoon.
- Cain's son (anag.).
- Name of one of Bach's concertos.
- "The inaudible and —less foot of time."
("All's Well that Ends Well," Act V, Sc. 3.)
- A tuft turns this sweet into a flower.
- Expel.

N.Z. LISTENER, OCTOBER 21, 1949.