

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

Letters sent to "The Listener" for publication should be as brief as possible and should deal with topics covered in "The Listener" itself. Correspondents must send their names and addresses even when it is their wish that these should not be published. We cannot undertake to give reasons why all or any portion of a letter is rejected.

BUBBLES

To the Editor,
"The Listener."

Sir,—Your reference to the picture "Bubbles" in your issue of February 9, does not say how a firm of soap-makers got hold of that portrait. If you look at any normal person you will see that the upper lip is about on a level with the lobe of the ear. In the portrait in "Bubbles" the little boy's ear is placed far below this level, indeed, so much so, that when this error was pointed out to Sir John Millais he did not exhibit the picture. Later it was sold to the soap firm. Shortly before the war of 1914 Sir William—then Mr.—James was in New Zealand, where there are, or were, members of the Millais family at Wellington.

Yours, etc.,
LLEWELLYN ETHERINGTON.

Auckland,
February 7, 1940.

PIONEERING THE PUMICE

The Editor,
"The Listener,"

Sir,—I was interested to read your review of "Pioneering the Pumice." In fact, it was the cause of my reading the book, for, though I had access to it, the book's title was not encouraging, even to one interested in farming.

However, I was pleasantly surprised, as apparently your reviewer was, to discover not just a mass of statistics and a treatise on farming under difficult conditions, but quite a fascinating literary broth of farming, politics, botany, anthropology, history, local body intrigues, humorous and serious reminiscences galore, and, above all, a host of strong opinions about almost everything under the sun. Indeed, Mr. Vaile's tendency to swoop off from the subject into a discourse on some entirely irrelevant matter provides, for me, one of the most piquant features of the book. Like eating an excellent Irish stew, you are never quite sure what you will swallow next (not that I swallowed everything).

At some of the things Mr. Vaile considers outstanding, I must admit to being puzzled. Space will allow but one example (and that may seem like pin-pricking). I recall his supreme example of long hours on the job — 1 a.m. until 8 p.m. once while mustering. My experience of farming is paltry beside that of Mr. Vaile, yet, while dairying at the height of the season, I have worked from 3.30 a.m. till 8.30 p.m. as the regular thing. Yes, we stopped to eat, but not for long, and I think Mr. Vaile did too. Such hours as those are certainly horrible, but they are not so very amazing.

However, outstanding above all is the fact that Mr. Vaile is a versatile and conscientious hard worker who has carried out a great piece of pioneering. That he could have lived an easier life had he chosen reflects to his credit. And, he has succeeded in the difficult task of making the story of a New Zealand farm interesting, amusing and human.

Which brings us to a point. Despite your reviewer's admitted self-abasement, I think he is just a little hard on Mr. Vaile in parts. He hates everything the author says? Everything? I wonder — is it just possible he comes from the south?

Certainly, I found many of Mr. Vaile's opinions distasteful — even including the unkind comparisons 'twixt north and south; many of his opinions I liked none the better for their air of complete finality. But, in the pioneering sphere, Mr. Vaile has done a

man's job in the full sense of the phrase, and, as a wise physician who knows about these things said to me recently, "Very, very few of us are fully grown up in all respects."

Yours, etc.,
EFFIGY.

Wellington,
February 8, 1940.

WELLINGTON SINGERS

To The Editor,
"The Listener,"

Sir,—It is very gratifying to note the number of young singers who are receiving the opportunity of broadcasting from 1YA, 3YA and 4YA. It is delightful for New Zealand radio audiences to listen to the youth of their country, but where are our Wellington singers?

That we have them, I know! The Melba Scholarship Preliminary Contest was held here recently, and brought forth some really excellent talent: if I am correct, a Wellington competitor was runner-up for the New Zealand finals.

While appreciating the more experienced men and

OUR COVER PICTURE

The striking illustration on our cover page is a symbolical representation by Russell Clark of the Spirit of Finland. The central figure is Vainamoinen, the legendary protector of Finland, celebrated in the "Kalevala," Finland's national epic. The other features of the design symbolise the art and industry of Finland, and the soil that is the source of them all — timber, manufacturing, music, poetry, painting, architecture, science, and education

women singers, radio audiences would welcome the freshness of these young voices. There are several young women in Wellington who, in my opinion, far surpass the standard of some of the older artists, and why should not some of the best of them be heard?

Yours, etc.,
J.E.B.

Khandallah,
February 10, 1940.

NEWS FROM INDO-CHINA

To the Editor,
"The Listener."

Sir,—I would like to bring to your notice another News Session in English to add to your list, viz., Radio Saigon in French Indo-China, frequency 11.78 mc/s, time about 10.45 p.m. New Zealand Summer Time. This station comes in with excellent signal strength and some very interesting news.

Your "Empire Service" and shortwave news page is most useful and much appreciated by

Yours, etc.,
JOHN R. WILKINSON.

Wanganui,
February 8, 1940.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

"Listener." Waitoa: Mexico, but you probably heard XE, not XC.

"Interested Listener": We are sorry, but you have asked a Service secret.

"Curious": Six: Harry Frommmermann, Roman Cycowski, Hans Rexsis, Erich A. Collin, Fritz Kramer, Rudolph Mayreder.

Radio Personalities

(13) F. D. J. Crowle, Station
Manager, 2YH, Napier



F. D. J. CROWLE, station manager at Napier's 2YH, comes from Waimate.

At St. Bede's College, Christchurch, he started a promising academic career, represented his school in oratory (against St. Patrick's College, Wellington), and played in the First Fifteen. He had hoped to continue with a University education, but instead went farming at Waimate, where, during four years, he became a well-known member of the Catholic Dramatic Club, one of the most successful competitors in the famous South Canterbury Drama League's festivals.

It was in 1932 that he started radio work, announcing in Christchurch. He liked it, and kept at it, but found time outside the studio to continue his studies and win his Master of Arts degree.

He went to Napier in 1938, and has since then been station manager at Station 2YH.

He is married, with a family of two.

Recreations: mainly intellectual, partly gardening, partly golf, in which, he says, he has attained no heights.

Although his work is now so much more closely connected with the administrative side of radio work, he still takes a keen interest in announcing and has his own ideas on the subject; one of them that New Zealanders should speak like New Zealanders and make no futile attempts to copy other people. In the natural course of events, New Zealand, he thinks, will develop a distinctive speech out of all the elements which, combined, affect English pronunciation. This process should be allowed to develop, as he thinks it inevitably would.