

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 Correspondents must send their names and addresses even when it is their wish that these should not be published.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.

DX NOTES

The Editor,
"The Listener."

Sir,—I am amused by the letter signed "Bored" in your issue of March 24-30. "Bored" can only get Germany, Russia, etc., on his set but if he realised the amount of interest that is taken by DX-ers with sets capable of getting stations that he has never even heard of, he would be surprised. He says this might have been of interest 15 years ago. Well, I can tell "Bored" that I have had a wireless set for more than 15 years, and the notes are of great interest to keen radio men. It is strange to complain that 9 inches should be allotted to DX notes out of about two thousand inches.

Yours, etc.,
N.Z.DX.R.A. (1559).

North Brighton,
March 21, 1940.

The Editor,
"The Listener."

Sir,—In last week's issue of *The Listener* I read a letter written by one who signed his name as "Bored," and complained of the DX notes in *The Listener*. He may think DX-ing is absurd, and there are a few more like him, but few DX-ers listen to the ultra-high-powered stations such as he mentions. Furthermore, DX-ers who subscribe to this paper should be entitled to a small amount of space, even if it is only nine inches.

Yours, etc.,
DX-er.

Mataura,
March 23, 1940.

Sir,—In reply to the letter by "Bored" published by you in your issue of March 21, I believe that I am speaking for all the members of the New Zealand DX Club, and of the New Zealand DX Radio Association, when I say that his statement is absolutely incorrect. Perhaps people like "Bored" who are incapable of appreciating the great pleasure, fellowship, etc., of "Real DX-ing," may think that DX is useless and absurd, but anybody who has DX-ed or listened to some outlandish station (and there are plenty of them), cannot but experience a thrill. I have been a DX-er now for six years, and can honestly say that I can still hear new stations and new countries practically every night. If "Bored" would spend an evening with any ardent DX-er located near him I am sure that he would change his tune. If he is willing to co-operate, I will gladly pay his subscription for the New Zealand DX-ers Association, and after he comes in contact with other Club members he will change his mind. I am hoping to receive a letter from "Bored."

Yours, etc.,
L. W. SUTHERLAND,
R.A. 1592 DX.78.T.

Hamilton,
March 22, 1940.

The Editor,
"The Listener."

Sir,—I agree with "Bored" — partly. It is no earthly use publishing particulars of any station which operates on a frequency or with power so low that it is impossible to hear it in this country. On the other hand, if Budapest can be heard on "one

cat power," or Timbuctoo on "one flea power," I venture to say that this sort of news is welcome to more readers than "Bored" realises.

While I am on the job, just a little criticism of your "News Bulletins in English" and the "Empire Service." To my mind you waste a lot of valuable space in these features. The information given is welcomed by many, but why give all the frequencies used, when so many are not audible here at the times given? My idea is to select those frequencies best heard in New Zealand, at the different times, and leave the others out. Also, why cover the 24 hours when few will listen from, say, midnight till 6 a.m.?

One more point. The schedules for Daventry are mainly correct, but I am afraid that this cannot be said for many of the foreign stations, either time or frequency. Information which is not correct, or doubtful, is best left out, and I know as well as you do how difficult it is to guarantee correctness in these cases.

Yours, etc.,
B.C.L.

Wellington,
March 26, 1940.

THE DEATH RAY

The Editor,
"The Listener."

Sir,—The article in a recent *Listener*, "Is There a Death Ray?" gives food for thought.

Although men of science in many parts of the globe are experimenting with what is termed a death ray, so far this possibility, a ray which will destroy battleships, aircraft and cities, exists only in the mind of man, mostly writers of fiction. But science is divided on the question. One school of thought maintains that it is impossible to evolve such a ray, while others believe that it is well within the realms of possibility. Also there is no mystery regarding the possibility of such a ray.

The question is whether it is possible to use the oscillations of ultra-short radio waves to administer destruction from afar. It is contended that these waves increase the vibration to such an extent that the ignition system of a motor, tank, or ship, is disrupted to such a degree as to render it useless. In reference to animals and human beings, according to modern physics, this increase of vibration

PORTRAIT OF MR. SAVAGE

To meet the wishes of disappointed subscribers who are anxious to possess the excellent portrait of Mr. Savage by our official photographer, Spencer Digby (which was contained in our issue of April 5), the Publications Department of "The Listener" will receive a limited number of applications for the supplement only.

Single copies of the portrait supplement will be forwarded post free to any address on receipt of twopence in stamps and the coupon which will be found at the foot of Page 55 of this issue.

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causes the individual molecules in the body to explode.

No nation has yet perfected the so-called death ray, but every nation is experimenting in that direction. Also the "perfect military secret," the property of one nation alone, has yet to be evolved. The death ray, should it ever come, will be the coup de grace administered by war to humanity.

Yours, etc.,
HARRY WOODRUFFE.

Auckland,
March 17, 1940.

ROOKIES

"The Listener."
The Editor,

Sir,—There is an article in your last issue on "Army Slang" (Page 4), where you say that "rookie" is a new word, and means a private soldier. It is not a new word. You will find it in Kipling's "Barrack-Room Ballads," which was published in late 'eighties, or early 'nineties, of last century. It is in the second to last verse of "Route Marchin'", which runs:

So 'ark and 'eed you rookies which is always
grumblin' sore,
There's worser things than marchin' from Umballa to Cawnpore, etc.

The meaning of the word is a recruit of less than six months' service. It wasn't a new word when Kipling used it fifty years ago. With best wishes to *The Listener*,

Yours, etc.,
A. CHISHOLM.

Waipukurau,
March 17, 1940.

(We thank the correspondent who has reminded us of Kipling. But "rookie" was not used in the last war, and but for an American film would perhaps not have been used in this war. In that sense it is a new word.)

LISTENING TO THE GRAMOPHONE

The Editor,
"The Listener"

Sir,—I am quite unable to agree with the sentiments expressed by you under this heading in *The Listener* of 15/3/40. You hold that when face to face with an enemy we must take great pains to conceal our own weaknesses. In a word you advocate something approaching blind reverence, temporarily at least. At no time and under no circumstances do I believe in blind reverence for something that exhibits flaws. Moreover the more energetic we are in denouncing the vices of our enemy, the more grave becomes the danger of losing all consciousness of our own.

Recently the Dean of Canterbury in an article entitled "Is this what we are fighting for?" revealed that one sixth of the total child population of Great Britain is (be it observed that all the blunders of Britain are not to be spoken of in the past tense) dangerously undernourished. Now, sir, this is one of those cankerous growths about which you bid us be silent. The Dean of Canterbury is not a victim of "perversion and disease," neither did he make this revelation for the edification of Dr. Goebbels. It is essentially for our own benefit, and to whatever purpose it is directed by our enemy it must have the effect of goading our own men into battle if this war be regarded in its true light, as a crusade. And in this connection here is the point to be stressed: this crusade is to be directed quite as much against the moles on our own faces as against those on Hitler's.

Yours, etc.,
JASON.

To Awamutu,
March 18, 1940.

(The Dean would have been better employed reading the third chapter of *Ecclesiastes*. However worthy his motive was, if the effect of his words was to encourage the enemy and discourage and divide his own people, he should have remained silent at this stage in the struggle.—Ed.)