

LISTENER

Incorporating N.Z. RADIO RECORD

Every Friday Price Threepence

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Each In His Turn

IT is a sobering thought that the appearance of this number coincides with the appearance of a Gazette calling up sixteen thousand of our countrymen for military service. More sobering still is the thought that everybody over forty has seen such things happen before. Twenty-two years is a long stretch for boys and girls, but to those who were men and women when the last ballot was taken it is almost no time at all, and is certainly not long enough to dim the memories of 1918. It would be unnatural, insensitive, and dangerously uncomprehending to accept such experiences without question.

We do question them, and we should. We should even feel bitter about them. But we deserve no pity and we shall experience no mercy if we waste time expressing our bitterness while gangsters gun our homes. Ballots have never been taken in New Zealand to make men fight. They are taken to settle in what order each will fight—a vastly different matter; to free the individual from the burden of a decision he is not always competent to make. We should be bitter against the war-mongers who make a decision necessary, but we are poor representatives of our race and age if, since sacrifice is necessary, we do not accept it cheerfully when we know that it is our turn to pay.

Conscription cannot, in a self-governing community, send men to war. The community decides on war and conscription settles the method of waging it. That is why there will be no distinction in the army itself between volunteers and men called in by ballot, and why it makes no difference whether the ballot is for home service or for service overseas.

Parliament and the people declare for battle. The ballot merely sounds the "Fall in." By the men themselves it will be answered very cheerfully.

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 Correspondents must send their names and addresses even when it is their wish that these should not be published.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

MODERN MUSIC

Sir,—It had not been my intention again to join in this interminable controversy, but with your kind permission I should like to add a few final words to correct a misapprehension that has arisen. The only fault I can find with *The Listener* is that the long interval between your receipt of correspondents' letters and the appearance of them in print is apt to obscure the original argument. So it happens that I am now charged with having said something concerning music which I certainly never have said.

In your issue of September 13 there appeared two letters under the above heading, both refuting statements allegedly made by me. The first letter was signed, "Jack Point." I do not propose to comment on this effusion, for the simple reason that when he penned it the writer was obviously beside himself; consequently, his letter is quite beside the point.

But the second letter, sir, gave me much concern—I refer to that signed "Miss Modern." If I may employ the classic vernacular, I would say to her: "Lady, you done me wrong!" Your fair correspondent is unfair when she arraigns me as an "apparently dissatisfied listener-in . . . unable to find a programme" to suit me "within the whole range of N.Z. stations."

Mr. Editor, I never said no such thing! Not once in my letters have I assailed or impugned our radio fare. On the contrary, in various newspaper articles I have repeatedly extolled the efforts of the NBS to improve broadcast programmes. "Miss Modern" has evidently not read my letters carefully or she would know that the criticisms therein have been directed solely against certain extreme types of modern music. On this subject, my opinions are unalterable, and for peace's sake I now withdraw from the arena.

—L. D. AUSTIN (Wellington).

"MUSIC FROM THE THEATRE"

Sir,—We have endured in silence the "Music from the Theatre" series for many months. Is it still necessary for beautiful music to be drowned by a stream of fake description?

For example, on August 28 "Aurora's Wedding" was broadcast from 3YA. No mere words can convey the beauty of the actual dancing, but the effect of the running commentary was to make the music, which could have been enjoyed, subsidiary to the commentator's voice. In its softer passages the music became almost inaudible. The statement which was made with mock excitement in the above broadcast, "By Jove! the gentleman is leaping in the air," may be appropriate to a football match but not to Russian ballet.

If a description is wanted, it should be made at the commencement, so that the music, which is the basis of ballet, may be heard and appreciated.—M.M. (Invercargill).

INITIALS OR CHRISTIAN NAMES?

Sir,—I think the Broadcasting Services might well cry "touché" to "Touchy's" complaint on the above topic. I am inclined to believe that he is right, not merely from the point of view of euphony but also from that of style, since I have a vague recollection of being taught that the full Christian name and not merely the initials should follow the

use of any title. But, in any case, the use of initials is a most irritating practice, and to me a most tantalising form of semi-anonymity. It is almost as bad as using an alias. Imagine what feeling would be aroused in countless breasts if it were learned that the name H. G. Wells concealed the adumbrated persona of, say, Hannibal G. Wells, or H. Gulliver Wells. Of course it doesn't, but the thought is surely an appalling one. Of course there is an obverse side to the business. If the Führer had had the sense to stick to A. Hitler, the Fifth Column might have done a big build-up with whispers about Attila, or even Agamemnon, which are slightly more warlike to us than Adolphus, in spite of all that Gustavus of that ilk did in the brave days of yore. However, I suppose people will go using initials, no matter what I think.—S.P.Q.R. (Auckland).

NEW ZEALAND SLANG

Sir,—Mr. Sidney J. Baker (my son) is now living in Sydney, New South Wales, and will be unable for some time (depending entirely on the vagaries of the mail service) to reply to J.W.B., Kelburn,

More "Letters from Listeners" will be found on Page 14.

who appears to be somewhat annoyed by his views on Slang. He is very well able to defend himself, so I only ask you to publish this letter to hold the fort till he can deal with his critic in his own way.

—S. G. BAKER (Karori).

WALLACE IN NEW ZEALAND

Sir,—I have been very interested in the question in *The Listener* of September 13, whether Wallace, the composer, ever visited New Zealand. I can definitely say that he did in about the year 1847. My grandmother and grandfather travelled to Auckland from Sydney in the same sailing ship as he did and said that he was composing all the way across the Tasman, and my grandmother was told that Wallace completed the composition of "Maritana" going round the coast of New Zealand. My grandmother was particularly interested in music, being herself a performer on both the piano and harp which she had brought out from Ireland.

—E. M. WYNWARD (Remuera).

AS OTHERS SEE US

Sir,—I read with interest Mr. Garland's letter relating how he thinks a paper should be written. My opinion of your paper is that it is the best paper of the kind I have read—plenty of news, all the main programmes set out in readable type, a page for those who like sport, puzzles, a page for women, etc. Also you give very interesting extracts from recent talks—including all the ZB news, and very good reading it is too. Then instead of having those two pages "What Would You Like to Hear?" you have two different pages, "Things to Come" and "People in the Programmes," and all your articles are readable.—J. ENSOR (Hastings).

Sir,—I hope you will permit me, under one heading, to thank your correspondents, L. D. Austin and Fred. L. Garland for their recent letters. I heartily agree with both. —ALICE (Dunedin).

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

"Peggy."—One good bite deserves another. But see *Proverbs* I: 17.

"Alice."—Because it is not possible to get them soon enough for publication in *The Listener* (whose printers have to work several days in advance of the readers).