

# LISTENER

Incorporating N.Z. RADIO RECORD

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## The Darkness Deepens

IT would be foolish to pretend that Japan's line-up with Germany and Italy leaves Britain undisturbed. It is a grave development which neither Britain nor any British Dominion can treat lightly. Here in the South Pacific it is the most serious news since the fall of France. But anxiety is never an excuse for fear.

Whatever Japan does or tries to do, we are in a better position from almost every angle than we were two months ago. First we know now, and don't just hope, that Germany will not conquer England. We know that not enough airmen can be assembled anywhere in the world to destroy the R.A.F. We know that the United States grows stronger every day and draws nearer to Britain every day—and will continue in the same direction whatever happens next month in Washington. We don't know what Russia will do, now that her diplomacy has brought her so suddenly between the European hammer and the Asiatic anvil. But we know as much about that as Japan does, and as much now as is known in Germany, and we have no more reason than those countries have to be worried over the possibilities. Here again we must not fall back on sooth-saying. But we know how anxious Russia must be whether she looks East or West; how little she trusts her neighbours and how little they trust her; how many armies are immobilised as long as suspicion remains; and in any case that all the hosts of Hell will not conquer Britain while she holds the seas and controls her own skies.

There is a sense in which God is never mocked (whatever we mean by God). Reckless though it may sound to say so just now, humanity and decency are mighty allies. Neither in Germany itself nor in any of the countries at present under the German heel is humanity so blind that it can't see and decency so deaf that it can't hear. A just and generous conqueror has a chance of retaining his conquests. A tyrant and a liar has none. There are more men and more materials, more power and more resilience outside the control of the Axis than in all the regions it now dominates; and every man outside who is not a moron knows that the question is no longer whether he will save his life or lose it but whether he will endure hardship long enough to allow the tide of civilisation to turn.

## 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.

### KATHERINE MANSFIELD PORTRAIT

Sir,—Katherine Mansfield was included in your series of talks on New Zealanders who have won fame and distinction abroad. There is now in London a portrait of Katherine Mansfield by Anne Estelle Rice, an American artist, who worked with her in Paris and became a great friend. This is the only portrait in oils of Katherine Mansfield, and some of us think that it should be acquired for the National Portrait Gallery. I should be glad to hear from any of your readers who would be willing to help. —W. S. WAUCHOP (General Assembly Library, Wellington).

### BILLY BUNTER

Sir,—It was with great joy that we read in a recent issue that Billy Bunter was to be heard on the air. Our family were all brought up on Billy Bunter and his friends, and we still read them (when we think nobody will see us and laugh at us). We are no longer young. I am sure thousands of your young listeners, and old ones, too, will welcome the news, now that the books have ceased publication. My main reason for writing, however, was to ask whether the serial contemplated could not be put over on one of the other stations. With our set we cannot get 2YD at any time of the day or night, and the thought of our childhood heroes being on the air and we not able to hear them, would upset us very much. Please, Mr. Editor, couldn't you do something about it? I'm sure you'd please many others.—AN OLD READER (Rangiora).

("Billy Bunter" will be scheduled in the programme of one of the main stations later. Ample notice of presentation will be given in *The Listener*.—Ed.).

### WOMEN'S DIARIES.

Sir,—The other Diarists who tried to improve on Betty only made themselves look ridiculous. As for that man's Diary in this week's *Listener* I thought it the height of stupidity. If that is the way he thinks women should write a diary then some female should enlighten him. We hope to hear more from Betty. She is a great favourite with my girls and even with my husband, and we have missed her weekly story.—Listener-Reader (Remuera).

Sir,—What a very interesting woman's diary "Thud" writes—I beg his pardon, "Thid." So woman is unprincipled, vain, unbalanced, feckless, and dumb? What a pity not to have gone a little further and added—repressed, down-trodden, cowed, since history began, by that marvellous being "Man." Even though dumb, most women know that man is the superior creature—the one who possesses all the brain, or at least we ought to, we are told often enough.

Take some of our broadcasts (man-made, I think) and gauge the intelligence. Waiting for the 6 a.m. news, and afraid to turn off the radio for fear of missing the first of the broadcast, nerves are shattered for some maniac shrieking in a raucous voice, and proclaiming to the whole world that they have the "jitterbugs"—or worse still, the voice of a he-man whining out that his heart, or some other internal organ, has been misled. At the end, a manly voice says "1YA testing." In my "dumbness" I used to think it was the station being tested, but now I've come to the conclusion it's the listeners who are being tested, to see how much they can stand.

Now, take a look at the world to-day and see how very superior men are intellectually. One shud-

ders to think what a chaotic world this would be if women had been the rulers of the nations instead of the quiet peaceful place it now is.

"Thid" thinks badly enough of us, but not the worst—he did not add disloyalty to our many crimes, and so I think we deserve a little credit, for though so horribly unprincipled I have not heard of a body of women going on strike to the detriment of their country and nation. So we bow humbly before "Thid," and beg that for the benefit of us poor dumb creatures he gives us a MAN'S diary. It might sharpen our intellects.—Just Feckless (Auckland).

### "RULE, BRITANNIA"

Sir,—The refrain which is based on the first verse of "Rule, Britannia" is invariably sung by the general public—"Britannia rules the waves." The

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original is "Rule, Britannia, Britannia, rule the waves—a command, in the imperative mood. Though "Heav'n's command" has been obeyed and the error expresses a fact, yet it is very satisfying to feel the power in the command when sung correctly with due accent on the word "rule."

When Britain first at Heav'n's command

Arose from out the Azure main,

This was the charter, the charter of the land,

And guardian angels sang this strain:

Rule Britannia, Britannia rule the waves;

Britons never shall be slaves.

The two hundredth anniversary of the first performance of this "ode in honour of Great Britain" fell on August 1 this year. Our National Song was composed by James Thomson, of Southdean, Roxburghshire, Scotland, and the music by Dr. Arne. The composition was for the Masque of Alfred, the occasion being the commemoration of the Accession of George I. The Masque was performed at the residence of Frederick, Prince of Wales, at Clifden House, Maidenhead, August 1, 1740.

—ROB (Ahipara).

### GREAT BARRIER ISLAND

Sir,—Would you pardon me for sending you a few lines by way of correction to a statement which appeared in a recent *Listener* about the passenger service between Auckland and the Great Barrier Island.

It is a fact that the steamer passenger service terminated some months ago, but cargo scows took up the running and these boats are owned by the same Company. So popular and attractive is this island that passengers accept with fortitude the accommodation provided in the hold of these boats pending the inauguration of some modern transport by sea or air. Great Barrier Island is 50 miles N.E. of Auckland, has an area of 80,000 acres, and a population of somewhere near 500. The attractions for tourists—ocean beaches, forests and hot springs—are so real, that as many as a thousand people have crossed from Auckland in one season. That is why tourists still patiently submit to the discomforts of the present arrangements, but they are hoping for the day when the Tourist Department will take pity on them.

PIONEER (Gt. Barrier)

### PROGRAMME CHANGES

Sir,—As the new programme changes will doubtless bring you some complaints, while most satisfied listeners remain silent, may I voice my whole-hearted approval of the change! For those who retire early (e.g., farmers and elderly folk), the 7.30 p.m. start is welcome.—"CONTENTED" (Waihi).