

# NEW ZEALAND LISTENER

Incorporating N.Z. RADIO RECORD

Every Friday Price Threepence

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## Let Us Pay

IT would be a little reckless to argue that wars are won by the side with the deepest purse. Most of us can recall victorious campaigns by armies with almost no purse at all, long campaigns by bankrupt leaders, and revolutions run on paper. But it is difficult to exaggerate the advantage to a belligerent of being able both to purchase and to pay. If all other things were equal the power of the purse would be decisive, and although they never can be equal the purse is still a major weapon of war.

It was a black day for Germany when all the wealth of Britain passed by a resolution of both Houses into the war chest. Ever since that day enemies and potential enemies have put more and more venom into their propaganda against "plutocracies"—each new sneer an alarm signal. But we have by no means yet thrown all our resources into our war effort in New Zealand. We have of course done well relatively. We have accepted new and heavy tax burdens. We have contributed to special funds. We have lent the Government tens of thousands of pounds free of interest. We have cut down personal expenditure. We have been prompt to answer national appeals. We have done, and will go on doing, everything that the Government says we must do to equip and maintain our fighting forces. No army has ever been better found, better fed, carried more comfortably overseas, made easier in its mind about relatives and dependents at home. We have been liberal enough in all these ways to excite the admiration of the other branches of the British family. But there is not one of us who does not know in his heart that he has not yet begun to give.

We must give more. As the costs pile up we must cut down our indulgences and pile up our gifts. The slogan twenty-five years ago was to give till giving hurt. To-day we must give till our giving hurts our enemies—make the financial offensive as furious as the offensive by arms. We can do it if we are unselfish enough and take the trouble to realise what unselfishness in such a case means. A shilling a week from every wage-earner would provide a Spitfire a day.

# 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.

## THE PIPER AND THE TUNE

Sir,—Your correspondent, Fred L. Garland, started something when he criticised your programmes, to which I am going to add a mite. You are spoiling the ship for a "penneth of tar." Poor quality of paper and small type do not make either more popular. Despite this, your paper would be worth 3d. if you really presented what we pay to receive—that is, a correct programme. Given a correct programme, listeners can suit themselves where they tune in. The programmes presented by the subsidiary stations, are very often more important to listeners than those from the main stations, yet all programmes from the sub-stations are printed in very small type—6 point Eyestrain. Why not scrap several pages of irrelevant matter, and have all the programmes set up in the same size type, giving equal prominence to each?

The mark with you people is to see set down for Christchurch, where they have very tasteful programmes, an evening of chamber music, interspersed with items by Yehudi Menuhin and, say, the Philadelphia Orchestra; and when one is writing comfortably, to hear nothing but discordant noises and effects, which would probably be an ultra-modern jazz programme which has slipped in by mistake.

This departing from programmes has occurred on several stations. The worst breach of faith with listeners (harsher words are justified), occurred about three weeks ago when a wrestling match was to be relayed from Christchurch. Listeners heard "We are now passing over to the . . . Hall." After a considerable wait and no result, we were informed that there was a fault in the line; and a variety programme was substituted. Could any private concern get away with a thing like that? Would they not have had that fault remedied right away, and given listeners what they are paying so dearly for, Service?

Speaking of service: why do we have so much time, hours per day, wasted on BBC or any other commentators' "views"? There is too much of this giving us "views" for "news." Did not our own Government very recently put "off the air" a local very clever, well-informed commentator, on similar grounds?

And finally, why are our best programmes given when the average working man cannot hear them? I refer to luncheon and dinner music. Now that Daventry encroaches so much on their time, cannot we have these programmes later in the evening, and in their place have some of those endless serial stories which seem to clutter up all programmes? To hear the same set of voices much of each day, and nearly every day, is just the last straw, but it may help to digestion, even blending with the soup.—H. ALEXANDER (Auckland).

(We are sure that our correspondent knows where to get the tar and the penny, but it is selfish not to tell us.—Ed.).

## HIGH BROWS AND LOW BROWS

Sir,—I have been amused by the letters of Mr. Garland and the others on the everlasting subject of programmes. Most of these letters are full of the usual selfishness. Mr. Garland wants all classical music. "Low Brow" wants dance music with vocal interludes by orchestral leaders, and apparently no classical music. Both seem to want to force the other to listen to what he approves or not listen at all. I love classical music, but not all the time. Dance music with vocal interludes is loathsome to me at any time. But lots of people enjoy it who pay licence

fees that provide me with plenty of other good things to choose from. When someone starts moaning about "lul-lul-luv" and the "Moo-moo-moon" to the silvery tinkling of tin-cans and the soothing pounding of tom-toms, I can always tune the all-powerful dial to something more pleasing. I'm sorry for the few who like only jazz and only the classics. Why don't they try to widen their tastes? If they'd try pleasant light music, light opera, good English ballads, interesting talks, and go adventuring round the dial a bit, they'd have far less limited lives. Mind you, Mr. Editor, I think you're partly responsible for the recent outburst of selfish dogmatism. You asserted that Tchaikovsky was morbid. And you repeated it! You didn't say he seemed so to you. You may, of course, be a world-famed authority on Tchaikovsky, but did you ever hear the Nutcracker Suite? If you find the

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"Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy" morbid, I weep for you. You must be morbid indeed! And the "1812 Overture," too? Poor man! I deeply sympathise.

And his Symphony Pathétique? It is pathetic, perhaps, even sad, in parts, but great music without some sadness would be rather unreal, don't you think, for life is full of light and shade.

Now then, "Low Brow" and Mr. Garland, before you pulverise me, remember, please, that there are other people in the world besides you.—SUGAR PLUM (Auckland).

(We did not say that Tchaikovsky's music was morbid. We said that he was. If our correspondent will read any authentic Life of the musician he will realise that "morbid" was a very mild word.—Ed.).

Sir,—Since my brow is just one of those ordinary affairs with bumps and hollows about evenly distributed, I cannot offer you or the Director of Broadcasting useful criticism either constructive or destructive. However, I am sure you must have quite a large stock of advice stored up, so may I send just a small pat-on-the-back from a contentedly omnivorous listener-in. A school inspector seeking the meaning of "omnivorous" once prompted the class thus: "Now what would you call an animal that eats nothing but grass?" Duly answered, he continued: "And one that lives on flesh?" "Right" "Now how would you describe an animal that eats everything that comes its way?" Bright boy: "A gutsy brute, sir."

Well, perhaps I am that kind of animal, but so far I have managed to avoid the painful Radio Indigestion that afflicts the too fastidious programme taster. To me it seemed a particularly happy idea to follow the BBC news with its inevitable tale of destruction by 3YA's Correspondence School Educational session. The story of constructive work amongst way-back children was a tonic to folks bewildered and distressed by the shattering of things moral and material that had seemed the foundation of our civilisation. This calm recital of continuity and the unhurried building-up of a cultural life for the pupils of the Correspondence Classes somehow restored a sense of balance for at least one of your subscribers.

This "tonic pearl" is only one of the many that the NBS casts in your printed programmes—so let us wallow on happily and hopefully.—"PIGGY" (Ouruhia).

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT  
F.W. (Thames).—The first soon; the second some day if a record can be found.