

# LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

(Continued from page 4)

## MODERN MUSIC

Sir,—As an old buffer well into his sixth decade it astounds me to read the letters of other old buffers in reference to their dislike for jazz and crooning! Those are not new accomplishments by any means, and if they will cast their minds back half a century or more they may recollect their own jazz bands on Saturday mornings out in the back garden before their Dads came home for lunch. There would be quite a number of performers, and it all depended on the length of time which had elapsed since Christmas as to what instruments actually were in commission and which had suffered from having been walked or sat down on, but as a rule the following had a part in the programme and the results were very similar but admittedly slightly more melodious than we get at present: Pride of place of course was given to the big tea-tray, which with the tea-cosy as uniform, led the procession; then there would be a small drum with one side still in working order; next came the large and much-dented gilt cardboard trumpets which you boomed through; a kazoo perhaps the leading instrument, in sound the forerunner of the saxophone for funny noises, but more accurate and always in good working order for some unknown reason; bones with lead things that rattled; a concertina; an ocarina; a

real penny tin whistle; a jew's harp; a pre-Adler mouth-organ which in those days merely produced two chords (a blow and a suck); the comb and tissue paper which made your lips go all funny (a sensation also caused by the old battered bugle), and the smaller tea-tray to bring up the rear.

There might possibly have been additions or subtractions at times, but ten performers was about the average number, and fortunately nobody sang.

There was usually one particular "signature" tune for each year—"White Wings," "Two Little Girls in Blue," "After the Ball," and so forth, and the extraordinary and outstanding fact was that in those days you could actually tell one tune from another—nowadays a forgotten art, when all tunes (pardon, "melodies") sound much the same, only some are worse than others.

As regards crooners the subject is somewhat painful. These, too, are ancient, and even after all these years the sight and sound of two of them remains photographed on my mind: At the age of seven I was returning from the Pantomime in a four-wheeler, when there was a stoppage for a few moments in a block at the corner where the blazing gas lights and brilliantly lit windows of a public house illuminated the whole street. There in the gutter before the door stood a ragged couple, male and female, and the sounds which issued from their lips still haunt me, but not the words. These were "crooners" and they were "crooning"!—"THE SKOO-SHOCK" (Ohura).

Sir,—For some time past I have read listeners' views on crooners and I feel that somebody ought to put in a good word for them instead of crying them down all the time. Please do not think I am an ardent fan of crooners, because I can listen to Peter Dawson, Richard Tauber, or Lawrence Tibbet with equal pleasure, but I also find pleasure in listening to Bing Crosby. I do agree with these objectors to crooning on one point. It is certainly most disappointing to tune in from one station to another and hear nothing else but crooning. However, we can only presume that this is accidental. . . . Perhaps the organisers could arrange it so that each station could have their crooners on different mornings, then crooner objectors could partake of their breakfast in peace. "Old Fashioned" says that one station gives fifteen minutes every Sunday morning to the "prime moaner" of them all. I believe he referred to Bing Crosby. It is not necessary for "Old Fashioned" or anyone else to listen to the station which presents Mr. Crosby on Sunday morning. At the time this session is broadcast "Old Fashioned" should be either at church or have the radio tuned into a station that is broadcasting a church service—that is why I never listen to Bing for fifteen minutes on Sunday mornings. Besides, "even a crooner must eat," and isn't crooning the way they earn their bread

and butter? Even if Bing is a "prime moaner" he is tops in his section of the musical world. . . . I feel somebody should be helping crooners, not insulting them! For the first time in my short life I heard them referred to as zoological specimens—words fail me. — "FLAB-BERGASTED" (Gisborne).

## WOMEN AND COURAGE

Sir,—I don't think "Thid" really doubts the courage of women. His insulting remarks read as though some "unprincipled, feckless" female had given his vanity a nasty knock. I was going to say "pride," but no man, with

a spark of that commodity in his make-up, would advertise his chagrin so blatantly. Catching sight of a reference to one of "Thid's" articles in the "Exporter," where he says "Farming is a woebegone, God-forsaken industry," makes one wonder if "Thid" is the double-dyed pessimist he makes out, or is he having a good old chuckle over the outbursts his remarks have called forth? Whichever it is, I suppose both Women and Farmers will survive. — "JUST FECKLESS" (Auckland).

(When this letter was referred to "Thid" he asked us to state that he has not contributed to the "Exporter" and is in no way responsible for opinions expressed in that journal. His letter in reply about women's courage is printed separately.—Ed.)

## 22B's Mary Anne As Guest Artist

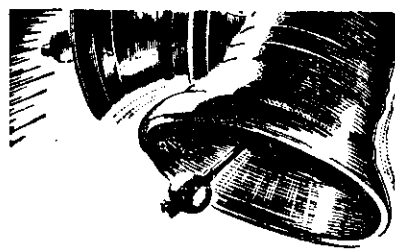
Guest artist during Finlay Robb's "Mid-day Melody Parade" sessions on Tuesday, November 26, and Thursday, November 28 from 22B will be Mary Anne (seen here), who conducts the station's home service session. Mary Anne, who is blonde and attractive, is



an experienced entertainer. She was formerly with J. C. Williamson, and last year toured New Zealand with the "Charlie's Aunt" company. She has a pleasant light soprano voice.

Guest vocalists who have been heard so far during Finlay Robb's session have included Rex Walden of 22B, and "Jill" of 32B, who was in Wellington on holiday, but was immediately invited to sing from 22B.

## SOUND AS A BELL



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