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LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

(Continued from page 4)

SINGAPORE SPY?

Sir,—In these days of danger and suspicion it behoves everyone, not least those in authority, to walk with the utmost circumspection. You can imagine my amazement, therefore, to discover from a recent National Service programme sponsored by the NBS that the Japanese Houseboy has succeeded in getting into Singapore where he is actually passing himself off as a servant of our loyal ally, the Sultan of Johore. I am sure that many besides myself would be glad to hear that he was in safer keeping.—N.Z. HOUSEWIFE (Auckland).

THE MINUTE VALSE

Sir,—Your correspondent, L. D. Austin, is quite correct in pointing out that Chopin's "Minute" valse takes a minute and a-half if it is to make its effect. The title, though misleading to those who, unlike Mr. Austin and myself, are not numbered with the musical cognoscenti, is probably a careless approximation — just as one is wont to say, "Just a moment while I dash off a letter to *The Listener*, though everyone knows that it is impossible to write a letter in a moment, especially if it is to be erudite enough to get into *The Listener*. Which reminds me that Chopin's "Minute" Valse is also known as the "Dog Valse." The story is that, seeing George Sand's dog chasing its own tail, Chopin sat down and improvised a valse to represent the incident. Of course, on second thoughts, it might have been a very minute dog, which looks like getting us back where we started. However, I hope all your readers are sufficiently edified.

—POLONIUS (Auckland).

SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir,—Can you give me the answer to these questions?:

(1). A city worker aged 60, unmarried, owns town sections valued at £1,250. If he sells his sections, buys a town home and retires from work—he has no life insurance and no other investments — is he eligible for social security allowance?

(2). If instead of buying a house in town he buys a cottage and enough land in the country to run a few cows or sheep, is he still eligible?

(3). How much does he receive in each case?

—INQUIRER (Martinborough).

The Director of Social Security replies as follows:

While there is a deduction in respect of the property of an applicant for age benefit, in determining such property no account is taken of any interest in land, including any mortgage on land. The fact that an applicant may own a section either in the town or in the country will not of itself affect his right to age benefit, but of course the income from this source would be charged. From the information given it would seem that the person referred to would qualify for the full age benefit of £78 a year provided the income from other sources did not exceed £52 a year.

AFTER THE NEWSREEL

Sir,—At the moment I am listening to the extremely interesting "Pacific Edition of the Radio Newsreel" from the BBC, re-broadcast by 2FC Sydney. Why cannot this instructive series, which is receivable so well here from 9.30 to 10.0 p.m., be re-broadcast by our own

stations after the BBC topical talk? This would avoid the programme "flop" after the topical talk, and would appear to be more what is wanted in these days than recordings and dance music.

—N. S. MacDONALD (Tikirangi).

We are informed that the aim is to preserve a balance between re-broadcasts on war topics and local programmes. If the correspondent got his way, here is what the programmes of the National Stations would be like for say a Sunday evening during the best listening hours of 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.:

7. 0 to 8.15 p.m.	(approx.) Church Service
8.15 to 8.45 p.m.	Musical programme
8.45 to 9. 0 p.m.	National Service Talk
9. 0 to 9.25 p.m.	NBS Newsreel and Topical Talk
9.30 to 10. 0 p.m.	Re-broadcast of Newsreel

Such an arrangement would not be treatment for those who, while keenly interested in the war effort, desire some relaxation in the shape of entertainment and music.

RUSSELL VIA WHANGAREI

Sir,—Much resentment has been felt locally by a broadcast by Rod Talbot from Auckland advising intending fishermen to avoid the Russell-Whangarei Road and go to Paihia, as the road was uninteresting, particularly the last 20 miles. One pities another making such a statement. Included in the last 20 miles of that road is the National Bush Reserve which constitutes part of this scenic route. Apart from some magnificent Kauri trees bordering the road through the bush, the glorious panoramas seen as the traveller makes his way to Russell shows where the Bay of Islands got its name.

No matter what time of day this trip may be made, the islands set in the sea cannot fail to fascinate even world-travelled tourists. I can only sum up in words of Don Walter, Pan American Airways Airport Manager of recent date: "We have Rotorua—only more of it — but boy! We haven't anything like Russell and the Bay of Islands in the States."

—DAVID H. WOODCOCK (Russell).

DE PROFUNDIS

Sir,—I write in the bitterness of my soul. I have had a bad afternoon. Being fond of music, and now in my old age being free for the first time in my life to indulge my hobby in the day-time, I have for the last twelve months made the most of those hours in which the YA Stations profess to provide "Classical Music." My first disappointment was to find that in radio circles "Classical Music" does not mean classical music, but just music, as opposed to noises made with musical instruments. Still, it was nice to hear some of the classics and also some good music of later date. But Monday, March 3, provided programmes which could not rightly be called classical, no matter what definition of that word be adopted.

I started with Wellington at 2.30 p.m. For a whole half hour I listened in hope while a tenor and a baritone sang. Whatever may have been the merits of the songs and the singing, a whole half-hour of it was too large a proportion of the one hour which was supposed to be devoted to classical music. So at 3 p.m. I turned on 3YA (I can't get Auckland on my set). There I got Paganini's Concerto in D Major, a work of absolutely

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