

NEW ZEALAND  
**LISTENER**

Incorporating N.Z. RADIO RECORD

Every Friday Price Threepence

MARCH 28, 1941

EDITORIAL AND BUSINESS OFFICES:

115 Lambton Quay, Wellington, C.I.

Post Office Box 1070.

Telephone, 46-520.

Telegraphic Address: "Listener," Wellington.

For Subscription and Advertising Rates see Page 40.

## Liberty To Curtail Liberty

SOMETHING was said last week by the Prime Minister that many have thought but few had the courage to declare. In his reply to the attack on the censorship regulations he said: "I am not going to bow down to a doctrine of the sacredness of the Press or to the belief that the Press is sacrosanct." In other words he was not going to bow down to the image of liberty and endanger liberty itself. What he thought it necessary to do in the present emergency he would do even if, to do it, he had to suspend what normally were sacred rights. He of course made it clear that what was taken away would be given back.

The astonishing thing, however, is that such a declaration calls for comment. If we were reasonable beings instead of bundles of habits and prejudices we would not have to be reminded that liberty is our own creation. We would know that it was made for man, by man; that it never has been, and never can be, independent of time and circumstance; that to make a graven image of it is idolatry; and that the Devil has always been able to quote the Scriptures. Some of those who make the loudest noise in defence of liberty are its least devoted servants. They may even be its deliberate betrayers.

Nor do we forget that the Prime Minister's remark was made in defence of his right to curb the newspapers. No newspaper questions that right. Every issue of a newspaper—unless it appears only once—is a demonstration of the fact that liberty is limited. There is the elementary fact to begin with that nothing appears in print, however true it may be—and many rejected contributions are demonstrably true—if it is libellous. The more we value liberty the stricter that rule invariably is, since liberty otherwise would become a monstrous tyranny.

We must have the courage to fight for liberty when liberty is endangered. But we must also have the common sense to restrain liberty when liberty is itself the danger.

## 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 in 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.

### MUSICAL QUINTS

Sir,—I hope it is not too late to express appreciation of your artist's impressions and your columnist's comments published in last week's *Listener* on such an outstanding work as the Bliss Clarinet Quintet. I think there is room for original illustrations of this kind. I would like to see many more of them. As a few examples may I suggest the following: the Brahms Horn Trio, the flute and oboe quartets of Mozart, the pianoforte quintets of Brahms, Schumann, and Cesar Franck. One might even add such works as Beethoven's Harp Quartet, or the Lark and Nigger Quartets by Haydn and Dvorak respectively.

—A. C. KEYS (Victoria College).

(Never too late to be witty. We can take it. But don't blame the artist.—Ed.).

### AN IRISH VOICE?

Sir,—I was amused at one of your reader's remarks about Jack Daly. Jack has an Irish brogue that never was heard on sea or land, unless from a stage Irishman. Being Irish myself, I think I should know. I should say he is an American—to judge by a little speaking part in one of his songs. But Irish. No, no!

—M.W. (Dunedin).

P.S. By the way, where is "Thid"?

("Thid," we are both sorry and proud to say, is in uniform.—Ed.).

### CROSSWORDS

Sir,—Where was our crossword puzzle this week? Two friends and myself who derive much pleasure and profit each week from this puzzle were greatly disappointed at finding none in the last issue of *The Listener*. They are splendid puzzles—just the right degree of difficulty in them. Please may we not again be deprived of our interest and amusement.

—"PUZZLER" (Dunedin).

(We are sorry to make this, and several other, correspondents suffer again, but we hope to afford relief in our next issue. In the meantime we are hiding behind the Advertising Manager.—Ed.).

### SO HARD UP!

Sir,—Are you so very hard up for "It Happened to Me" material? This dreadful little thing on "fleas"! Surely there must be some one in this progressive country who can manage something better. I do not mind whether you print this letter or not, but feel it is high time to protest against such poor literature.—MARY PRIOR (Akatarawa).

(Our correspondent has "said a mouthful." We invite her now to send a penful [fountain].—Ed.).

### MUSIC FROM THE THEATRE

Sir,—As an opera-lover I would like to express my sincere appreciation of the several beautiful operas which have recently been broadcast from the respective National Stations on Sunday evenings. It is a great treat to hear such good music over the air, and although we are unable here in New Zealand to see and hear many of the famous artists personally, it compensates greatly to have their beautiful music broadcast. I would like to say, also, that I, and I am sure many other listeners too, am of the opinion that the selection of the musical programmes from the National Stations has greatly improved, and on behalf of the listeners may I express my appreciation and pleasure at the improvement.

There is also a programme—"For the Opera Lover"—broadcast from Station 2YA occasionally.

I enjoy these sessions very much, and would be pleased to hear them more frequently. May I make the suggestion that the opera "La Boheme" be broadcast in the near future from one of the National Stations in the Music from the Theatre Programme? This, I feel sure, would be greatly appreciated by many listeners.—STUDENT (Auckland).

### BROADCAST ENGLISH.

Sir,—I have read with much interest the letter signed John Doe concerning the mispronunciation of commonly-used English words, such as we hear over the air and in Parliamentary debates, etc. The incorrect placing of the accent is responsible for mistakes in such words as municipal (munic-ipal,

More letters from listeners will be found  
on page 10.

not municipal); industries (in-dustries not indust-ries); formidable (for-midable, not formid-able); deficit (def-icit, not defic-it); mandatory (man-datory, not mandat-ory); controversy (con-troversy, not contro-versy); inventory (in-ventory, not invent-ory); Admiralty (Ad-miralty, not Admiral-ty); bureau (accent on last syllable, not bu-reau); adult (accent on last syllable, not ad-ult); discipline (dis-cipline, not discip-line) and many others.

Another difficulty seems to be whether vowels should be pronounced long or short, as in the following: penalize (peen-alize, not penn-alize); mobilize (mow-bilize, not mobb-ilize); basic (bay-sic, not bass-ic); pageant (page-ent, not page-ent); volt (as in vault, not as in bolt); livelong (live as in let live, not as in live bird), etc.

The following words are generally acknowledged to have alternative pronunciations, either of which may be accepted as correct: patriotic, finance, gala, centenary, hydatids, quinine, neither, tribunal, apparent, abdomen, plebiscite, emaciated, etc. In this connection there is the well-known story of the Irish professor, who, when asked if the word "neither" should be pronounced "nigh-ther" or "nee-ther," replied that it was "nay-ther."—J. VOSS (Christchurch).

Sir,—John Doe's proposal that the NBS should try to establish a standard pronunciation of disputable words is all very well so far as it goes, but if it were adopted it would do nothing to remedy the main fault he mentions, i.e., the habitual mispronunciation of words which admit of only one pronunciation—the right one. A person who habitually stresses "romance" on the first syllable, or says "minuay" for "minuet," or thinks that "forehead" should be spoken as it is spelt, is obviously not aware that there is anything wrong with his pronunciation, until he is told so by someone having authority.

The only way of curing this evil would be for the NBS to employ specialists to listen to every broadcast, and to record every mispronunciation by speakers, actors in radio plays, and announcers, and bring the faults to the notice of the offenders. If after a reasonable period these were not able or willing to mend their ways, their voices should cease to be heard on the air.

Unless this is done (and there seems little prospect of it) not much could be gained by adopting John Doe's proposal. By the way, the pronunciation of "precedence" to which he objects has the full support of Fowler, and is given as an alternative accepted pronunciation in Jones's dictionary. The word illustrates the rapidity of changes in the language; for volume VII. (part 2) of the O.E.D. on which John Doe relies, appeared in 1909.—RICHARD ROE (Wadestown).