

# NEW ZEALAND LISTENER

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## The Sea

EVERY day someone in authority says that the war will be won or lost in the Atlantic; and whoever he is who says it, no one contradicts him. It is accepted as widely in New York as in London, and repeated as often in Capetown as in Sydney and Melbourne. It is an opinion that we must accept not only on the authority of those who know, or on the word of those who, whether they know or not, feel bound to support those who *should* know, but on the strongest evidence of all—the persistence, violence, and boldness, of the enemy attacks there.

And yet we have the extraordinary fact that the Atlantic has become vital because it has never been sufficiently used. The United States has a big and powerful navy—though only half as big as it now thinks necessary—but when its mercantile marine is considered in relation to the number, wealth, energy and variety of its population, it is the fleet, not of a sea-going nation but of a nation of land-lubbers. And land-lubbers in general the Americans now are. The position is discussed at considerable length in a recent issue of *Time*, which points out that although the United States once had "the best and second-biggest fleet of merchantmen on the high seas," and carried more than three-quarters of its foreign trade in its own bottoms, it dropped out of the race when steam displaced sails. The figures are really astonishing: nearly 2½ million tons before the Civil War, and only a little more than three-quarters of a million when the World War broke out in 1914: astonishing even when we look at the simple explanation—that Americans suddenly became too busy on land to go to sea.

And now of course the problem is to build warships and merchantmen simultaneously, and both at a faster rate than the yards have ever reached before. It would in fact be a terrifying problem if we did not know that from about the middle of 1918, United States yards were launching one ship every three days, and when they were fully speeded up in 1919 actually turned out more than four million tons. That was what Mr. Churchill referred to in his recent speech, and is one of the reasons why his confidence never falters.

# 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.

## EILEEN JOYCE

Sir,—In reply to his letter (*Listener*, April 24), let me give "Facts First" a few facts. He says, "Mr. Austin claims that Eileen Joyce had only a few lessons from Tobias Matthay."

I "claimed" no such thing, Mr. Editor. What I said was: "Miss Joyce told me herself that she only had a few lessons from Matthay." This is an altogether different proposition. I got my information direct from the mare's mouth, so to speak (Miss Joyce is now a *mère*, please note), and if it should prove to be a mare's nest, surely I cannot be blamed. There are other people in Wellington, Mr. Editor, to whom Miss Joyce made the same observation, with the additional remark that "she didn't like the Matthay method of teaching, and she learnt nothing from it." I am permitted to refer you, sir, to these persons for corroborative testimony, and enclose their names.

At the end of his letter, "Facts First" launches his dive-bombing attack on me personally. He says: "Mr. Austin tells us that Eileen Joyce is the greatest

land and on the Continent, receiving lessons from several eminent masters—Rosenthal, Borwick, and Cohn, pianoforte; Lomas (of Neuwied, Germany), and Sir Frederick Bridge (then organist of Westminster Abbey), organ; and Professor Ebenezer Prout, music theory.

In 1910 I came to New Zealand. For 25 years I was almost continuously before the public as a successful conductor of orchestras, so there is no need to enlarge upon that aspect of my career.

In 1934-35 I re-visited London, and made up for lost time by attending 217 concerts in 15 months—170 of which were piano recitals by leading contemporary pianists: including, of course, Eileen Joyce. I heard Myra Hess, Harriet Cohen, and Irene Scharer, among other star ex-pupils of Matthay, and have no hesitation in asserting that, although unquestionably fine players, they are in no sense virtuosi. I came to the conclusion then, which I still hold firmly, that no female pianist comparable with Eileen Joyce has appeared since Carreno died.

Does "Facts First" still maintain that my opinion has no value?

Let me add, sir, that the same opinion is held, and has been expressed to me personally, by Sir Henry Wood, Dr. Malcolm Sargent, Frederick Lamond, Egon Petri (from whom Miss Joyce had a "few lessons" in 1938), Andersen Tyrer, and by a prominent Wellington musician who was once a pupil of Madame Carreno.

Finally, Mr. Editor, I am not, unfortunately, Miss Joyce's publicity agent. If I were, I would print her fame in headlines stretching across the world.

—L. D. AUSTIN (Wellington).

## Postscript

Since writing the above I have received proof positive that Miss Joyce was a pupil of Matthay for three years, as stated by "Facts First." There seems to have been a misunderstanding of remarks made by her which will doubtless be cleared up later. However, my first letter was written in absolutely good faith, and it only remains now to express sincere regret for the mistake.—L.D.A.

## "LISTENER" SUPPLEMENT NEXT WEEK

Major-General B. C. Freyburg, V.C., D.S.O.

AN excellent Spencer Digby portrait of Major-General Freyberg, Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Forces in Crete, will be issued with next week's "Listener".

In view of the restrictions on paper consumption and the shortage of supplies, we strongly advise readers to order next week's "Listener" in advance.

Those of our readers who, for any reason, may not be able to purchase next week's "Listener" will have an opportunity of obtaining the supplement separately by means of a coupon which will be published in the following issue, dated May 30.

female pianist since Carreno. That is purely a matter of opinion—Mr. Austin's opinion. It's the sort of claim made by the publicity agent of every artist, and has about as much value, being entirely misleading."

Ignoring the gratuitous offensiveness of this utterance, the insinuations it contains are clear—viz., (a) That my opinion on the subject has no value; (b) that nobody else shares that opinion; and (c) That I am merely acting as Miss Joyce's publicity agent.

Well, here are more facts for "Facts First." A longer experience of piano playing than that perhaps of anyone now in New Zealand surely entitles my views to some respect. During the past 50 years I have heard practically every instrumentalist and singer of renown, including almost all the celebrated pianists, male and female—not merely once but several times, in actual recitals and concerts. The catalogue of pianists begins with Madame Clara Schumann, whose rendering of her husband's famous "Carnival" I heard at a Monday "Pop" in St. James's Hall, Piccadilly, over half a century ago (incidentally I was present at her funeral in Bonn, in 1896, and stood beside Brahms at the graveside).

From that time onward, except when at school, I missed no concert of any importance. For about 20 years I attended every piano recital given by such artists as Paderewski, Hofmann, Rosenthal, d'Albert, de Pachmann, Busoni, Sauer, Godowsky, Grieg, Lamond, Leonard Borwick; Mesdames Essipoff, Clothilde Kleeberg, Sophie Menter, Teresa Carreno, Fanny Davies, Gertrude Peppercorn, Adela Verne—and scores of others, too numerous to mention. Contemporaneously I studied music myself, both in Eng-

## "IN QUIRES AND PLACES"

Sir,—Since I wrote and complained that the session "InQUIRES and Places" was not containing what it ought, namely English Church music, and since this afternoon, the session really did contain the right stuff, it is only fair that I should write again with gratitude. To-day, we had Stanford's "O for a Closer Walk" and another item—English Church Music sung by an English choir of men and boys. Thank you, NBS. Retain the title and give us some more.—R. P. TAYLOR (Christchurch).

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

"Inquirer" (Sumner):—Beyond the fact that Angela Paresse, soprano, made one record for Columbia which was released in London in July, 1937, and in New Zealand about March, 1938, and that she was described in England as "The New Australian Nightingale," no information on this singer is available. As for Galli-Curci, no fresh records by this artist have been issued since 1931. It is true that she had to endure a severe throat operation and made a "come-back" afterwards. The critics acted with chivalry, but reading between the lines the present Galli-Curci appears to fall short of the artist of the 'twenties.

"Serial" (Opatiki):—We are informed that the clash you mention occurs owing to an alteration in 3YA's schedule, which was unavoidable unless the balance of the programme was to be sacrificed. But you can hear *The Mystery of Darrington Hall* from 2YH on Mondays at 7.30 p.m. It will also be presented from one of the Auckland stations at a later date.

Oiga Stanley, Te Awamutu:—Station 2ZJ operates intermittently from Gisborne and arrangements are being made to include this station in our list of programmes in the near future.

Evening reception of 12B is reported to be quite satisfactory in most districts near Auckland. It is the case, however, that in some districts there is interference at the present time due to the numerical preponderance of the Australian stations on the wavelengths of Station 12B and other Commercial stations. This interference is noticeable where conditions are definitely adverse at certain times. It is receiving the constant attention of the Commercial Service engineers.