

NEW ZEALAND
LISTENER

Incorporating N.Z. RADIO RECORD

Every Friday Price Threepence

AUGUST 1, 1941

EDITORIAL AND BUSINESS OFFICES:

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Post Office Box 1070.

Telephone 46-520.

Telegraphic Address: "Listener," Wellington.

For Subscription and Advertising Rates see Page 40.

Very Important People

ADDRESSING the boys of Wellington College a few days ago, His Excellency the Governor-General urged them *not* to follow in the footsteps of their elders. Their elders, he said very earnestly, were failures. An opportunity had come to them and they had not known what to do with it. But another opportunity would come soon, and it would depend on the "very important people" now at school whether there would be failure a second time.

By failure His Excellency of course meant neglect or misuse of the opportunity to build a new world, and he was very frank about the difficulties. But, as some of his hearers must have realised, his remarks, and even his presence at the College, meant that one difficulty at least had been removed. For these "very important people" were the sons of all classes of New Zealanders and not of one class only. They were there because it is beginning to be realised everywhere that a new world means a better educated world, better informed, and more critical citizens, with fuller opportunities to develop and express themselves. When His Excellency went to school a secondary education for an overwhelming proportion of the community was obtained with extreme difficulty. Getting it was in fact one of the great problems that stood in the way of a better world. But already, in theory at least, it is available to everybody in New Zealand who is not sub-normal, and it is beginning to be available to every British boy everywhere.

And the removal of that hindrance to a better world removes another with it. The old conception of a secondary school was that it was a place of preparation for leaders. The new conception is that it prepares leaders and followers alike, making the choice of leaders more intelligent, and the obedience of the followers more discriminating. Whatever we call our new world, and by whatever means we achieve it, its opportunities and rewards must be available to all who deserve them, or it will not stand.

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.

WOMEN WHO SING MEN'S SONGS.

Sir,—Why are women allowed to sing men's songs on the air? If there is one thing that maddens me more than the classics v. jazz debate, it is to hear a good New Zealand girl waste her and mine with songs which were not only written for men, but which are also inevitably sung better by men. In recent months I have heard women sing "Friend o' Mine," "Annie Laurie," "My Love is Like a Red, Red Rose," and "I Shot an Arrow Into the Air." If I listen long enough I dare say I shall hear some young girl do her worst with "I Am a Bandolero."

And these women can't get away with the excuse that they like the tunes better (there are thousands of beautiful tunes written for women's songs), or that it suits their voices (the songs were written for men's voices), or that they like the sentiments (they are engaged to sing a song, not to tell us a story). The correct and obvious reprisal is for men to start singing women's songs, and show the whole stunt up for the silly exhibitionism it is. Why don't some of our local basses give us "My Mother Bids Me Bind My Hair"?—ABC (Wellington).

A NEW ORDER

Sir,—You published an article recently from the pen of his Grace, Archbishop West-Watson, which, in my opinion, should be read and well considered by all who hope to attend the Conference which I understand, is to be called together soon to discuss a new order. The article is a fair, able and masterly one, and I hope all Church magazines will print it. I would also suggest that you again insert it to give the public an opportunity to procure it. I know *The Listener* has a large circulation, but many thousands do not read it, and I feel sure your readers would be greatly increased in numbers if it were more widely advertised. In my opinion it is my best investment, as, without considering the programmes, the publication is of great educational value, and the articles are splendidly written and right up-to-date in every respect.—HARD TO PLEASE (Papatoetoe).

(It is not possible to reprint the article by his Grace, but we are glad to have this proof that it was appreciated, and that we are appreciated too.—Ed.)

MAORIS OVERSEAS

Sir,—As a regular listener to the radio magazine "With the Boys Overseas," may I suggest that a member of the Maori Forces should participate in the above programme? The recent battles of Greece and Crete, where our Maori boys fought bravely, was a very anxious moment for their parents and relatives, and I think it would be most consoling to them if even only one member of the Maori Forces Overseas were allowed to address the Maori people as a whole through the radio magazine.

—H. PAORA (Te Kaha, Opotiki).

PLEASE EXPLAIN

Sir,—In desperation I turn to you for enlightenment in a matter for which I realise, you are not responsible. In your issue of May 30 there appeared on page 18 a panel with the caption, "Emergency Precautions Scheme" and giving details of special broadcasts in connection with the scheme. Both 4YA and 4ZB were cited as participants in these broadcasts, so at the appointed hour I listened to the national station for the first talk, but the station did not give it, nor did I hear any explanation of its absence, or, for that matter, any apology for its deletion from the advertised programme. Neither were talks on the E.P.S. given on the other pre-arranged evenings. The next issue of *The Listener*

containing the programmes for the present week, I noted, again advertised a series of talks from our stations on the scheme, and last Monday I again tried 4YA. Following the chimes re-broadcast from Wellington, a speaker began to talk on the E.P.S., but he was not allowed to proceed very far before being cut off. Our local announcer substituted race results for this talk. Now the point is, is it asking too much of our local stations in such circumstances

More letters from listeners will be found
found on Pages 12 and 13

to give us an apology and an explanation at times when listeners expect to hear the talks and don't?

There might have been some announcement regarding the deletion of the E.P.S. talks; if so, it must have been at a time when I wasn't listening. I must explain that I select my programmes carefully and listen only when the advertised items tell me I am to hear something I am interested in, such as E.P.S., for instance. After all this, I revert to my opening sentence. Will you please give me the reason why the talks mentioned were not given after you had been evidently advised by the radio programmes department that they were to take place?

—E. CLELAND (Dunedin).

(The departure from the published arrangements was regrettable, but we are informed that it was unavoidable. The time was made available, but not all the persons responsible for the preparation of the scripts were able to have them ready, and the series was postponed for four weeks.—Ed.)

TALKS ON THE EMPIRE

Sir,—Recently I heard a most interesting talk over 4YA by Dr. McLintock, Lecturer in History at Otago University, his subject, "History and the Modern World," being most ably and interestingly presented. Many listeners have remarked that they would like to hear more talks of a similar nature. One often listens in to broadcasts in Australia by professors and other authorities on matters of Empire history, such as the part the British Navy has played in building up our Empire to what it is to-day—the bulwark of freedom not only for our own nation but for all races of mankind. Could not such a series of addresses be arranged here which would help to enlighten, educate, and give pleasure to all listeners?

—S. HANAN (Dunedin).

WAGNER'S OPERAS

Sir,—I would like to support the appeal for more of Wagner's operas. Thousands who are fascinated with Wagner's creations hunger and thirst for more of them. It seems a travesty that, although one may tune in to numerous stations in New Zealand an abundance of grating, nerve-racking noise offends the ear, but so little of Wagnerian and other such decent music. Surely at least a small proportion of the rubbish that rends the air can be cut out and some of Wagner's operas substituted. Is the scarcity of Wagner's music due to a lack of real musical appreciation in New Zealand? Surely it cannot be because Wagner happened to be a German, for music is music, no matter from what person or country it may come.

Let me quote a few words from Ernest Newman's *Life of Wagner* (two volumes of which have so far appeared) with reference to the *Ring*. They are "Such music might conceivably outlast the race that made it. . . . To-day it has the unmistakable quality of timelessness. Almost one can hear this music murmuring Brunnhilde's words in *Siegfried* 'Ewig war ich, ewig bin ich' (Eternal was I, eternal am I). It makes, for a time, one's dreams and visions seem the only real experience."

—LOHENGRIIN (Wadestown).

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT.

JONATHAN WOLF (Timaru).—Please send postal address.—Ed.