

LISTENER

Incorporating N.Z. RADIO RECORD

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"Now's The Day"

THE most memorable thing said by Mr. Duff Cooper in New Zealand was that danger is not really alarming when it comes. It is alarming in advance, but there is too much to do when it actually arrives to allow our imaginations to torture us. So the people of Britain discovered, and already we are beginning in New Zealand to realise why. We are compelled at last to be busy. The war has reached our shores. Every man and every woman has duties and responsibilities.

And the relief is greater than the alarm. Morbid fears and dismal forebodings have now no place to grow. There may or may not be time remaining for all the things we know we should do, but no more time will be lost. Those who are young enough are arming. Those who are too young or too old to carry rifles are taking the places of those who have put on uniform. Women are being mobilised. Work is being planned. Waste is being eliminated. Extravagance is beginning to be made shameful. We are forgetting whether we are Right or Left, radical, reactionary, or middle of the road. Our week-ends are spent digging trenches; our evenings blacking out our windows; our walks in studying the country and thinking out defence problems. The best sellers in the book-shops are manuals of military instruction. The most popular films in the theatres are land, sea, or air documentaries of war. We are running a race with destiny, and we are exhilarated.

Nor does any of this mean that we do not know what we are facing. We do. That is why we are exhilarated. It is the first time that the New Zealand scene—our homes, our farms, our factories and our shops—have come right into the track of an invader. New Zealand soldiers have stood in the hottest corners of the world's hottest battlefields, twice in one generation. Now the battlefield may be the streets we walk to work, the paddocks where our cows graze, the beaches on which we had intended to spend our holidays. It is gravely serious, and the gravity of it stimulates and braces us. We don't like to say it, but we have resolved that "they shall not pass."

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 Correspondents must send in their names and addresses even when it is their wish that these should not be published.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.

WHERE ARE GILBERT AND SULLIVAN?

Sir,—I should like to know why Gilbert and Sullivan seem almost tabu by all stations. David Albow said in his letter published recently that "Wagner is the best thing that ever came out of Germany, much the same as Gilbert and Sullivan—Shakespeare excepted—is the best that ever came out of England." That sentence, in my opinion, is one of the truest ever spoken. Well, since complaint has been made, we are hearing more of Germany's master of music, and now let us prove that England can produce men as great in their own way. No better proof of this is to let the people of New Zealand hear the complete operas of Gilbert and Sullivan.

IOLANTHE (Christchurch).

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Sir,—As one of several who expressed a wish that the items in the Chamber Music, Sonata, and Symphonic hours be extended, may I express my delight

An article of special interest to housewives and mothers appears on Page 10

on the fulfilment of that wish? My pleasure is more than doubled. On two occasions, when unfortunately I was unable to hear the start, the programme put me right. Very many thanks.

I would like to have the opinion of your readers on the matter of a singer giving four or five items without a break. I am unable to sustain my interest after one encore; my mind seems to become dull. Two great symphonies in succession would be too much for me, I would require at the least, an hour's interval in between. Is it lack of training on my part?

A.E.B. (Sumner).

TRIBUTE TO A TRIBUTE

Sir,—I would like to express my appreciation of the very fine tribute paid to Captain A. A. Wesney by "The Sportsman" in his talk from Station 4YZ. The speaker delivered his words simply and in a manner which made the listener feel that he spoke straight from his heart. I am not exaggerating when I say that I consider it to be, for its very simplicity and absence of all attempt at "effect," the finest tribute of the kind I have ever heard from a New Zealand station. In my house there are several whose interest in sporting commentaries is non-existent, but we were all deeply moved by "The Sportsman's" talk on Friday.

FREDERICK W. G. MILLER (Invercargill).

THANKING US

Sir,—I wish to take this opportunity of congratulating you on the excellence of your publication, which I thoroughly enjoy. Also, you are very fortunate in having the services of such an artist as Russell Clark. Then, I particularly look forward to your editorial and "Letters from Listeners." I get a lot of fun out of the latter. And, of course, information as well, even if at times they are somewhat beyond me (as when they get onto highbrow stuff like Persian or Greek cultures).

Although Mrs. Mary Scott's Episcopalian dyspeptic would hardly come under the category of, say,

ecclesiastical humour, I am reminded of the following true story: One of my uncles, a clergyman, when visiting among some of his parishioners in the south of Ireland, called on an elderly couple. In the course of conversation the old chap said: "You know, sir, Mary and me have been married for over fifty years and we never had a cross word." "Well, well, John," my uncle replied, "what a tame affair it must have been."

J.S.B. (Gisborne).

HAROLD WILLIAMS

Sir,—As an attentive listener, may I express through your paper my appreciation of the programmes presented by the visiting baritone, Harold Williams? His artistry and general presentation are a delight, notable in the varied choice of his songs. May I mention two, "The Death of Boris" and "Silent Worship." Also may I pay tribute to the able accompaniments of Mr. Penn. Seldom is it that we are given the opportunity of listening to such a well-balanced combination. I congratulate both artists.

APPRECIATION (Rangiora).

A LIMERICK.

Sir,—I was moved to try my hand at solving your difficulty in finding a last line to your limerick, and here is the result, which I might add I "rattled off" as soon as I read the piece:

"And finally laid the poor Boss lo."

I know you will say that it won't do because it does not rhyme with Oslo. But, Mr. Editor, I rather think that the majority of folk pronounce Oslo like this: Oz-lo. Others say Oss-lo. My solution would rhyme with the last. Another ending, Quisling himself might finish it thus: "Why do you go Zo-zlo?" or better still, "Blitz, Blast, Why do you go so-slo?"

—YORKSHIRE LASS (Palmerston North).

CHRISTMAS SUPPLEMENT

Sir,—I would like to express my appreciation of the gift picture enclosed in your Christmas issue. I am just a bachelor, but to me that picture and accompanying verse coming at the present time and circumstances proved quite a tonic. I would think it has been even more appreciated by womenfolk, especially those who have relatives or friends fighting in the places they call somewhere.

GRATEFUL (Twyford).

THE CROWN OF THORNS.

Sir,—Writing not as a higher critic but merely as one who would like to deserve the epithet Christian, I think your correspondent, E. R. Heal, tends to lose sight of fundamentals when he criticises *The Listener's* "Messiah" illustration. What matter how the crown of thorns is depicted? Most of us know that, like the cross, it was a symbol of infamy or degradation, and that to-day we recognise both as emblems of triumph and victory. *The Listener's* artist followed a convention in his drawing and if any criticism could be made it would be that the picture showed Christ as the Man of Sorrows and not as the King of Kings.

PRESBYTERIAN (Auckland).

POINTS FROM LETTERS

E.W. (Mataroa) wants to know: (1) Why 2YA announcers so often interrupt or cut off items without apology or explanation; (2) why the sinking of the *Repulse* and *Prince of Wales* was announced first by Berlin; (3) why radio programmes are punctuated by "everlasting appeals for money" when there are other ways of advertising such needs; and (4) why we do not get the whole of the Radio Newsreel instead of bits only.

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT

C7 (Northland).—(1) No more space at present for Swing arguments. (2) No space at any time for letters of such length.