

# LISTENER

Incorporating N.Z. RADIO RECORD

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## A Message From America

NEW ZEALAND heard two moving speeches last week, both within half an hour. In the first the Prime Minister welcomed Brigadier-General Hurley as the representative of the great American republic and the personal representative of a great man. In the second Brigadier-General Hurley saluted our Dominion and our Empire, and pledged to us "the resources, the lives, the honour, and the power" of a hundred and thirty million Americans. Each in fact disproved the theme of his own address, namely, that the time for words is past. Each showed that the time for words never passes when they are the right words, as they so conspicuously were on that occasion.

For of course no one who heard one or the other can have remained indifferent to what they said. We were either doing something for the cause, and are now doing more, or we were doing nothing, and are now ashamed of ourselves. It was a brief, dramatic, and genuinely impressive demonstration of the power of the word. In a little more than ten minutes Mr. Fraser brought home to us what we are and what we are fighting for, who is on our side, and how wide a sea of misery lies between victory and defeat. In a shorter space still General Hurley brought millions of pledged helpers to our side, convincing us that our principles are America's principles, our cause hers, our fight hers, and that she will neither desert us nor leave the field till the battle has been won.

Nor are we arguing that battles can be won by words alone. If they could be we should already be drawers of water and hewers of wood, since Mr. Churchill is not at all skilful in merely pouring out words and Mr. Roosevelt is hopelessly incompetent in twisting them. We must attack our enemies with other weapons, hurl them back, and bring their crazy castles down on their own heads. It will take time, and it will take our last reserves of strength and courage. But it is encouraging while we stand so far from help, and so far short of the material things we require, to be told so convincingly that we are neither forgotten nor alone.

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 Correspondents must send in their names and addresses even when it is their wish that these should not be published.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

### HISTORY FROM AN ALBUM

Sir,—I must thank you for the interesting comments under the above heading in your edition of April 10, on the Hobson Album. My letter to the London "Times," written as chairman of the National Historical Committee, inviting readers who had material of historic value to New Zealand to make a Centennial gift of it to the Dominion Government, brought several generous responses, but none more valuable than that made by Hobson's great-grandson, Lieutenant-Colonel Rendel.

Before I left New Zealand for London on the way to the International Labour Organisation conference at Geneva in 1938, arrangements for the entertainment of those who had made these donations were agreed to, and I met them all at a function at the British Empire Club, with our High Commissioner, Mr. W. J. Jordan, present.

Your readers may be interested in an amusing incident that occurred when I met Lieutenant-Colonel Rendel. While we were conversing together, he took a rather large greenstone tiki from his pocket and said that it had a history. It had been given to Captain Hobson by a Maori chief, and shortly after, when one of Hobson's officers was returning to the Old Country, he gave it to him to hand as a present to Queen Victoria. This the officer failed to do, and ultimately, the tiki returned to the possession of the Hobson family. And there it was! I waited, silent and expectant, thinking that he intended to hand it to me as another gift to the New Zealand Government, but all that happened was that he put it back into his pocket! There was nothing left to do but to pass on and have a cup of tea.

I may say that Lieutenant-Colonel Rendel would never serve for a model for Low's Blimp, being slight and mildly spoken. New Zealand is greatly in his debt, for his gifts were priceless, and will never fail to stir New Zealanders who recall the beginnings of their country's history.

JAMES THORN (House of Representatives).

### THE REMEDY FOR THE WORLD'S ILLS

Sir,—The *Listener* letter page has been rather interesting these last few weeks, as the letters deal mainly with some of the serious questions of the day, and as the average man in the street is often a thinker but a poor speaker, he feels so impotent when he reads news apparently biased by the political or religious views of the writers. Your page therefore fills a useful purpose, as subjects are discussed from different viewpoints that are barred by some other publications. This is a healthy sign for the future.

H. H. Fountain closed his letter with the words that it "still remains true that Christianity alone has the remedy for the world's ills and nothing else has." Surely this is a half truth, as many who profess in and believe the whole story of Christ are neither honest, truthful, nor just, while others who do not believe the whole story, have all those virtues. Surely the latter are more trustworthy and likely to understand and put things right than the former. As you say in a recent editorial (March 27), the best men and women any of us know are Christian in spirit even if they hesitate to call themselves Christian in

belief. No doubt British tolerance in India gives Gandhi's theories any success claimed for them. Probably if Japan gained control of India, the last would be seen or heard of Gandhi. If the latest report of part of Gandhi's speech is true, he, himself, has no real faith in his theories; he says that if the Chinese had not opposed Japan and simply refused to co-operate, the Japanese would have been defeated, though carried to its logical end, it might have meant the death of the last Chinese. After that, one wonders if he is simply a victim of his own egotheism.

REMEMBER (Carterton).

### "SOME RECENT MUSIC"

Sir,—Congratulations on your new feature "Some Recent Music," by "Marsyas"—particularly his comments on song-broadcasts. These may broaden the interest of singers in their art, which is what we all want above everything—to be musicians and not "just singers." I can add to his examples of poetry "rendered inoffensive" when set to music. I have long been amused by the presentation by some singers of Orlando Gibbons's "In Going to My Naked Bed," as "going to my LONELY bed." Such is the precious age we live in!

I know that old recording of "Adelaide," too; but I disagree about the bated breath of those who "write" about the song. Shouldn't the word be "wrote?" The Plunket Greene school or earlier? And I think they much over-rated the song, anyway!

P.N. (Wellington).

Sir,—It is good to see your new and, I hope regular feature, "Some Recent Music," by Marsyas. I have often thought there is some crying need for a critical appreciation of broadcast music, and I am therefore particularly glad to endorse Marsyas's remarks on this session, *In Quiet Mood*. Fortunately, I missed the session that aroused him, but I have submitted myself to one or two others in the tortured hope of finding some reason for the distortion of pleasant tunes by presumably responsible musicians.

The other night I had the happy experience—all too common with our local stations—of listening to the chiming of Big Ben in the middle of the last movement of Elgar's First Symphony. My prayer for better organisation of programmes was not too silent. Even in war-time I find it hard to excuse this sort of thing. A scrutiny of most musical programmes suggests that they are devised merely to fill up two hours here and two hours there, with little or no attempt made to construct a coherent session.

W. THOMSON (Dunedin).

### DR. GALWAY'S RECITALS

Sir,—May I express my appreciation of Professor Galway and his series "Musical Masterpieces." His informality and his interesting comments make him a delight to listen to and I am indebted to him for opening my eyes to beauties I might otherwise have missed. I hope Professor Galway will publish his talks in book form. They would be most helpful to students and the average listener who loves good music but who doesn't know very much about it.

"ELISE" (Palmerston North).

### ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT

M.R. (Levin): Eileen Joyce was born in Tasmania, but when only a few months old, was taken by her father, a labouring man interested in the smelting industry, into the wilds of Western Australia. When she was 10 years old, her father took her to Boulder City, and placed her under the care of the nuns, who schooled her in the elements of music.