

LISTENER

Incorporating N.Z. RADIO RECORD

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Russia After The War

THE resumption of the attack on Russia looks like the beginning of a movement that will shake the world. If Russia is overwhelmed, civilisation will rock on its foundations. If Russia stands, Germany will totter and fall. But no nation so powerful as one or the other falls, even temporarily, alone. What happens is what takes place in our bush when a storm brings down a century-old tree. Everything resting on it and near it comes down too. And it will be the same in Europe. One half of it or the other will lose its life and its shape. That in fact is Hitler's strongest card. When he ordered his armies West he told them to go forward and secure Germany's "future for a thousand years." When he turned them East it was to "blot out for ever" the hordes of Bolshevism. Now that he must order them East again he tells them, and all their friends and relatives at home, that it is victory now or annihilation. He knows that what a nation will not go through for gain it will endure to live.

And he knows too that victory for the United Nations makes Russia one of his judges. Britain and the United States are soft. Russia is realistic. It will neither gloat, if it wins, nor forget. It will set to work coldly to make another German attack impossible. What this means in detail we do not know. What it means in broad outline has been clearly stated by Sir Stafford Cripps on the authority of Stalin himself. Europe, if Germany is beaten, is to be "re-constituted" upon a basis that will allow the Soviet Government to develop its country in safety and peace. In addition, Russians think that there must be punishment of individuals. Those "responsible for the brutalities of the present war" must feel the world's anger. Those who have been the willing agents of aggression must become the wards of civilisation till they come, internationally, of age. In short, the destruction of the Nazis and all their works is Russia's paramount war aim.

Her peace aims, according to the same authority, are as little interference as possible from the rest of the world, and as little as may be with it. Sir Stafford is emphatic that it is no longer Russian policy to export Bolshevism. It is not even certain any longer that world Communism interests the Kremlin. But it is certain, he insists, that to attempt to spread Communism by interfering in the internal affairs of other countries is the very opposite of Russia's present policy, and gets no support at all from Stalin or his closest associates.

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.

CHRISTCHURCH LADIES' CHOIR

Sir,—My attention has been drawn to an article in your issue of May 1 by a contributor signing himself (or herself) "Marsyas." One paragraph of this article refers to the Christchurch Ladies' Choir, and as it gives to your readers an altogether false impression of the work of this choir I should be glad if you would print the real facts, which are as follows:—

1. The name was altered at the special request of the broadcasting authorities.
2. The same authorities have asked us to submit programmes of an attractive character, and of not too classical a nature.
3. The programme of our last broadcast at the end of last year contained a group of the Elizabethan compositions which "Marsyas" seems so anxious to hear.
4. Your contributor is either very ignorant of our work or very forgetful, as the choir has given a group of Elizabethan Madrigals or Canzonets at least once a year since the inception of the society.
5. Your contributor evidently does not know, as he or she says, what the choral libraries are like in New Zealand, anyhow not the Library of this Society.

If the compositions of Vaughan Williams, Elgar, Brahms, Schumann, Rubinstein, Parry, Holst, Ireland and Kodaly (to mention a few of the composers whose works have been performed by this choir) are not stimulating enough, then your contributor must be a very superior person indeed.

Although I have studied all kinds of catalogues and musical magazines I have been unable to find a major work for women's voices written by any of the great composers, and if your writer could suggest one, or better still present us with the copies we should be most grateful. My sole object in writing this letter is to defend the Christchurch Ladies' Choir from a quite undeserved attack, but I do not think I should be the only musician who raised an eyebrow (I nearly wrote high brow) when your contributor includes Walford Davies and Frank Bridge in a sentence commencing, "I've nothing against any of these composers."

ALFRED WORSLEY,

Conductor of the Christchurch Ladies' Choir.

BONDS FOR BOMBERS.

Sir,—I should like some information about the recent competition "Bonds for Bombers." I listened to "Jerry" making the original announcement and understood him to say, inter alia, that the sentence had to contain 20 to 25 words. Yet the winner's sentence used only ten words. The remainder of the prizewinners evidently thought as I did because they offered quite lengthy efforts. The difficulty in composing such a sentence is proportionate to the number of words to be used, and it does appear that some injustice has been suffered by competitors who adhered to the rules.

When the list of winners was read out the announcer said that "what was wanted was a central idea, of course." Well, that was the first time that the non-telepathists knew of that condition. There were so many angles from which this competition could be, and was tackled.

I am quite open to correction but if the foregoing is true, then who knows that my ungrammatical and very infantile effort may have rung the bell if the organisers had kept to their own rules. After all, a hundred pounds!

PREVARICATOR (Wellington).

[The sponsors of the above competition inform us that the original announcement mentioned "a maximum of 20 to 25 words". The Competition was judged by a committee of four, entirely independent of the NCBS.]

WAR AND THE LAND.

Sir,—Your editorial of April 10 is very uninformative. In factory production the raw material and sufficient labour can be fed to machinery and output be raised to any height. In the field raw material is variable even given sufficient labour and all necessary manures and then there are several uncontrollable factors, notably the weather. In 1917 I assisted to plough up pasture which had not been ploughed for 40 years. The potato crop was 3 tons per acre, as compared to an average of 18 tons per acre in a nearby crop. The farmer who grew that crop said the 3 tons per acre was very satisfactory; he added that it would take ten years to grow an 18 ton crop on that land. In wartime factory production the Government guarantees profit; in even wartime field production it cannot guarantee a profit. In factory production output can be raised and cost lowered extensively; in field production the extent of that process is very limited. If agricultural experts, such as Sir A. D. Hall, were given all the land, labour, etc., they asked for it is very doubtful if anything like the big increase in factory production could be achieved.

SAXON (Auckland).

(If our correspondent has said anything it is what we ourselves said, namely that it is easier to speed up factory production than production from land.—Ed.)

Disorder In The Dress

(By WHIM-WHAM)

"... Orgies of buying in what is generally admitted to be the greatest shopping rush in the history of Australia. One man this morning bought three dozen pairs of woollen underpants. Another man bought 10 hats. . . ."—Cabled report of rush to buy clothing in Australia.

*Man needs a Modicum of Dress
To cover up his Nakedness,
Such Garments as ensure for him
Both Peace of Mind and Ease of Limb—
But this Desire
For right Attire
Is seldom roused in Crowds, or stirred
Like some fierce instinct of the Herd.*

*But now they hear, in Sydney Stores,
How Man like any Lion roars,
Pouncing upon the hapless Stocks
Of Underpants and Hats and Socks,
Till Mercers yield
Or quit the Field
While Customers galumph away
Triumphant with their parcelled Prey!*

*The Thirst for Blood, the Thirst for Gold,
On human Swarms have taken hold,
But never did I dream that there
Was such a Thirst for Underwear!
These are no Fops
That mop the Shops,
But simple Citizens, obsessed
With the Idea of being dressed.*

*I find no Moral to be drawn.
My Finger points, but not in Scorn,
At those Australian Shoppers whose
Extravagance is in the News.
Those Underpants'
Significance,
Is less concerned, it seems to me,
With Wit, than Anthropology!*