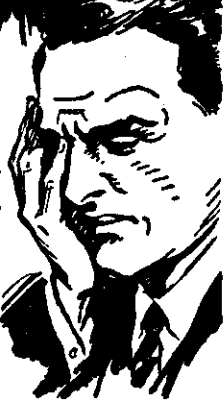


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MARCH 19, 1943

New Houses for a New World

A GOOD deal of space in this issue has been devoted to a problem to which most of our readers will not yet have given much thought. It will in fact seem to some readers that we are creating a problem that does not yet exist; and up to a point that is the truth. It is not the kind of house they will live in after the war that is now troubling house-hungry people, but whether any house at all will be available to them at a price they will be able to pay. We do not ask, when we wish to get out of the rain, whether the shelter we enter has tiles on the roof or thatch. But no one lives for ever in a state of emergency. The war will end, the wreckage disappear, and then, as our contributor "New Order" points out, we shall have to remove the stresses and strains that lead to war if we wish to live long at peace. And peace begins at home. The liberties we are fighting for will be dust in our mouths if while science is setting us free from drudgery we are not learning how to live richer lives in the hours that it is making wholly our own. Those hours we shall spend normally in some kind of house. The question is: Will that house be the right kind of home? "New Order" asks some of the special questions such a general question raises. What people do depends on what they are, and what they are depends far more than any one realises on the intelligence with which they adjust their environment in the progress of knowledge. A shelter from the elements is no longer enough. Our houses often shelter us too completely — shut us out of the sun and the view and destroy our sense of oneness with nature. That is why we have asked two architects to tell us how to build houses that are not prisons. But the problem is far more complex than that. It is religious, educational, political, social—and then a good deal more. The sooner we begin thinking about it the sooner we shall begin to see how much more a good house is than a place in which we eat, sleep, and hide.

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

SYMPHONY SURVEY.

Sir,—Congratulations to *Marsyas* on his most excellent symphony survey in your last issue. As it will (one hopes) cause a little heart-searching among programme organisers, this is a good time for any of us who feel strongly on the matter to put forward a suggestion or two.

I think it would be fatal to the development of a lively musical taste to have any further degree of centralisation in programme control: the idiosyncrasies of the individual programme organisers must be allowed substantially to remain. But even granting that they be given a fairly free hand to display their preferences in special programmes, there is still time to provide that each listener should be able within the span of one year to hear all the major works of the great composers (with the exception perhaps, of oratorio and opera which is a more lengthy business). This could surely be done.

Take, for instance, the case of Auckland with its four stations. During the so-called "classical hour" in the afternoon no major works are broadcast; we used to fare better, and I understand the southern stations still do, but we are the poorer here by 52 symphonies (or their equivalent) per annum. Then in spite of these four stations, the whole of Saturday, day and night, will pass with nothing more than a few small crumbs from 1YX at 9 o'clock, while 2YC and 3YL are given two full hours each of symphonic programme.

On Sunday we are given a snack at 3.30 and then nothing till 8.30—sometimes nothing even then. This in spite of the fact that 1YX and 12M are putting forth hours of non-stop recordings.

Gramophone records of the major works are now practically off the market, even for those who still have money left to buy them. Is it fair then, for the NBS to keep unused on its shelves records which it alone can procure and which it buys with our money?

ALMAVIVI (Auckland).

DUNEDIN CHORAL SOCIETY

Sir,—It is not true (as you suggest in a recent issue) that the Dunedin Choral Society "has gone into recess for the duration." The society last year gave a very successful performance of the "Messiah," in fact one of the best for many years, and also took part in the Peter Dawson concert. It also gave a large number of concerts in military camps. The society is, however, in recess so far as payment of subscriptions on the part of honorary members is concerned, as it felt that it should leave itself free from the obligation of performing for its members three major works in the year.—G. V. MURDOCH (Hon. Secretary, the Dunedin Choral Society).

SEX INSTRUCTION

Sir,—Replying to your correspondent, "Out of the Everywhere," who is concerned, and quite rightly, with the mental welfare of the sensitive, spiritual child, may I say that my article was addressed particularly to the parents and guardians of just such children.

If we could keep our "other-worldly" children segregated in an other-worldly

home, in an other-worldly neighbourhood and attending an other-worldly school it might be permissible to give an entirely spiritual explanation of the advent of baby brother, although the shock of discovering the physical origin is bound to come sooner or later, and the later the discovery, the more profound the shock, in my opinion. Since, however, our sensitive children must everywhere mix with children of coarser clay, and since sex knowledge inevitably comes to them in their early years in one way or another, it seems to me that it had better come from a sympathetic parent, and later on from a well-trained, well-balanced teacher, than from another child who delights in destroying all those pretty-make-believes that have been built up "out of the everywhere."

So far from it being cruelty to give the physical truth to the sensitive child when it asks for an explanation of the origin of baby brother, I think it is cruelty to fill its mind with airy nonsense only to have a playmate brush aside such delicate imaginings with the truth in its most brutal and sordid aspect. You smash then not only the child's faith in the beauty and rightness of Nature, but its faith in its parents and their veracity.

M. R. KENT (Kohu Kohu).

(Our correspondent goes on to say (in reply to the same critic), that although there has been "peace in the land . . . for many long periods in our history," the "percentage of sex-normal adults has been distressingly small." In reply to another critic, "C.C.," our correspondent agrees that "Nature does not work too badly if left alone," but asks how often that is.—Ed.)

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS

"Smacker" (Grey Lynn) and "D" (Wellington).—No more space for letters in praise of "Easy Aces."

Talked Out

(By WHIM-WHAM.)

[The United States Office of War Information has picked up a Tokyo broadcast paying a tribute to a Japanese shortwave propagandist who talked himself to death denouncing Mr. Roosevelt. Tokyo Radio said that this microphone martyr harangued Mr. Roosevelt nightly and overtrained himself. His condition steadily got worse and he finally succumbed. The radio added that he "died a happy death."—Cable news item.]

WHAT is the moral of the Story About the Japanese Fanatic Who talked himself to Death and Glory, Having denounced, in terms emphatic, The Foes of Nippon near and far, And Roosevelt in particular?

Is it that Nemesis descends On Those who vilify the Right? That Death inevitably ends The long vociferated Spite Of Broadcasters who do not care How terribly they foul the Air?

PERHAPS a Man cannot expect To charge the Waves with Fear and Hate Indefinitely, and project To distant Listeners such a Weight Of Malice, and himself contrive With all that Death to stay alive!

NO moral of that Sort, I fear Is to be drawn from these Events. But oh, if, Hail the Talk I hear Had such a signal Consequence, And Death its natural Penalty—How very quiet the World would be!