

MARCH 26, 1943

Michael Joseph Savage

THE ceremony on Sunday afternoon at Bastion Point, Auckland, will be the last of the formal steps taken by the Government to honour Michael Joseph Savage; or perhaps we should say the last of the pre-arranged steps. It was announced when he died that his life would be commemorated in this fashion when the necessary preparations could be completed; and now they have been completed. A column has been raised to his memory on a spot that will be for ever associated with his life and work; sixteen acres of the surrounding land have been dedicated, not in empty solemnity to his name, but to the use and enjoyment of the people he served; and in the centre of it, for all time, if we guard our country and prove worthy of it, flowers will bloom every day. Officially there is nothing more to do; nothing more that it would be helpful to do. He is dead, dead three years, and there is a point beyond which formal remembrance should not be carried. But we say formal for the plainest of reasons. Other memorials may, and will, be unveiled before time obliterates what he did for New Zealand; as time some day must. But no one living will see that day, which will not come this century or next. And in the meantime he is being honoured all over the world wherever governments are working to remove social insecurity from their people. The Beveridge Report is a monument; monuments are being erected in Australia and Canada, and prepared in the United States. It is impossible to introduce any scheme of national or social insurance, to erect any defence against poverty, sickness, and age without honouring the statesman who first erected a successful defence in our own country. For although social security goes back hundreds of years, New Zealand was the first country to gather up the lessons of all those years into a plan that really worked; and New Zealand's leader when that great step was taken was Michael Joseph Savage. In that garden of memories his fame is secure.

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

"WHO IS ROBBING US?"

Sir,—I have thought for a long time that broadcasting has not been doing its best for New Zealand listeners. Now I am convinced since reading the following in a book of reminiscences: "In every house, in every concert-room where music, more especially vocal music, is welcome, the name of Virginia Gabriel has long been and must

stimulated further by criticism. His column is one of the things that keep New Zealand music from becoming thoroughly moribund.

By the way, A.W.T. cannot have explored the byways of music much if he has never come across anything by Haba or Varèse. I do not remember "Marsyas" having mentioned any music that cannot be found in a gramophone catalogue.—I.A.M.S. (Auckland).

BBC PACIFIC SERVICE

On Monday, March 29, the Winter Schedule of BBC Empire transmissions will come into operation. It will open at 5.0 p.m. and will close at 9 p.m. The principal fixed transmissions will be as follows:—

6.15 p.m. News.

6.30 Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays: War Review.

7.30 Headline News and Views.

8. 0-8.25 Pacific Newsreel.

8.57-9.0 News Headlines.

long remain a household word. Who has not been invigorated by the stirring melody of 'Cleansing Fires,' charmed by the measures of 'Where Sparrows Build,' enlivened by the animated strains of 'Message of the Wind,' touched by the sadder music of 'My Lost Darling'? Who has not been haunted by the insinuating tones of 'Only,' 'In the Gloaming,' 'Far Away in the West'?"

Now, I who am dependent on the radio for my music have often been haunted by insinuations "In the Gloaming," but never invigorated by "Cleansing Fires." I can guess at "Lonely," "My Lost Darling" and "Weary" and "Only," but I feel that "Where Sparrows Build" might help me to look more kindly on those little feathered friends that will build in our veranda.

AGGRIEVED LISTENER (Dunedin).

OUR MUSIC CRITIC

Sir,—The column of "Marsyas" seems to have come in for a little criticism lately which shows, at least, that it is read, if not always with the care it merits. The letter of A.W.T., however, deserves an answer. It is easy to talk of "verbal floundering" and "entirely unoriginal arguments" and doubtless these phrases could be used of the writings of Ernest Newman or of Deems Taylor, but it is not so easy to turn out a column week after week with freshness and critical exuberance. I notice that the last is No. 52. Fifty-two columns; one a week for a year. I admit that Marsyas has had his off moments, but so have the NBS programmes, and it must be a disheartening business sometimes trying to extract from them anything worth tasting. It says a lot for Marsyas' liveliness that he is always able to make his readers listeners. Even his most ardent admirers are ready to cross lances with him. It would be an innocuous criticism that was never provocative, and an ingenuous reader who was never provoked. It is to be hoped that "Marsyas" will be

Sir,—My *Listener* came in the mail yesterday without my favourite column "Recent Music." In its place I found advice on health. What about our spiritual nourishment? I hope we are not to be permanently deprived of "Marsyas." His column gave vitality to your paper, and was the real reason for my taking out a subscription. "Marsyas" gives thought for musical discussion, and the musical world needs revitalising. Your paper is the only literary medium in New Zealand which is helping us to set standards for a national music. "Marsyas" has always played fair. He throws his brickbats in the open, and we can throw them back; but apart from that, he makes the average person who is too busy to refer to text books take an intelligent interest in the programmes. Professor Shelley's programmes set us a very high standard, and we can appreciate them more fully with the help of your column "Recent Music."

J.T. (Wadestown).

"OSCAR" FOR "G.M."?

Sir,—In your film page of February 5, "G.M." stated that an American radio station had announced as the 1942 Academy Award winners, Greer Garson ("Mrs. Miniver") and Gary Cooper ("Pride of the Yankees"), adding that although he had correctly prophesied Greer Garson's award, he "could not

SCOTS TO SCOTS

This Friday, March 26, 4YA will broadcast a special programme from the city of Edinburgh to the city of Dunedin. The Lord Provost of Edinburgh will speak, and the music will be supplied by the Army Piping School of Edinburgh Castle. This programme will be heard only from Station 4YA, which will broadcast it direct from the BBC at 6 p.m.

see an Academy Award" in Cooper's performance. A less honest critic, knowing the Academy decision, would have professed to see in Cooper's performance a brilliant piece of acting; but it's just as well "G.M." decided to rely on his own judgment, for the correct results just cabled out, while confirming Miss Garson's award, name James Cagney ("Yankee Doodle Dandy") for the male award. Does the Academy provide an award for honest critics? It should.

FILM FAN (Hataitai).

(The broadcast from America on which G.M.'s paragraph was based probably referred to the New York Film Critics' annual award for the best performances. These awards are frequently confused with those of the Motion Picture Academy.—Ed.).



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