

JULY 2, 1943

## Freyberg's Division

THERE are times when it is difficult to speak the truth without blushing and without making others blush for our plainness. It has been the problem of every public man who has been called on during the last few days to welcome General Freyberg; and the problem of the General himself in replying on behalf of the Division. To call the General a great soldier is safe enough if we are all using words in the same way: the popular way. It is the simple truth by all the tests by which civilians estimate soldiers—courage, strength, dash, success. Similarly when the General said that if the Division never fought again it would still be famous a hundred years hence, he said no more than every New Zealander firmly believes. But he in fact said more than that; far more. He said that it would have the place, a hundred years hence, that Crawford's Light Division has been given in the history of the War in the Spanish Peninsula; and that is something that no student of military history would say lightly. How much more then does it mean when it is said, not by the mere student of battles, but by the wager and winner of them; not by a recorder but by a doer; not by a general whose fighting days are over but by the fighting leader of a fighting force brought home for a few days to tell us how the battle is going. We must take notice of an opinion like that when we consider the circumstances in which it was given; and we must not hesitate to exalt the leader when we think of the audience to which he has exalted his army—our army; our sons and brothers and lovers and friends who five years ago really were the country lads at whom our enemies sneered, peaceable farmers and labourers and factory hands and clerks without enmity against anyone, and with no thought of battles at home or abroad. He led it through triumphs and — a far more bitter test—he held it steadily through overwhelming defeat, and we need not look for a better definition of greatness.

## LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

### APPEAL TO WOMEN

Sir—Qualified congratulations on your leader "Appeal to Women." It is one of the most courageous statements on the subject I have read—but it still isn't courageous enough. It still does not recognise sufficiently the distinction between normal times and abnormal (i.e. war) times. In normal times, fidelity and chastity are no great hardship to the average person; husbands can be separated from their wives and wives from their husbands for long periods without succumbing to temptation. In normal times, it is absurd to suggest that sex is an appetite which must willy-nilly be satisfied—because in normal times, most people have the expectation that they will live long enough to satisfy it normally. But these times are not normal. While it is true that even in war the great majority of separated husbands and wives and separated sweethearts have enough faith and enough love to retain their fidelity, I don't think that even you take sufficiently into account something which the majority of public pronouncements completely ignore—the effect which the unnatural wartime conditions of excitement, instability and doubt about survival have on many young people. I don't want to pick on any one section as against another, but just for example, when I hear on the radio time after time that "35 of our aircraft are missing" (the numbers vary, but the theme is the same), I can forgive—indeed I can almost excuse — any young Air Force man who decides to take a fling at life while he can.

You say: "We surrender most of the ground we have ever won as civilised beings when we argue that men and women separated by circumstances must necessarily consort with other men and women." But sir, we surrendered most of that ground when we committed ourselves to waging total war. Perhaps on the home front we are just beginning to realise what "total" involves.

AUDAX II. (Wellington).

### "A YANK AT ETON"

Sir,—My high opinion of your film-reviewer "G.M." suffered a shock when I found him wondering how we British managed to win the Battle of Waterloo as an outcome of his seeing Eton through Hollywood eyes. I am not an Etonian, but I have had contacts enough with the products of both the great English public schools and the more ordinary cost-less school to save me from any such wondering. The greatness of Britain springs out of the combination of all the various types which she produces, and, despite much propaganda in favour of dead-level equality of status (a thing which can never be, by the way, in any society), there are many of us who still believe that the loss of any one strand would weaken the whole fabric. Oddly enough, it was from an American source that I gleaned the assertion, some months ago, that Britain's chief "secret of Empire" is the British gentleman, described by this American writer, as a valuable product unproducible by any other nation on earth! And, if our democrats feel like slaying me for so quoting a citizen of democratic America, I shall plead to be spared on the ground that I am not one of them, but an ordinary Briton sufficiently devoid of class consciousness to be able to see that, as

this American suggests, the English public-school- and -university type of gentleman has served Britain well, and is likely to continue, so to do—unless our stupid levellers make the breed extinct.—C.C.C. (Cambridge).

[Our correspondent barks up the wrong tree. What our film critic said was, in effect: "If this is Eton, how did we ever win Waterloo?"—Ed.]

### OPERA COMMENTARIES

Sir,—In his letter, G.C. discloses irritation at the inclusion of a commentary in operatic broadcasts. Well, sir, there is this line of thought for consideration. There exists in the minds of many people a desire to elevate the musical taste of the younger generation, and the best way to achieve this end is to present the music of the masters in a form comprehensible by those who feel need of guidance in "musical appreciation." To-day, many young New Zealanders working long hours and still studying to improve their technical knowledge, find little time in which to investigate the secrets of the classics. However, when broadcasts are prepared with helpful explanations, much is done to popularise this lovely music. Understanding our viewpoint, may G.C. relent and welcome us into the fraternity of opera lovers.

ICONOSCOPE (Wellington).

Sir,—I heartily agree with G.C.'s complaint regarding opera commentaries, but, unlike him, I have ceased becoming irritated. Although I am a great lover of operas, I have given up listening to the broadcasts.

OPERA LOVER (Lower Hutt).

### BETTER MUSIC

Sir,—I think "Cornstalk" has a wrong impression of music. After all, there are many kinds of music, and people have their own tastes. If, as he says, most of us younger folk prefer swing to classical, then that is our affair, and definitely our enjoyment. I do appreciate some classical music, but modern rhythm gives me a much greater pleasure.

What, for instance, is wrong with "The Last Time I Saw Paris," played by Ambrose? That, in my mind is picturesque and very pretty. If "Cornstalk" had even taken the trouble to listen to the 12B Sunday Request session, he would have found swing the main choice of the public. Surely that shows the musical taste of the average listener, and also the reason why more of this "better music" is not broadcast.

"CORN SILK" (Pukekohe).

### POINTS FROM LETTERS

"Disappointed" (Auckland), wants to know why "Interlude" has been changed to a morning broadcast. "Many housewives will enjoy it, but what of the many business men who enjoy a programme where they can relax?"

G.K.V.S. (Tauranga), "disagrees very definitely" with W.A.B. (Feilding), about national link-ups. "We can get music from very early morning until eleven at night. Surely we have sufficient interest in our nation's affairs, and in the efforts of our boys overseas, of our allies and of our kinsmen on the other side to remain linked up for 15 minutes to listen to the news."

E. B. Holland (New Lynn), expresses appreciation of P. Martin-Smith's session from 12B: "You'll Enjoy Education." "Many of my friends reckon this is the best Sunday morning feature from any station."

"Surprised" (Waiuku) asks why, when we are being urged every day not to talk, publicity should have been given over the air to the building of mine-sweepers at Port Chalmers.



MOTHER BORROWED  
MY KNIGHTS CASTILE  
JUST FOR A TRY—NOW  
SHE BUYS IT FOR THE  
WHOLE FAMILY!



Knight's Castile used to be my own special complexion soap. Now everyone goes for it! Gives Dad a real pep-up when he's tired—such a grand refreshing lather! And Mummy fancies the fresh lavender fragrance. (Don't we all?)



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