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## Getting on the Roll

THERE are a hundred reasons why we should make sure that our names are on the roll, each of them (as a wit said on another great occasion) better than the first; and the first is that enrolment is compulsory. That ought to be sufficient for the elector who finds no pleasure in paying fines. But the really important reason for making sure that we are on the right roll before the right day is of course the importance of the approaching election. The men and women chosen next month to represent us in Parliament will almost certainly be the men and women representing us when the war ends. It will fall to them and not to us to say what kind of an end there will be in New Zealand—when our fighting forces will be demobilised, what occupations and homes will be provided for them, and what other opportunities they will be given either to start a new life or to resume where they left off. But the task will be far more complicated than that simple statement of it might suggest. Parliament's responsibility will start in New Zealand but it will not stop there. It will not rest there for one day. The world we set out to preserve when we entered the war has left us already. Whatever allowances we make for catch-phrases, parrot-cries, ignorance, hypocrisy and cant, the new world is here and the old world will not come back. That would be true for us in New Zealand if the world began and ended in the Pacific Ocean, as more and more it will for most of us as the years go on; but we have to be fitted into a more complex pattern than that, and next month's representatives will at least begin that task. In any case the man who cannot be bothered to select just rulers will be getting what he deserves if he finds himself groaning under unjust laws.

## LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

### THE VITAMIN BANDWAGGON.

Sir,—Please allow me a little space to reply to Dr. Muriel Bell's article in your issue of July 9. What Dr. Muriel Bell states is not justified, and it looks as though she has studied a report of one of the various so called American Medical Associations, which, as we all know, is the organisation which gives the true facts of all medical treatment, whether with vitamins, drugs or surgery. We all know, even in this country, the specific effect of vitamin concentrates, and the wonderful benefits thousands of our people have derived from them. If, as Dr. Bell states, vitamins are controlled by the medical profession only, then why not the same control of aspirin, Epsom salts, patent medicines, etc., which, as most people know, are taken to excess by the average person and do more harm than good.

It would be a very foolish move to deny the public an open sale of vitamins, when they read and hear so much about their use and what good can be done with them for better health, as we all know that our vegetables, etc., are not grown under natural conditions and our daily food has a definite vitamin shortage.—PHARMACEUTICAL CHEMIST (Auckland).

A copy of this letter was submitted to Dr. Muriel Bell, whose reply follows:

I would be on very unsafe ground if I quoted any but the opinions of accredited members of the medical profession in matters of this nature. The sources of my information are the publications of the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry, and the Council on Foods and Nutrition of the American Medical Association, in the Journal of the American Medical Association, volumes 118 and 119, 1942. These councils include men of undoubted repute, such as Cowgill, McLester and Wilder. Many quotations of similar views could be given, from the numerous medical journals that are available among the first-class medical literature at the Medical School. I am unacquainted with the literature of the medical institutes.

Out of the 40 different essentials that are known to be necessary in nutrition, why pick on vitamins for intensive dosing? If "we all know the specific effect of vitamin concentrations and wonderful benefits thousands of our people have derived from them," we have yet to attain to the perception of Hippocrates, who realised that "experience is fallacious and judgment doubtful." Controlled experiments are especially necessary when man, with his susceptibility to suggestion, is the subject of the experiment.

With the alleged shortage of vitamins in our vegetables, etc., presumed to occur because they are not grown under natural conditions, I have dealt in an accompanying article (see page 18).

### JOHN DOE, OR JOHN DOPE?

Sir,—I did not see *Meet John Doe*, but G.M.'s review of it appealed to me as a piece of ruthless and accurate anatomising of a type of picture that is fundamentally phoney. The honest, forthright, simple citizen, is pitted against a scheming selfish crowd that run things for their own sordid material purposes. Whether he gets away with it or not he is portrayed as a paragon and, as wishful thinking is our chief pastime, we all warm towards this reflection of our own innocuous and somewhat naive selves. At least I have, and have found *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* and *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* sufficiently entertaining.

But fundamentally these pictures are all askew. It would be an unbelievable simpleton who kept himself intact when confronted by the tough crowd with whom he unguardedly mixes it. He is too defenceless, front, flank and rear.

A real John Doe picture will instruct us from the screen when it shows John, in spite of his simple code and his heart as big as a ham, going to pieces under

the impact of the temptations proffered by grafting coteries of go-getters, or trapped by their nefarious ruses. And as art cannot in spite of Hollywood dispense with truth, it is a real John Doe that is wanted.

A harder task for Hollywood would be a real John who was honest but also hard-boiled, and had the strength of the graft and corruption he crusaded against. A harder task this, because such a John would be unique.

The moral of social and political life now and always, it seems to me, is that Honesty is not Enough, any more than a determination to play a straight bat on a sticky wicket hemmed in by an alert in-field is enough.

I do not wish to be misunderstood. Honesty is a great, perhaps the greatest of human qualities. Lincoln had it, and he was also high-minded, humane, and far-seeing, but, besides, Lincoln was as a politician shrewd and hard-boiled. He was perhaps the unique John Doe the screen wants, because he could handle pitch—and large quantities of it—and yet was wary enough to keep himself surprisingly undefiled.

In conclusion, those who do not agree with me in accepting G.M.'s estimate of the J. Doe type of picture will probably do so in thanking him for the only film criticisms printed in New Zealand that make their readers think

F. L. COMBS (Wellington).

### THE GRIFFIN PRESS

Sir,—The unkind reference to the Griffin Press in the review of my book "Sweet Beulah Land" (*Listener*, June 21-27), deserves reproof. Certainly "knowledge is not sufficient without facilities." But it will be time enough to make patronising comment on the Griffin Press when those who have the facilities do one hundredth part as much for the cause of art and letters—in peace time, let alone amid almost insuperable wartime difficulties.—RODERICK FINDLAYSON (Auckland).

[This letter miscarried, or would have appeared sooner. But Mr. Findlayson is too touchy. If we had shot the pianist he would have had reason to complain. Instead, we expressed regret that he had a poor piano. Our reviewer said (at the end of a wholly sympathetic notice): "It is a pity when a writer who is feeling his way goes to a printer engaged in the same occupation. The Griffin Press knows how to print, but knowledge is not sufficient without facilities. Nor was it safe to depend on the selling power of the deliberately scatty cover. A book to buy all the same."—Ed.]

### SUNDAY MUSIC

Sir,—With so many fine programmes in a week it seems ill-natured to find fault. My grievance is not with the programmes but with their placing. Often there are two classical programmes at the same hour and it is difficult to select. As the son of early Victorian parents, I find some things at which to smile in their rather gloomy Sundays, but one thing has stuck, and that is, that there are six days in the week for business, dancing and comic songs. Let us make Sunday different from the rest of the week. Thanks to this idea, on Sundays we heard Haydn trios, a few simple symphonies, and many solos from the oratorios. If chamber and symphonic programmes were transferred to Sunday evening, it would double my enjoyment. To me the Sunday evening programmes are at present the poorest of the week.

A.E.B. (Sumner).

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