

LISTENER

Incorporating N.Z. RADIO RECORD

Every Friday

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EDITORIAL AND BUSINESS OFFICES:
115 Lambton Quay, Wellington, C.I.
G.P.O. Box 1707,
Wellington, C.I.
Telephone 46-520.
Telegraphic Address: "Listener," Wellington.

Life on the Land

IN an article in this issue the Director of Canterbury Agricultural College (Professor E. R. Hudson) not merely suggests, but says plainly, that New Zealand will slip socially and culturally if it detaches itself from the land. He does not of course say, or even suggest, that this has happened already. Far less does he say that those now on the land are not making a good use of it. His argument is that the rest of us are not making the farmer's life as rich and full as it ought to be, that the good life is not the same thing at all as the economically successful life, and that no country can remain healthy unless a considerable proportion of its people live and work among living things. It is not a new theory or a revolutionary one, but he is right in saying that it is not as widely accepted as it must be if we are to avoid "physical, mental, and spiritual maladjustment." We are in fact maladjusted already, though not yet hopelessly so, and Professor Hudson's remedy for this is (1) to make it easier for able young men to get on the land and (2) to make life more satisfying for them when they have succeeded in establishing themselves. A man may of course live and work in the country without being a farmer: many men do, and some must. It would be ridiculous to draw a line between those who till the soil and those who work for them—doctors, teachers, storekeepers, and tradesmen. Professor Hudson does not do that. He does the very opposite of it—asks that more people of all kinds should live in the country. But he asks also that they should be satisfied people—people whose lives are made mentally interesting and emotionally wholesome and clean; and he knows that it is a big and difficult request. But he argues that any other line of development will bring greater difficulties still; stresses and strains which will distort and exhaust us.

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

AMERICAN-ENGLISH

Sir,—I confess I haven't so much nautical knowledge as "Spitfire." As to the origin of the word schooner I take my authority from H. L. Mencken, a name to conjure with in the philological field. It is true that many archaisms remain in American speech—but to say that it has remained stationary is surely the language of hyperbole or malice. In this matter we have to be fair and objective. To-day, no language in the world has the same power to coin fresh words, words that fit the subject to an uncanny nicety: bell-hop, subsister, glad hand, lounge lizard, stuffed shirt, go-getter. "Spitfire" admits that trenchant phrases or words are introduced into the American tongue from foreign sources and English dialects. Why, then, have we English not made more use of our own expressive dialects? Surely it is a failing when among the multitude of good dialects used in England only Oxford English is considered authentic, and a man speaking a dialect is considered illiterate. That is the point I wish to stress: that American is essentially a *people's* speech, in which slang and idiom are not only permitted but encouraged. When the desire to experiment ceases, our language is on the down-grade. For that reason we are glad to borrow—and do borrow freely—from the vigorous American speech.—KAY (Auckland).

FIRST WOMAN DOCTOR

Sir,—In a Winter Course Talk from 4YA on September 28 I inadvertently made an incorrect statement. I said that the first woman in New Zealand to graduate in medicine was Dr. Margaret Cruickshank. I have learned since that

Soapsudden

By WHIM-WHAM

[Auckland consumers some time ago rushed all available supplies of cosmetics and soap, and the *New Zealand Herald* now reports that a similar rush is being made to secure supplies of butter. One elderly Auckland woman bought sufficient soap to last her for 20 years. Another now has 35 pounds of butter stored away.—*News item.*]

COME Weal, come Woe, new Orders
or new Wars,
Come Peace with Plenty, Famine or
Disease;
Come Cakes and Ale, or Crusts and
Apple-cores;
Let Multitudes go warmly clad, or
freeze,
Know Health and Merriment, or Blood
and Tears—
I have sufficient Soap for Twenty
Years!

HOW shrewdly I anticipate the Time
When Soap will seem a rare and
precious Thing;
My Neighbours will retain their natural
Grime,
Their trowsy Frames no longer lather-
ing—
While I, well soaped and scrubbed from
Head to Toe,
Shall shine among them like the Driven
Snow.

OH, Some in Cigarettes lay up their
Treasure,
That turns to Ashes or goes up in
Smoke;
In Hoards of Tea or Sugar Some take
Pleasure;
Some go without, and treat it as a
Joke;
I smile upon such trivial Fear and Hope,
Rejoicing in Sufficiency of Soap!

BBC Shortwave News

THE BBC will be altering the times of its shortwave news broadcasts this week, and though there will be no change in the times at which recordings are re-broadcast by the New Zealand stations, we print below the times that will be adopted as from Sunday, October 17, in the Pacific Service:

News: 6.0—6.15 p.m.

War Review: 6.15—6.25 p.m. (Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday).

Newsreel: 7.0—7.25 p.m.

Headline News and Views: 8.0—8.15 p.m.

Headline News: 9.43—9.48 p.m.

The chief effect of these changes for those who listen-in to the Pacific Service direct, is that the Newsreel has moved from 8.0 p.m. to 7.0 p.m., and the Headline News (formerly at 7.30 p.m.) will now be heard at 8.0 p.m.

Dr. Siedeberg-McKinnon (nee Emilie Siedeberg), was not only the first to practise, as I stated, but also the first to graduate. I should be glad if the letter making this correction could appear in your columns.

VIDA M. BARRON (Dunedin).

FILM CRITICISM

Sir,—The earliest thrilling serials— with the heroine snatched away in the nick of time from the circular saw or on-coming train—instructed us that ladies are never cut in half or run over. That was untrue. Ladies are quite frequently. And what is worse, they are even blown up these days. But constant movie-going has left us quite unable to appreciate this. Mass film propaganda has done its work, and we believe that the worst can never really happen to us, for, of course, we always identify ourselves with the hero or heroine. If the movies wish to be taken seriously, must they not recognise their responsibilities— must they not realise that it is iniquitous to continue doling out this coma-producing dish-wash? It is their falsification of the facts of human life that causes "G.M." to protest against their immorality. Don't get me wrong; I don't mean their frankest presentation of the human form, but rather the clever way in which they evade discussion of every burning question when they could so easily provide us with stimulating food for thought.

ROY A. EVANS (Christchurch).

CAVE CANEM

Sir,—"Beware! I may sing." The recent article on war songs shows the British to be inept braggarts. It is not their metier. Wickham Steed was approached recently on this matter by outsiders, puzzled that the British Home Front should be so undemonstrative while their troops were enacting wonders that caused the Germans to acclaim them the finest fighters in the world, our valiant Russian friends not excepted. In a recent talk, McDonald Hastings gave the text of the song "Don't Let's be Beastly to the Germans." The joke (if any), was that while the BBC was putting Noel Coward's classic over the air, J. B. Priestley was telling the world that it was not the German people who were responsible for the war, but another crowd with the same name.

E. A. W. SMITH (Christchurch).



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