

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

PRONUNCIATION OF FOREIGN NAMES

Sir.—Neither C. Francis Thompson nor "R.F." appear to have read my letter carefully. First, I did not say how Los Angeles should be pronounced in English, but merely stated that the NZBS announcer did not give it a correct Spanish pronunciation as alleged by "Student." No criticism of the announcer was implied; I thought and said that the effort was a compromise.

With regard to Mr. Thompson's statement that it is left to the knowledge and ability of the individual I can only say that unless he is a Spanish scholar he would not know what place or person I was referring to if in conversation with him I discussed certain towns and people. Would he regard this as desirable? With regard to his statement about the form of words, how about Vienna-Wien, Livorno-Leghorn, Firenze-Florence et al? I could be happily side-tracked for hours on the question of correct Spanish pronunciation, but having in mind your space will only say, without further comment, that Castilian is to Spanish as Oxford is to English. The number of people who speak Spanish is 180 millions: it is the second on the list of most spoken languages. Although there are variations, as in English, the vowels are always vowels.

With "R.F." I will be as brief as he deserves. I gave no example of how I instinctively pronounced Te Aro, as none was necessary. I said I pronounced the vowels as vowels: TAY contains a diphthong, both orthographically and phonetically. For "R.F.'s" enlightenment no movement of the vocal organs is possible in producing a vowel sound. I have yet to meet a New Zealand university graduate who has been taught and can precisely define what a vowel is.

I. R. MAXWELL-STEWART
(Wellington).

Sir.—Replies from I. R. Maxwell-Stewart and "Angeleno" disagree with each other on the correct pronunciation of "Angeles," and being peremptory in tone would lose points in a debating contest. My letter referred more particularly to the adjective "Los," and as

I have had the opportunity of visiting Valparaiso I do know how the Chileans pronounce Los Angeles when referring to a town of that name in Southern Chile. The use of the long o produces a sound which rhymes with rose. This, I agree, is different from the pronunciation of the educated Spaniard; pure Spanish is the dialect of Castile and the s, pronounced with a lisp, becomes th: so that los becomes loth, rhyming with both.

The reply to my question is contained in an unpublished comment by a German acquaintance: "The reluctance to learn or speak foreign languages is a trait of Britishers and North Americans; whether this is a fault I cannot say."

It is one of the main reasons why the English language has developed such strength and motive force. There will be no need for Esperanto, as English is becoming the international language.

STUDENT (Palmerston North).

HOME-PRESERVED FRUIT

Sir.—I was amazed when listening to the lunch-hour Country Session talk on 3YA on December 14 to hear a Mrs. Miller assert that women were wasting their time in bottling fruit. There was, she said, no nutritive value in any bottled fruit other than black currants, gooseberries and tomatoes, and the fruit was very insipid. She advised listeners to buy either tinned fruit or the frozen article.

These days home-preserved fruit has reached such a degree of excellence that there is very little to choose between it and the tinned article except in cost. Mrs. Miller must be a very lucky woman to be able to pay 3/- odd for a tin of fruit as often as she requires it. The average wage-earner certainly could not afford this, nor would a good housekeeper be willing to do so when the same food processed at home, once the preserving bottle is bought, often costs only the price of the sugar and of the firing. This is the time when thrift—almost a forgotten virtue in New Zealand—should be encouraged.

E. L. TAPSFIRTH
(Christchurch).

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reader as well as the expert. It will unquestionably interest the expert, but the ordinary reader who is thinking of trying Jane Austen had better give it a miss.

—F.S.

BROADCASTING HOUSE

THE BBC FROM WITHIN, by Lord Simon of Wythenshawe; Victor Gollancz, English price 16/.

LORD SIMON was Chairman of the BBC from 1947 to 1952, a strong supporter of the monopoly it holds (there is a section of 60 pages about this), and a strong opponent of the Government's proposal, foreshadowed in a White Paper in 1952, to set up a separate organisation to manage commercial

FOUR books of diverse character are to be reviewed in the ZB Book Review session on January 24. They are (with names of reviewers in parentheses): "More for Timothy," by Victor Gollancz (Professor G. A. F. Knight); "Until the Phoenix," by F. S. Chang (J. J. Saunders); "Seven Years in Tibet," by Heinrich Harrer (H. E. Riddiford); and "A Pioneer Family," by Gladys Scott Thomson (Sarah Compion).

cial television. There is internal evidence that the book was rushed through the press to strengthen public opposition to the Government's proposal, but in this it appears from current news to have been unsuccessful.

However, the book is not merely advocacy of a policy. It is also a comprehensive and authoritative survey of British broadcasting in all its aspects—of its regional organisation, of its three main programmes, of its most important asset, "unity of operation, purpose, and spirit," of the almost absolute control exercised by two all-powerful Directors-General, Lord Reith and Sir William Haley. To these men he gives unstinted praise, notwithstanding his differences of opinion as Chairman on many points with Haley, who, though nominally a subordinate officer, managed to preserve against the Governors the Reith tradition that "the functions of the Governors are not executive, their responsibilities are general and not particular." Lord Simon, though an advocate, provides a model of fair criticism. His book, which includes a section of 80 pages on commercial broadcasting in U.S.A. and other countries, is packed full of interest and information.

—L.J.W.

ROYAL ODE FROM YCs

A RECORDING of the Royal Ode, made at a performance of the National Orchestra (under the conductorship of Terence Vaughan) in the Wellington Town Hall on November 11, will be broadcast by the YC stations at 8.30 p.m. on Monday, January 18.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

K. W. Duggan (Christchurch).—Four sons. Interested (Tokoroa).—Merton Hodge is the author of "The Wind and the Rain," a play which ran for a thousand performances in London.

H.B. (Nelson).—The Presbyterian Church Committee on Broadcasting initiated the experiment, and no doubt made its own arrangements to estimate its success.

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