

## PRONUNCIATION OF FOREIGN NAMES

Sir,—I have been a teacher, and am still a student, of languages (including English), and I wish I could share Mr. C. Francis Thompson's faith that English "always attempts an approximation to the native pronunciation" of foreign names. Surely Mr. Thompson has heard English-speaking people say "Wipers" for *Ypres*, or "Bonus Air-Is" for *Buenos Aires*, or "Pappeat" for the four syllables of *Pape-ere*; he may not have heard Aucklanders call *Motuihe* "Motor Hee," or *Te Kauwhata* "Teeker Wotter," but he may well have friends in "Papper-Newy." Would he really call any of these an approximation to the native values?

The matter is not without complications, and variant pronunciations are often tolerated; thus for *Los Angeles* (recently discussed in these columns) Webster admits, as alternatives to the Spanish form, either the "hard" g of *get* or the "soft" g of *gem* (but insists on the clear e-sound of these words). On the one hand, very many well-known place names have standard anglicised forms: it would now be sheer affectation to say, for instance, "Pah-ree" for *Paris*, or to substitute "Firenze" for *Florence*, "Muenchen" for *Munich*, or "Kwangtung" for *Canton*. On the other hand, the more general trend is now to accept native spellings: since World War I, *Serbia* has replaced *Servia*, and more recently we have *Helsinki* and *Ankara* instead of *Helsingfors* and *Angora*. Educated people will no doubt "approximate to the native pronunciation" of such forms, but the less-educated and less-travelled majority will inevitably pronounce them as if they were English; it would now be pedantic to object to "Reemz" for *Reims*, or "Burr-linn" for *Berlin* (the natives say "Berr-leen").

But the mispronunciation of personal names is more serious. English has a remarkable number of names with recognised variant pronunciations, and it is agreed that in common courtesy the owner of a name should decide how it is to be pronounced. Ought we not to extend the same courtesy to foreign

# LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

names? Would Mr. Smith consent to be "Smeet" in France (where he is a foreigner)? or would Jones accept "Honace" from a Spaniard? The purist must, of course, be reasonable in his demands: I felt a throb of sympathy for the recent announcer who balked at *Szulc* (Polish spelling for *Schultz*), and (honest man!) omitted the name rather than distort it; and I suppose I must forgive even my good friend Owen Jensen for calling *Bartok* "Bah-tock," instead of something like "Borr-toke" (the second syllable rhyming with *coke*). Only a minority of New Zealanders, I suppose, have a working knowledge of Polish or Magyar. But many can speak French or German, Italian or Spanish; and rules for the pronunciation of these important languages are easily accessible. It is as unnecessary as it is unpleasant to hear, for instance, *Victoria de los Angeles* announced as "Dee Loss Ann Jurleez"; a Brazilian *Lobos* is not a "Low Boss," nor is *Berlioz* "Burlyuss"; *Goethe* was recently announced as "Gurtee," and in the next sentence as "Gurtay" (both are, in fact, wrong, and both cannot, in any case, be right); when a German *Georg* is called "Jay-awj," not one single sound is even an attempt at an approximation to the native pronunciation.

The matter, Sir, is of some importance—not to the highbrow in his Ivory Tower, but to the multitude of ordinary listeners, who seldom or never hear these foreign names except from the radio. Surely the NZBS stations have works of reference; and surely their announcers are briefed before they come on the air.

P. S. ARDERN  
(Auckland).

## "TONIGHT WE SING"

Sir,—Your critic "P.J.W.," who criticises *Tonight We Sing* in your issue of January 8, makes me wonder if he even saw the film. In the first place, Tournanova did not dance the *Swan Lake* ballet. If your critic had any knowledge at all of such things he would have known that she danced what was

one of Pavlova's most famous interpretations—"The Dying Swan," with music by Saint-Saens. If he had looked and listened he would have seen the 'cellists on stage playing the music in the traditional Pavlova style. Further along he says that we see "Hurok's first arrival in New York with Chaliapin," when in fact Hurok's first arrival in New York was alone as Chaliapin's agent, quite a long time before the singer attempted to go to the U.S.A.

From a music lover's point of view I think *Tonight We Sing* was one of the best of its type we have had from Hollywood.

C.H.F. (Wanganui).

## THE SHADY SIDE OF FLEET STREET

Sir,—I am sure that your editorial, "The Shady Side of Fleet Street," has met with the most general approval by the readers of your magazine. As one of them I wish to compliment and thank you for your observations. It is to be hoped they will be noted by those who, at a time when Britain has certain difficulties to contend with, have the surprisingly bad taste and stupidity to affront a loyal native race.

EMM ELL (Wellington).

## GOOD SPEAKERS

Sir,—The broadcasts given by Mr. Longmire reminded me, for no apparent reason, of those given by Miss Cecil Hull over past years. They both had a happy choice of words, an elegant diction, no blurred endings and their subject matter was to me of absorbing interest. The loss of Miss Hull is still mourned.

G. B. ELLIS (Auckland).

## MODERN ART

Sir,—Your correspondent "Tolerant" is quite correct in his assumption that I have reached maturity in appreciation of the fine arts. In order to do so, I was trained very thoroughly in my youth, and I have served a sound apprenticeship in the principal art centres of Europe. With the exception of Italy, I made a special study of the picture galleries in all the important countries.

and was taught early in life to discriminate between good and bad in painting, sculpture, literature and music. Before I was 16 I had mastered the principles laid down by Matthew Arnold in his *Essays in Criticism*, the most valuable of all guides to acquisition of judgment and formation of taste.

Therefore, Mr. Editor, despite the remarks of "Tolerant" and those who think like him, I consider myself competent to voice authoritative opinions, from time to time, upon the above-mentioned subjects.

L. D. AUSTIN (Wellington).  
(This correspondence is now closed.—Ed.)

## HOME - PRESERVED FRUIT

Sir,—I also listened to the well-thought-out talk by Mrs. Miller on the pros and cons of bottling fruit at home, and while not entirely agreeing with some of the points she made, I do feel that E. L. Tapsfirth has quite misinterpreted the meaning of what she heard.

Mrs. Miller did not advocate the large-scale buying of tinned fruit, but she did suggest that for the woman who has to buy fruit to preserve, it would be better, from a nutritional point of view, to concentrate on those fruits rich in vitamin C, such as black currants, gooseberries and tomatoes, and for variety to buy occasional tins of peaches, apricots and pears.

For the woman with an orchard at her disposal the position is obviously different, but I agree with Mrs. Miller when she says that very often the best fresh fruit is bottled and only the oddments used in season. As a case in point, I myself have always bought raspberries to bottle, but since hearing Mrs. Miller have decided that in future I will spend the same amount of money on raspberries but eat them fresh, and when pushing a prune round my plate next July will try to remember the joy those raspberries gave me in January.

T. S. LYNCH (Clifton).

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT  
A.M.S. (Hastings).—April 3, concerto with National Orchestra; April 10, recital.

## Young Soloist for First Wellington Prom.

THE judges at musical competitions are normally men of cool judgment and severe deportment. When, therefore, they underline their superlatives and express a desire to stand on their seats something out of the ordinary is afoot.

The something in this case is the performance of a 16-year-old Christchurch pianist named Julie Clarke (see cover). For several years now she has been taking first place in solo pianoforte sections at the Christchurch Competitions. Soon she will make her first appearance with the National Orchestra of the NZBS. At the first of Wellington's Promenade concerts, on Thursday, February 4, Julie will play Mozart's Concerto in A Major, K.488.

The National Orchestra's conductor Warwick Braithwaite, who chose Julie for the concert, says she came by herself for an audition. "As soon as she started to play—in the first few bars—I knew I was hearing quite an exceptional talent. If she lives up to the first impression she made on me she'll captivate the audiences."

Julie is the youngest artist ever to perform under Mr. Braithwaite's baton, either in New Zealand or abroad. "But," says the conductor, "she must be considered as an artist in her own right, quite apart from her age. She needs now to obtain as much experience as she can get—she should be able to get it here—and she'll be heard of elsewhere. I have the utmost confidence that she will live up to the remarkable promise she shows."

Julie Clarke first took piano lessons at the age of eight under Lilian Kennard, who remains her sole teacher. Theory of music she studied under Miss T. M. Lewin, qualifying for the Royal Schools of Music grade VIII examination. From the age of 12 she has broadcast from the two Christchurch radio stations, and recently has been guest artist with the Christchurch Liedertafel, under V. C. Peters, on two occasions.

At the Christchurch Competitions, Julie has scored success after success. After hearing her performance of Schumann's *Aufschwung* last year, for instance, the judge was moved to write on his award sheet: "I liked the tempo



and the splendid spirit and dash of the opening—you set the mood at once with excellent understanding. I wanted to stand on my seat for the sheer exuberance of the all-round competence of this. It was magnificent."

Two years earlier, another of Julie's judges had broken into a similar kind of prose after hearing her play Verdi's *Rigoletto Fantasia*. "A brilliant performance of a most difficult work," he wrote. "My sincere thanks for a delightful experience." And later: "A wonderful performance. I am always cautious over awarding marks of 90 or over. I reserve such high marks for the very few com-

petitors whom I believe capable of becoming professional artists. In fact, I have only once before awarded over 90 marks."

This year's Prom. series at which Julie will perform is the third to be held in Wellington. As in previous years, it will feature music of a lighter, less demanding kind than that performed at the winter season concerts. In addition to the Mozart concerto with Julie as soloist, the first concert will consist of the *Magic Flute* overture and Symphony No. 34 in C, both by Mozart, and Brahms's Symphony No. 1 in C. The second concert, on Friday, February 5, will consist largely of ballet music, with two operatic arias (from Tchaikovsky's *Pique Dame* and *Eugen Onegin*), sung by the soprano Lily Latischeva. The third Prom., on Saturday, February 6, will feature Maurice Till as soloist in Dohnanyi's "Variations on a Nursery Theme." Other items will be the *Carnival* and *May Night* overtures by Glazounov and Rimsky-Korsakov respectively, the Sibelius Symphony No. 5, and Tchaikovsky's Theme and Variations from Suite No. 3.

All three concerts of the Prom. series will be broadcast in their entirety by 2YC.