

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

EXTENDED HOURS AT 2ZA
AND 1XH

LEFT-HANDED

Sir,—I was very glad to hear the subject of left-handedness discussed during a Feminine Viewpoint session. I have been in this country about a year and in that time my children have had to change schools several times. In each we have found a concerned feeling on the part of the teachers about my son's left-handedness. Definite social pressure has been put upon him, in two cases, to attempt to change. I was approached by another teacher to see if I would agree to a change. I did not agree, since many experts feel that there is a chance in some cases of impairing a child's speech or reading ability by this practice.

The speaker, Eleanor Bolster, gave a well-rounded report on various attitudes toward left-handedness, and yet gave a strong and well-based recommendation that left-handed children be allowed to keep their preference. I was glad to hear the well-informed summary of this subject, since I was beginning to think that no study had been given the problem in this country. And yet there seems to be more fretting about left-handedness here than in many overseas countries. Is it a manifestation of the strong urge to conform that I find in many New Zealanders?

JANET MacAFFEE (Auckland).

"THE TITFIELD THUNDERBOLT"

Sir,—Referring to the interesting comments of your Havelock North correspondent relating to that very successful enterprise, the Wellington and Manawatu Railway Company, Ltd., "W.M.R." has slipped with "No. 9": the record breaker was No. 10, which (in 1892) attained a speed of 64.4 m.p.h.—a world record for 3ft. 6in. gauge railways. (My memory of No. 10 is verified by the N.Z. Railway and Locomotive Society.) Why not co-opt Mr. Gordon Troup in "W.M.R.'s" proposal? His recent railway talks included a very realistic reference to the Company's No. 13 "climbing the Pukerua bank," etc. (These old locos. of the early '90s were mammoths as compared with the then Government stock!) The newsvendor at the old Thorndon station would be an interesting character with his cries of

Weekly Herald, Family Friend, Canterbury Times, New Zealand Graphic, Evening Press. Nor should we forget our late genial friend, the Dining Car caterer (Walter Freeman). For further realistic effect there could be a carriage-load of college youths with their lusty singing and a football tournament in prospect.

W. H. WARREN (Timaru).

LEARNING TO LISTEN

Sir,—I suggest that the friend in question will never become a lover of classical music by listening to radio records. Let him attend a good concert of chamber music, the National Orchestra, or a quartet of good musicians.

To hear music played by a good orchestra in a hall with good acoustics is not to be compared with a radio representation, however good. It is like taking tinned salmon as compared with the freshly caught fish. After all, tinned food is not to be compared with fresh food.

MAY E. FINEY (Christchurch).

Sir,—May I offer a suggestion to your correspondent on the subject of "Learning to Listen"? If his friend would read the stories of the works of the composers, it would make all the difference. As I write I have in mind Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony, a story of life in the country, always beautifully portrayed by the world's best orchestras. Also, arias from opera are much more enjoyable if one knows the story. There are books on the subject in any public library.

M.G.H. (Wellington).

Sir,—In reply to K. R. Groves (*Listener*, February 12), who wants to know how a friend of his can best set out to become a lover of classical music, I would recommend his reading a book called *The Art of Enjoying Music*, by Sigmund Spaeth. In this book Professor Spaeth describes some well-known symphonies, movement by movement, as well as various other works. I found it of great value in helping me to listen to classical music. As I understood it more, I enjoyed it more.

I have also found *The Listener* a great help in my listening. When I hear

something I like, I have no difficulty in finding out what it is; and then I can listen to it again and again. At the beginning of each week I underline everything in the way of classical music I want to listen to, and then I can tell at a glance which station to turn to.

I think that the best way of listening to classical music is to sit in a darkened room; then one has no distractions. Finally, I would not advise anyone to try to become a lover of classical music by listening to the works of some of the modern composers such as Stravinsky and Bartok. They seem to me to be just one long loud noise.

BARBARA DANIELL (Feilding).

CRICKET BROADCASTS

Sir,—I should like to register appreciation of the excellent test match commentaries given by Messrs. Cross and Earnshaw during the tour of South Africa by New Zealand. These were remarkably well done and most enjoyable to follow.

R. CROWE (Auckland).

THE ROYAL CONCERT

Sir,—A nice article on the Royal Concert at Dunedin is marred by the use of a phrase both discourteous and lacking in perception. I note this is happily set right in the caption to the pictures.

One cannot imagine Miss Dora Drake or Mr. Warwick Braithwaite, for instance, recalling that memorable occasion in terms of Her Majesty the Queen being "introduced to them," but I am sure that they and everyone else, from the Director of Broadcasting to the school-girl choristers, will remember with pride and gratification that, having played their admirable part in an enjoyable evening's entertainment, they had the honour of being presented to their Sovereign.

DULCIE M. COHEN (Taupo).

(We accept the correction, and regret that it was needed.—Ed.)

SIMPLICITY IN PLANNING

Sir,—Mr. Sowerby's design appears to me to contain two major errors: (1) Waste space and unnecessary wall in building a laundry. The do-it-all type

enough to enjoy the next development. The tenor's first song was: "What a look, what a brazen assurance . . ."

The audience loved that, too. Laughter and applause again delayed the performance.

Moral for Marxists

If there's a moral in that about being tempted by red roses and fair words, the Comrades can be expected to make the most of it. There's an all-red-roubles party line on the subject of trousers.

It is not long since the *London Daily Worker* published a letter declaring: "Throughout the capitalist world today you will see working men apeing the bourgeoisie by wearing trousers—those symbols of the inequality of women. Not only evening dress, but trousers, too, will disappear under Socialism."

"I am already designing a tasteful blanket suitable for both sexes. It is irreproachable in having no shape at all."

Such a uniform—presumably grey for the proletariat and red for commissars—might not stop Communists having their legs pulled, but it would rob *Carmen* of the joyful anticipation it has now acquired.

—J. W. GOODWIN (London)

THE cities of Palmerston North and Hamilton are to have extended broadcasting hours as from Monday, March 1. The commercial station 2ZA will remain on the air between 2.0 and 6.0 p.m. on weekdays, and will broadcast "Shopping Reporter" and "Women's Hour" programmes at the same times as those of the ZB stations, i.e., at 11.30 a.m. and 2.30 p.m. respectively. The part-commercial station 1XH will remain on the air between 2.0 and 6.0 p.m. on weekdays and Saturdays, and will also feature ZB-style women's programmes. "Shopping Reporter" will be at 9.0 a.m. and "Women's Hour" at 2.0 p.m. The three hours from 3.0 to 6.0 p.m. will be non-commercial time, and a regular classical programme has been scheduled for 4.0 p.m.

of washing-machine has made laundries, as separate rooms, obsolete and extravagant. (2) The sink faces a blank wall, a crime in this housewife's opinion. The sink should give on to the best view from the house. There it will be most often seen and really appreciated.

E.J.C. (Wellington).

THE JUNGLE AT SCHOOL

Sir,—I can understand and sympathise with "T.A.B.'s" divided attitude towards the BBC *Forenoon*. But as both he and your guest critic "A.R." imply that no self-respecting teacher can shed professional solemnity for long enough to be amused by Gwyn Thomas's satirico-comic picture of secondary school life, I may be allowed to indicate that one reason why I enjoyed the programme so much was that, in my time, I have taught several Fanshaves, and shared common-rooms with some of Mr. Thomas's more eccentric masters. And, in the same connection, it is perhaps not irrelevant to point out (since apparently the fact is unknown to both "A.R." and "T.A.B.") that Gwyn Thomas himself has been, for the past 13 years, a language master at the Barry County Grammar School in Wales.

J.C.R. (Auckland).

THE NATURE OF MIND

Sir,—A speaker on *The Foundations of Mental Health* uses the term "mind." In text books this term is variously defined as soul, intellect, thinking principle, brain, consciousness, etc. Would the speaker, or some other competent person, give an authoritative definition of "mind" and its functions—also, if space permits, its relation to (a) the soul and (b) the brain?

R.J.T. (Auckland).

(Since whole libraries have been written on the subject, neither an "authoritative" definition nor the space to contain it seems likely to be available.—Ed.)

THE EPILOGUE

Sir,—May I congratulate the person who wrote the Epilogue to the Royal Tour and the person who spoke it? It was magnificent, a perfect conclusion to a moving broadcast.

JOCELYN DORRINGTON
(Thames).

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

Gemini (Auckland).—It was part of Handel's "Origin of Design" ballet suite.

W. H. Warren (Timaru).—The collection of hymn recordings mentioned is now available in YA station libraries. A series of hymn programmes drawn from this collection is now being prepared. The choice of hymns used in devotional services is made by the ministers taking the services; they are supplied with lists of the recordings available and can hear any they wish before choosing.

RIPPING SHOW . . . But What Brazen Assurance!

JUST as I can never see *Antony and Cleopatra* (even when superbly done as it was by the Stratford Memorial Company last year) without remembering the night at His Majesty's Theatre, Auckland, more than 20 years ago, when the first actor to stride on to the stage forgot his lines, twice failed to hear the whispered reminder, and finally had to be prompted so loudly that everyone in the stalls heard it, so I shall not be able to see *Carmen* again without remembering the night at Sadler's Wells when the curtain was hastily rung down.

Everyone agreed that it was a ripping show, and, as you might expect, it was a woman who started it all.

The opera was going splendidly until Carmen threw that fatal rose to Don José, played by the 32-year-old tenor Robert Thomas. One does not have to be an opera-goer to know that no woman can be relied on to throw anything accurately at a man, unless it is

herself. This throw went wide and, as Mr. Thomas later said:

"I made rather a long stretch to pick the rose up and the trousers must have gone then. I did not know they had gone, but I felt a draught."

He said that it reminded him of a Rugby match—he does, in fact, play Rugby—but without the encircling protection of his team mates, the stage seemed suddenly as vast as a football field.

There was a hasty exit as the curtain came quickly down and the producer, Gavin Gordon, announced that the tenor had had "an unfortunate accident and would resume as soon as possible."

For Mr. Thomas back stage, this was no time for badinage; a bandage might have been more appropriate. He refused to return with the insecure aid of pins—no new trousers, no aria.

Four minutes later he was back again before an audience in which the husbands, unwilling attendants on their culture-conscious wives, were awake