

RECITALS ON RECORD

Sir,—In *Landfall* for June this year Bruce Mason complains that Lilburn's symphonies have been broadcast once only. This opens a question that should be discussed by, and before, all listeners—certainly all licence-holders. Why are the NZBS tape records of National Orchestra public concerts "for reference only"? Why may not recitals—say, the excellent performance of Bloch's Sonata for Viola and Piano, from 1YC—be rebroadcast many times? It would seem cheaper to pay royalties for rebroadcasts than to have the entire performance repeated—especially as no two performances are alike, and a good one should be preserved and replayed.

Like poetry, music needs not one, but several hearings. The poet whose work is printed can at least have it read many times. Composers and performers of music need as fair a means of publication as print—that is, the disc or tape recording. The next obvious step is that these should be available to the public. I suggest that certain conductors would gladly have had performances with the National Orchestra recorded by gramophone companies for sale, but that unwillingness on the part of the Musicians' Union may have prevented this.

Surely acceptable terms could be made with composers and musicians for recording and rebroadcasting worthwhile items? In America much of an orchestra's fame and income comes from the sale of recordings. Where a company is willing to take the risk, it seems there is nothing to lose.

In New Zealand, listeners should be able to hear a work half a dozen times, particularly if it is one not available on a disc; and they should perhaps be able to buy a record of notable works and performances of local composers and artists. If one can "request" Tchaikovsky's violin concerto (how many records of this have NZBS worn out?) one should also be able to ask for a repeat of Bloch's sonata as played by Winifred Stiles and Betty Pierson, or the National Orchestra playing Lilburn's symphonies.

F. A. SANDALL (Takapuna).

(Our correspondent opens his first question with a misquotation, which it is desirable to correct. Mr. Bruce Mason did not say, nor is it true, that Lilburn's symphonies have been broadcast once only. The question is then put in a form that misrepresents the facts. The National Orchestra is not recorded "for reference only," but for delayed broadcast. The second question is also put in a form that misrepresents the facts. Many studio recitals are repeated once, or up to seven times, or any number of times. For the answer to a suggestion that concerns the Musicians' Union the proper source is the Musicians' Union; but it may be said here that the Broadcasting Service has not stood in the way of any attempt to negotiate an arrangement with a recording company, has facilitated at least one, and is not responsible for its non-success.—Ed.)

AN EYE FOR FALLACIES

Sir,—Mr. O'Leary's bag of "fallacies" reminded me of an amusing cartoon that appeared some weeks ago in a Wellington paper. The cartoon depicted a suburban sportsman standing proudly before the fire on a dogskin mat, while the walls of the room were adorned with trophies labelled "panther," "rhino," "elephant," "moose" and "bison," but all easily identifiable as the heads or skins of domestic animals.

Perhaps, as "a competent philosopher" (thanks, Mr. O'Leary!), I may be allowed to continue my educative work, this time as a ranger in the intellectual domain, and explain why Mr. O'Leary's "fallacies" are harmless victims in a case of mistaken identity.

First, I did not quote Jean Guitten as an authority in support of a dog-

LETTERS

matic statement, but only because he expressed my own ideas better than I could have done.

Secondly, in newspaper correspondence it is not fallacious to make a dogmatic statement without adding an argument in support, for space is limited.

Thirdly, it is not fallacious to criticise a book one has not read, when the substance of that book has been set down by a reliable reviewer. It often takes several weeks to obtain a book such as *The Facts of Life*, and one of the golden rules of newspaper correspondence is: "Strike while the iron is hot."

Finally, I deny that I have anywhere "attempted to tell poets what they should write." But if, when they write of love, their poetry embodies an erroneous philosophy of love, I see no reason why, as "a competent philosopher," I should not tell them so. I have not read much of Mr. O'Leary's verse, and did not give it a thought when I was commenting on some New Zealand poets but from the tone of his letter it rather looks as if he has tried on the cap and found that it fits uncomfortably well.

G.H.D. (Palmerston North).

WILLIAM SATCHELL

Sir,—Congratulations on P.J.W.'s article on the elusive William Satchell. The search for early contributions is interesting. The only one I would question at the moment is that signed "J. Eman Smith." I knew Eman Smith when he was registrar of old age pensions. He afterwards went as resident agent for New Zealand in the Cook Islands, and I think was there almost to his death.

Actually, James Cowan was the third New Zealand writer to receive the civil list pension, a year or two before Satchell. I believe Satchell might have had his earlier but for his reluctance to take what might have a tang of charity about it.

In view of the poor rewards for writing in New Zealand until recent years Satchell was lucky to live long enough to receive what he did for his reprints. For the rest, he certainly won't be forgotten.

GUY E. SCHOLEFIELD (Wellington).

USE OF HARPSICHORD

Sir,—Your writer of "The Week's Music" (July 23) refers to an anachronism in the use of the piano continuo in the Telemann Overture, and says "Maybe the NZBS will run to a harpsichord some time."

It should be pointed out that there are in Wellington in our possession three harpsichords of varying sizes, the first of which we acquired no less than 16 years ago. The NZBS has on numerous occasions availed itself of both the instruments and our specialised services in playing them. The mere acquisition of a harpsichord and the seating of a pianist at its keyboard does not necessarily mean that the results will be straightway forthcoming. Both the playing of the instrument, and the manner of interpreting the early scores, require years of study.

We have long considered that the harpsichord should not be confined to playing early music, but that an increasing role awaits it in modern music,

FROM LISTENERS

and a number of present-day composers are availing themselves of its unique tonal qualities.

ZILLAH AND RONALD CASTLE (Wellington).

BOOK REVIEW SESSIONS

Sir,—The change to weekly presentation of *Book Shop* is most welcome, but the consequent abandonment of the ZB Book Review is to be regretted. *Book Shop* is an excellent programme and one of its most enjoyable features has been the short talks and the "tit-bits" which have made up the bulk of the sessions. Now that the whole burden of the NZBS book reviewing is to fall on its shoulders there appears to be a possibility of its losing that distinctive character which has in the past made it such a different book session. There are so many books to be reviewed today that there appears to be room for both programmes.

Also the ZB review was broadcast at a time when, I think, most people interested would be able to listen. The timing of the new *Book Shop* means that one will be likely to miss programmes quite often. When a programme of wide interest is to be broadcast surely it is better to let each of the main stations play it at different times. If, for instance, one is out on a Wednesday one can still hear that edition of, say, *Book Shop* from another station on another night.

D.H. (Christchurch).
(Abridged.—Ed.)

Sir,—A feature looked for in many country homes was the book reviews, so that we were surprised and disgusted, on a Sunday night, to be told the ZB review was to be the last. This latest decision of the NZBS proves that programmes are arranged by city people for city people. Town folk have the municipal libraries, city and suburban, private libraries, plus the library van going to the suburbs, each week. We have the Country Library Service van once in four months. This week it has been three-quarters filled with tomes Adam would not have been interested in. We depended on the reviews to send to the Service for request books.

If the session *Book Shop*, put over last night, is a sample of what we are to choose our reading from, I think it is a slur on our intelligence. There was a review of a book on football, plus an autobiography of a dress designer, plus a lot of unnecessary chatter.

FREEDOM OF CHOICE (Nelson).

PASSING ON

Sir,—Replying to correspondents in July 30 issue: Mr. Thornton makes some large assumptions about the "life which informs the lower kingdoms" and is entitled to his opinion, though I think his assumptions cannot be demonstrated. He also says that "the urge for further experience causes the self to assume another personality." If that is so, it is obviously not the personality who died that returns for the further experience. He says both mind and matter are "expressions of the Logos." But nobody knows what the Logos is or does.

"Eternal Beauty" does not realise that the Christian faith includes "comforting illusions" about death. Let an eminent Christian testify. The late Dean Inge, who spent his life as a Christian clergyman, said at the end of his life: "I know as much about the after life as you—nothing. I don't even know there is one—in the sense in which the Church teaches it. I have no

vision of 'heaven' or a welcoming God." As for a "distinction between mind and matter," the celebrated philosopher John Dewey says: "If mind and matter are radically different stuff, every phase of their relation is a problem, if not a mystery. But what if there is no such entity as 'mind' or 'consciousness'? What if, instead of thinking and talking of bodies having minds, we think of organisms that function physically and mentally?"

The plain fact remains that for us, no lost loved one ever returns to walk this earth with us again and to tell us what really lies beyond the portals of death. I have said, and I believe, that so long as they have a place in our hearts and in our thoughts, those we have lost never really die.

J. MALTON MURRAY (Oamaru).
(This correspondence is now closed.—Ed.)

ISLANDS OF EELS

Sir,—Some years ago a friend and I were camped at the head of Lake Rotorua in the Nelson Province, in early January. One bright moonlight night—the moon was full, or nearly so, as far

More Letters from Listeners will be found on page 25

as I remember, and the sky clear—we set off in our boat to try our hand at some night casting. We had not gone far before we ran into what appeared to be a mass of small logs stretching as far as we could see. It was not long before we realised that the logs were actually eels, and most of them large ones at that. They were lying right on the surface of the water. We had a .22 rifle with us, and shot several. The dead or stunned eels were immediately set upon by their fellows and quickly torn to pieces.

I had never before, and never have since, seen such a phenomenon, which appears to resemble in many ways that related by Mrs. Helen Wilson.

D. A. PURDIE (Dargaville).

DRUGS AND CONFESSIONS

Sir,—Even on such a subject as fluoridation, the subject of Communism must be dragged in. Your correspondent "S.H." in *The Listener* of July 23, says: "As is also well known, many of the 'confessions' in Communist trials are effected by overconcentration of what are helpful drugs when correctly used." Many things are well known, as, for instance, the story of the Piltown man, but time and investigation have proved that it was phoney besides being well known. Adolf Hitler repeated lying statements until they became "well known" enough to be looked on as the truth by many. Perhaps "S.H." will favour your readers with proof of the incorrect use of drugs in Communist trials. My experience has shown that when people like "S.H." are pinned down for proof of statements made, it is "well known" that they usually can't produce it.

L. REID (Otahuhu).

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS
N.C.T. (Blenheim): (1) No. (2) Yes.
Pilgrim (Auckland): Your letter much appreciated.

Call Sign (Dannevirke): Your suggestion is being considered.

J.M.C. (Papatotetoe): It need not and should not have been done. Thanks for drawing attention to it. The station will be informed.

Alison E. Lyon (Auckland): As full details as possible are given for studio broadcasts and for outstanding recorded programmes. Improvements will be introduced as soon as they are possible. "Pruning" When the link enables first-class programmes to be heard by four times as many listeners?