

## "TWELFTH NIGHT"

Sir,—I have just received cuttings of Mr. Bertram's review of *Twelfth Night* and Mr. Campion's letter defending his methods of production. Since the "scholastic circles" of which Mr. Campion complains might reasonably be held to include the present writer, may I be permitted a comment?

Mr. Campion misrepresents his critics. We accuse him of not putting the word first, of allowing it to be lost to sight in a welter of stage effects; in reply he declares that the word is not everything. But the issue is not whether the word is everything, but whether it ought not to be put first; and it is vain for Mr. Campion to remind us that there are stage effects in Shakespeare, when what we are saying is that these effects are of secondary importance to the spoken word, and that Mr. Campion smothers the spoken word with his stage effects, many of which are not by Shakespeare. The point is this. Mr. Campion has the following admirable words: "Rhythm, the rise and fall of action and commentary: rhythm embracing pace, movement, day or night, atmosphere, the sequence of small scenes developing to large scenes, etc., is integral to Shakespeare." This is very well put. The rhythm of a play, the pace at which its action and mood develop, is always the essential thing. But what Mr. Campion has never yet realised is that this rhythm *already exists, in the verse in which Shakespeare wrote the play*; and that his job is to discover this rhythm in the verse, see that his actors bring it to life by speaking the verse, and then fit themselves and their actions, and his scenery, lights and music into the framework of the rhythm of the verse. He simply does not understand this. He believes that the rhythm of the play does not exist until he and his actors have concocted it out of stagecraft. So long as he believes this, he cannot give us Shakespeare; he can only give us something ersatz, the product of his own (with due respect) lesser imagination. If he would only put his stagecraft at the service of the verse, he would be able to produce Shakespeare. As it is he can only produce Campion's *Fantasia* on a Theme by Shakespeare—bubble instead of bone.

It is really incredible that Mr. Campion should have selected, in support of his argument, the passage in which Hamlet realises the King's guilt and kills him, and supposed that his methods of production are justified by the fact that here there are few words and long pauses. If Mr. Campion has not yet discovered that the pauses between words are part of human speech, it is difficult to see what can be done for him. But he will not see this; he insists on supposing that the pauses are gaps to be filled by his own personal inventiveness. That is why, when Mr. Campion produces *Hamlet*, it will be necessary for the Prince to leap across an ornamental bridge spanning a goldfish pond in the courtyard of Elsinore—on the brink of which Ophelia will have been seen insecurely poised as the lights dimmed two scenes earlier—and stab the King through a gilded wicker diving-bell in which he will have encased himself to watch the duel. Meanwhile Laertes will be surrounded by woolly-tongued priests intoning the Miserere, and ladies in green satin will be enshrouding Gertrude in turquoise gauze. The scene will be lit by Chinese lanterns and played to Balinese music. J. G. A. POCKOCK (Cambridge, England.)

## MUSICAL PROGRAMMES

Sir,—With the recent change in policy with regard to the YC dinner music programme, it was only to be expected

# LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

that there would be some reaction from listeners who enjoyed the previous type of programme. I see in *The Listener* dated March 29 your answer to two letters presumably dealing with this subject. As a listener to the previous type of dinner music programme, I do not think your reply is at all satisfactory. Certainly the various news broadcasts from the YAs obviate smooth presentation of a programme, but any listeners to the YA stations at this particular time are surely those whose primary interest is a news broadcast. To inflict their 6.0 p.m. to 7.0 p.m. musical menu upon more seriously-minded YC listeners is just nonsensical.

The YC dinner music programme was never heavy. The main items were popular overtures, operatic arias, ballet suites and the like. To suddenly switch to items by the Melachrino Orchestra, Harry Davidson playing Gilbert and Sullivan, "Song of Soho" and others is annoying to say the least. In Auckland both 12B and 1YD are on the air at 6.0 p.m. with light programmes designed for the dinner hour. Why produce the same type of music from a third station?

If, as you say in your reply to your two correspondents, the YCs do not take up their evening programmes until 7.0 p.m., why is the broadcast of *Parasit* this evening commencing at 6.30 p.m.? Surely this is encroaching upon the YA dinner music programme?

I'm afraid there is no excuse worthy of serious consideration for the Service's latest deplorable move. First the YA breakfast session was deprived of its character, now the YC dinner music programme. What next?

## MUSICA VIVA (Auckland).

(There is nothing new in the statement that the YC stations take up their distinctive programme function at 7.0 p.m.; nor has the type of programme they are intended to broadcast between 6 and 7 been changed. IYC's dinner music is not being "deprived of its character" but being restored to it after markedly diverging; but the process certainly does not lead to "the same type" as 12B or 1YD. As for beginning *Parasit* at 6.30 p.m., that is accounted for by the exceptional length of a special programme, not by forgetfulness of the normal YC function between 6 and 7.—Ed.)

## ENGLISHMEN IN MOSCOW

Sir,—Mr. W. D. Aimer says that Soviet men and women are "more actively conscious of the welfare of their fellow citizens" than we are. Could he give us the grounds on which he makes this statement? Is there, for example, in the Soviet Union any Public Service Association, or a Federation of Labour, or an Arbitration Court, quite free from government directives and functioning

to achieve the well-being of the citizens? Is there a Labour Party, a Liberal or other party, distinct from the Communist Party, which is at liberty to criticise the Kremlin policies, advocate other policies and secure modifications of legislation? Then are there in the Soviet Union any bodies comparable to our Plunket Society, religious and other organisations taking care of citizens' welfare with and without government approval or assistance? If the position is as stated by Mr. Aimer, how comes it that so many thousands of people fly from this beneficent environment to the allegedly less sympathetic one of the Western world?

J. MALTON MURRAY (Oamaru).

## BBC BROADCASTS

Sir,—I was amazed and infuriated at the opinions expressed by Keith Mitchell and Barbara Jekyll, both of Christchurch, when they complained of the indistinct voices of the BBC announcers. I would suggest to both these people that they take the trouble to learn English, since I as an English woman find that all the BBC announcers are most comprehensible, whereas in contrast many of the announcers who may be heard over the NZBS not only have poor diction and enunciation, but distort the pronunciation and misplace the accents of my native tongue in an outrageous manner; so that I am frequently compelled to apply to your printed pages to get an accurate idea of what they have attempted to announce. Perhaps it would be too much to expect such a small and parochially minded people, to produce announcers who can pronounce French and German correctly, so that I will not dilate further upon their attempts in these tongues.

ROBERTA HIGHTON (Rotorua).

## HUNTING POETS

Sir,—I feel I must express my amazement at "Rustic's" uncalled for attack on the superlative verse featured in this journal. Surely our budding poets need some encouragement, and if *The Listener* with its abundance of intellectual readers did not nobly undertake to supply this, then who would? The first requirement in art is sincerity—what nonsense! That may have been so in earlier times, but standards have changed. It doesn't require any special ability or sincerity to write poetry nowadays. Anyone can do it. Just choose a subject (any old theme will do, but the more incongruous, the better), worry it around for a while, dig deep into your

subconscious mind and eventually you'll come up with something totally incomprehensible to yourself or your readers—if any. The idea is not to reveal your feelings, but instead make them as abstruse as possible.

I myself followed these instructions and in no time at all produced this effort:

## MORNING TEA BREAK

OLD George stands in the doorway—  
Late again.  
Eyes flick around nervously;  
Almost as though he expected  
Sluiced in his face,  
A cup of tea.

Bill seems worried this morning.  
Could it be  
His feelings create his face,  
Or does his face in some strange way  
Attract the look  
In the first place?

Miss Brown's legs are on display  
Trim and neat;  
In those curves sweet promise lies  
For any man with eyes to see.  
What a pity  
Her face denies.

I alone am calm and sure,  
Free from strife;  
My face shows no inner fret.  
With brow unlined and trembling hands  
I bend to light  
My cigarette.

My only regret is that I am unable to comply with "Rustic's" request that all contributions in verse should be accompanied by a note of explanation. That problem I leave to my psychiatrist!

J.C.M. (Waipawa).

## "YOUR CHILD AT SCHOOL"

Sir,—The term "Education" covers a wide field, but the question is not so much what it is as how much of it we are going to squeeze into the already overloaded school course. Parents are entitled to expect that their children's time in the classroom, even in the Infant room, is spent learning the practical skills, appreciation of culture, and being stimulated to think and express their thoughts orally and in writing. Reasonable rest periods, of course, are most necessary. Is not the out of school part of a child's life the correct time for free development and for "doing that which comes naturally," as Frank Dean puts it?

The plain truth is that no teacher can develop the "whole child," or rather 40-odd "whole children," in five hours a day for five days a week—much as the theorists and psychologists would have it. Perhaps the parents, too, have some duties to their children!

The path of New Zealand education is littered with exotic sheaves, wrenched from varied stocks to be pitch-forked on to its topsoil, shaken a few times and left to rot. True, occasionally a single seed takes root and flourishes, but at what a cost! Had we but carefully examined the soil, climate and market conditions of the two countries concerned, we might have been the wiser and our loss much less. And if we must import, why not try Scotland as a source of supply? Scottish seed is "Certified Educational," pithy and well polished, and most suitable for our conditions.

J. C. MARTYN (Oamaru).

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

J.A.B. (Auckland): It would be actionable.  
L.C.R. (Blenheim): Thanks; will pass it on.  
A. J. M. Power (Linden): Thank you. They are intended for overseas listeners and reception in most parts of New Zealand is uncertain.

T. K. Bassett (Dargaville): Suitable ones, still playable, distributed to public institutions; worn and damaged ones, destroyed. (2) Recordings of historic interest are preserved.

## ANZAC DAY

ANZAC DAY will be marked on Wednesday, April 25, by commemorative services all over New Zealand and, as in the past, many of these will be broadcast from NZBS stations. These will include Dawn Parades, and Citizens' Services in either morning or afternoon. Speakers at this year's services will include the High Commissioner for the United Kingdom, Sir Geoffrey Scoones, the Chief Justice, Sir Harold Barrowclough, and Sir Carl Berendsen. Among special broadcasts is a relay from 3YA of a Toc H and R.S.A. Service of Remembrance and Re-dedication.

Ex-servicemen in particular will be interested in a special Anzac Day edition of "Won't You Come In?" to be heard at 8.0 p.m. from 1YA, 2YA, 4YA, 3YZ and 4YZ. For the occasion William Austin, who spent seven years in the Air Forces overseas in the Second World War, became a Squadron Leader and was awarded the D.F.C., will have as special guest Oliver A. Gillespie. Mr. Gillespie served in both world wars, was awarded the M.M. and the M.B.E., and became a Lieutenant-Colonel. Other listeners will be invited to join Mr. Austin and Mr. Gillespie while they talk over their wartime experiences—the sort of songs that were sung and the shows they went to see; and these reminiscences will, of course, be interrupted from time to time when Mr. Austin plays records from his collection.