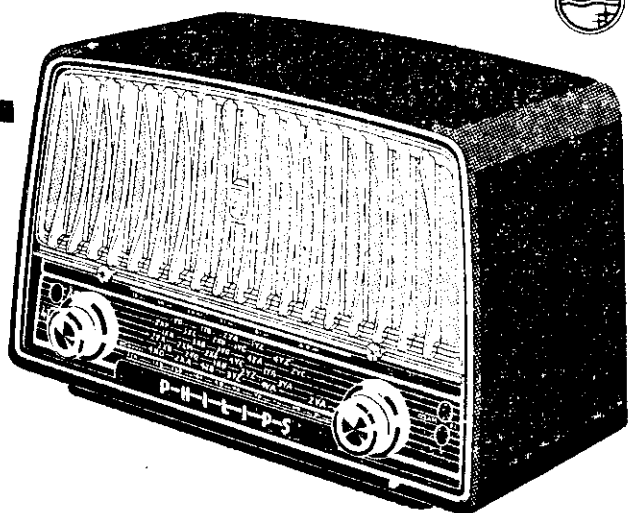


built-in  
SUPPRESSION FILTER  
cuts MAINS NOISE!



**PHILIPS** *New Yorker*

with new 3-D "Fluted" Look

- ★ Now room-to-room portability with the world at your fingertips.
- ★ Easy to read, full width, floodlit, slide rule dial
- ★ 3-way aerial system—
  1. Built-in Ferrite rod aerial for broadcast.
  2. Plate aerial for shortwave.
  3. External aerial and earth connection for reception of distant low-powered stations.
- ★ Gram pickup terminals specially connected for optimum quality.
- ★ Five new powerful multi-function Noval valves, giving seven valve performance.

**24 gns.**

**EASY TERMS AVAILABLE**

Philips Electrical Industries of New Zealand Limited,  
P.O. Box 2097, Wellington.

Please send me FREE copy of your folder on radios, radiograms and many other PHILIPS products.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

# NEW ZEALAND LISTENER

INCORPORATING N.Z. RADIO RECORD

Every Friday

Price Sixpence

JULY 5, 1957

Editorial and Business Offices: Hope Gibbons Building, Inglewood Place, Wellington, C.1.  
P.O. Box 6098. Telegraphic Address: "Listener," Wellington. Telephone 54-106.

## The Women Writers

STRICTLY speaking, there are only writers: the fact that some are men and some are women is incidental, and not of much importance in literature. True, the world will not always have it that way. People still add a feminine suffix to "author" and "poet," sometimes with curious results. Currer Bell, for instance, was an author until her sex was revealed, whereupon Charlotte Bronte promptly became an "authoress." So far we have been spared a female version of "novelist"; and now that the old-fashioned "typiste" is disappearing we may hope that the final absurdity can be avoided. But the use of words can at least be cited as evidence of a lingering prejudice against women who compete successfully with men.

These thoughts have been suggested by an occasion to which fuller reference is made on page 3—the 25th birthday of the New Zealand Women Writers' Society. Perhaps it will be said that the women, by putting up their own banner, are themselves helping to prolong an irrelevant distinction. Yet in New Zealand the situation is affected by the special problems of the writer in a young country. Twenty-five years ago, when the society was founded, it would not have been easy to think of half a dozen women with any claim to literary reputation. Clearly, the aim was not merely to protect the interests of established writers; it was also, perhaps mainly, to help younger women with literary ambitions. And this aim, added to a good deal of sociability, has persisted since then. Today the society can point to members eminent in letters, including several who are known beyond their own country. There would have been progress without the society, but also more strain and less happiness.

Now that women writers are numerous, and often successful, it may seem an open question whether they can profitably stay together in a separate organisation. The PEN (New Zealand Centre) is part of a world association of

writers, and its membership includes women, some of whom are also in the N.Z.W.W.S. At first sight the existence of two bodies, both concerned with the interests of writers, may appear unnecessary in a small country. But the PEN's membership is restricted, as it must be if eligibility rests on serious performance. And although it has given good service, it falls sometimes into passivity, and suffers from the lethargy which seems to afflict male writers when they are not actually writing. Its members are scattered up and down both islands; and the individualism of the writer, added to his isolation, does not make him amenable to group activity.

So far the Women's Writers' Society appears to have overcome these difficulties. Women may be less easily discouraged than men if there are no injustices to be fought or good causes to be supported. But there is more to it than that. Entrance to the society is not guarded by severe standards. It has always included writers of modest talent, and among its associate members are people whose interests may not go beyond literary discussion. Standards have risen through the years, and will become higher; but the society's strength is in the efforts and hopes of women who are learning to write, and in the guidance of more experienced writers who are trying to help them. As the society grows older, and has well-known names on its list, there may seem to be need of some revision of aims and functions. Whatever is done, however, the principle of mutual aid should not be put aside. In this country problems of markets and standards—especially standards—are always in need of attention. Much frustration and waste of energy can be avoided if experienced writers give information and advice to those who are still finding their way. The society has already done enough work in this direction to justify its existence; and it will do more and better work as it draws upon wider experience—and, let it be added, wider understanding and goodwill from outside.

—M.H.H.

N.Z. LISTENER, JULY 5, 1957.