

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS . . .

Why Not a Petition Against Classical Music?

To the Editor.

Sir,—May I, through the medium of your excellent paper, express my views of jazz and crooning as opposed to those of one of your readers in the issue of November 30? I cannot possibly imagine why your reader should wish the elimination of jazz from the day and early evening sessions. Surely the programmes already contain enough items by Jelowicz, Strauss, Tschalkowsky, Haydn, and other classical composers. The reader concerned must know that not everyone is educated to such a high degree that one appreciates the highbrow music. As for the "Radio Record" containing a coupon to be signed by those objecting to crooning and jazz, why not insert one for those objecting to classical music and asking for its part elimination?

Thanking you for your valuable space,
—I am, etc.,

Marton.

MODERN.

J. D. Parkin Replies to His Critics

To the Editor

Sir,—In answer to your correspondent, "Amused," may I point out that jazz did not stand most high in the recent ballot as a reference to the figures will show. Light opera held the top position and "dance music" (not necessarily jazz) was only third. He unconsciously supports my complaint concerning the superfluity of jazz records, as also does "Bing Vallee"; and the suggestion that license figures would suffer is indisputably contradicted by the axiomatic fact that nobody would discard their wireless set just because there was no jazz being broadcast.

But there is a much broader and more serious reason for my request than either of your correspondents has touched on. Music is a living fact, not merely an amusement; a vital principle in life, not an indulgence. Our appreciation of music depends on our character, and that character is developed by music both in study-

ing and hearing. We take care to keep trivial books from our shelves, and trivial and maudlin pictures from our walls; yet we court trivial music and wonder why we are losing poetry and romance and the sense of taste and discrimination.

Dr. James Lyon—examiner in New Zealand for Trinity College—said the other day: "The normal child likes the goods things of art; too often it is given the bad. Again, the impressionable mind of a child is almost certain to be hopelessly confused by the muddle that comes over the air, for we have jazz, crooners, sloppy sentiment, and all the rest of it dished up regardless of propriety." An influential English paper, the "Yorkshire Post," in an article on October 6 last, had this sentence: "All along the B.B.C. valiantly persists in spite of adverse criticism in giving us not just what we want, but what it is considered we ought to want, especially sacred music and classical entertainment on Sundays."

To anyone who suggests that it is a matter of opinion as to whether music is good or bad I would say he has only to take the broad term "healthy" as a criticism and he will quickly arrive at a standard. Let him judge all music by that standard of melody and content and he will find his own standard of criticism, and acquire a competent sense of discrimination which will make him improve his own mental fibre and abhor that which is evil. Frivolous minds always turn to frivolous music.—I am, etc.,

J. D. PARKIN.

Timaru.

A Criticism of Most of Our Announcers

To the Editor.

Sir,—Here is a quotation from a new weekly Glasgow radio publication which may interest readers as a criticism—true or otherwise—of most of our announcers:

"New Zealand Radio Board should insert such an advertisement as this in their newspapers: 'Wanted, announcers for YA stations; must have cracked voices, to maintain tradition. Preference given to uneducated youths with grating perpetual colds, nasal impediments, stutterings, impertinent address. Also an aunt who is a cross between Dwyer the comedian and Cecily the affected Cockney. Cracked voice also a recommendation for chief aunt to preserve tradition.'"—I am, etc.,

CRITICISM HELPS.

Carterton.

"Unfavourable Letters Are Ignored"

To the Editor.

Sir,—Much disappointment is felt that when letters which are not palatable are received by the "Radio Record" they are either ignored or put in the "Answers to Correspondents" column. This is sly, crooked journalism. Probably you will

Reduced from 30/- to 25/-

Listeners' Pockets to Benefit from New License Fees

THE Post and Telegraph Department has announced its Xmas box for New Zealand listeners—or perhaps Easter gift would be more correct. From April 1, 1935, the radio license fee is to be reduced from 30/- to 25/-, announced the Postmaster-General (Hon. Adam Hamilton) at the week-end. This step has been under consideration for some time and it has now been decided that the New Zealand broadcasting service is sufficiently well established to enable the reduction to be made.

Mr. Hamilton said the New Zealand Broadcasting Board had shown a spirit of co-operation in the proposal by agreeing to accept a reduction of 2/- in the amount payable to the board in respect of each license. As listeners were no doubt aware, the board had, since inception on January 1, 1932, undertaken large developmental plans both in respect of building and apparatus. Obviously, this progressive programme absorbed a large amount of capital, but these financial commitments would not, of course, be recurring ones.

An outline of the comparative increase in the number of licenses since the Broadcasting Board took control on January 1, 1932, was given by Mr. Hamilton. On that date, he said, the number of radio receiving licenses was 71,680. At October 31 last, the number was 139,690. The contribution by the board amounting to 2/- for each full license would, therefore, be by no means an inconsiderable one.