

Five Days a Week Arthur Collyns is on the Air, Solving Other Folks' Problems

By J. GIFFORD MALE

"DEAR ANNE,—I am only 19 years of age, and I am keeping company with a young man who says he loves me and wants to marry me when we are old enough. Now, we have been seeing each other every week for three years, and we were both very happy. But lately I have noticed he has changed a lot, and does not pay me the same attention. I have also heard that he was seen at the pictures one night with somebody else. What do you think I should do? Should I go on just as if nothing has happened, or should I ask him straight out why he has changed, and what is the matter? Please, Dorothy, tell me what to do, because I am heart-broken."

THE sort of letter you might find on the "Advice-to-the-Love-lorn" page of any newspaper, isn't it?

And while sophisticated folk would have you believe that both question and answer originate in the fertile brain of some spinster pounding a typewriter in a newspaper office, the fact is there are thousands of young folk who turn to problem pages for advice.

And what would you do, gentle reader, if you yourself were very young, very lonely, very much in love and had no friend to turn to? Particularly if you were at that interesting stage of life

when one spends secret hours writing ballads to eyebrows; when the rest of the world seems very self-assured and very intolerant of love's young troubles. You are anonymous, your heart-ery known only to one person.

RADIO, too, has its personal problem sessions, has found that many a love-lorn lass prefers to have her worries alleviated per medium of a soothing voice over the air. One of the most popular of such sessions in New Zealand radio—in fact, the only one of its kind—is conducted from 1ZB, Auckland, by Arthur Collyns.

Mr. Collyns is a young man who has carved a unique little niche for himself in commercial radio. His session "Between Ourselves" has been going for a good while now, originally from 2ZB and latterly from 1ZB, and its popularity doesn't seem to be waning in the slightest.

Thirty minutes five afternoons a week, Mr. Collyns is on the air attending to other people's worries. Problems, problems, problems. Letters by the dozen every week. Those who are inclined to be sceptical about personal problem sessions should see Mr. Collyns's mail-bag. He receives enough "cries from the heart" to keep him going six afternoons a week if he had the time.

It isn't only love that correspondents write him about. Does the Fair Rents Act prevent my landlord from raising the rent 10/- a week? Can you advise me of a simple cure for asthma? My son has had to leave Technical School to find a job. What sort of position would you advise, and could you help find him one?

Simple Theme

BUT by and large, "Between Ourselves" is ultimately a matter of infinite variations on a very simple theme—love.

It's almost enough to convert one to the Freudian theory that sex is one of the few basic experiences in life, and influences and conditions our every action.

Mr. Collyns is an experienced practical psychologist. Difficult problems he hands on to trained experts, people who know their psychoses, neuroses, complexes and fixations; but everyday psychological problems he attends to himself—with a good deal of success.

Sex, of course, is an extremely difficult subject to handle over the air, and while Arthur Collyns is entirely in favour of complete frankness, and would even like to see something in the nature of an open forum on the question, he realises the limitations of radio, and how impossible it would be to conduct frank discussion of sex problems over the air.

And so some questions he answers in everyday language

that is meaningless except to the person to whom his reply is directed, and other more intimate problems he answers by letter.

ARTHUR COLLYNS devotes much time to selection of the recordings he uses during his session. Music, as is well known, has an appreciable emotional effect. But what many people do not know is that jazz depresses rather than lifts up.

The music best suited to a session like "Between Ourselves" is tuneful and soothing—Tosceli's "Serenade," "Softly Awakes My Heart," Mendelssohn's "Spring Song" and other popular classics.

But "Between Ourselves" is not the only interest Mr. Collyns has at 1ZB; he edits the Children's Magazine, one of the Commercial Service's most intelligently conducted children's sessions, and looks after occasional special sessions.

"International"

LAST Christmas, for instance, he endeavoured to help along the cause of international amity with an "International Session" during which music of all nations was played, and spokesmen for various peoples broadcast messages of peace and goodwill.

Representatives of a dozen or so countries turned up, all, incidentally, undertaking to avoid anything controversial.

Everything went well until the German's turn came. His talk was red-hot Nazi propaganda, full of "Heil Hitlers" and sabre-rattling. He was stopped as soon as possible.

Mr. Collyns had intended broadcasting the Horst Wessel song, but after that he decided it would be in better taste to represent German music with the Comedy Harmonists singing "Helige Nicht."

ARTHUR COLLYNS,
voice of 1ZB's session,
"Between Ourselves."

Similarly with the spokesman for China. A mild, pleasant little Chinese, he was no sooner in front of the microphone than he launched an excited tirade against Japan and everything Japanese. He, too, was removed with all speed.

Mr. Collyns isn't sure whether he'll risk an "International Session" this Christmas or not.

MR. COLLYNS applies his knowledge of psychology to his children's session no less than to "Between Ourselves." For one thing, he doesn't believe in talking down to children. More important, the word "fear" is absolutely barred.

Here is his bulletin of instructions to participants in the children's session.

"It is the policy of this session that there must on no account be any mention of fear in any story or script which may be broadcast. Particular care must be taken to omit such words as 'frightened,' and 'scared.' The idea is that the children's session must be psychologically right..."

A distinct contrast to American children's sessions, if one can judge by a tale told by that alert New York paper, the "New Yorker." A correspondent of the "New Yorker" was being conducted through one of the city's largest broadcasting stations.

Arrived at the studios devoted to the presentation of the children's session, the visitor noticed among the devices used for producing sound effects a large apple and a hammer. Intrigued, he asked what sound an apple and a hammer could simulate.

"Man's head being bashed in," replied the guide.

MURPHY TWINS LEAVE 2ZB



(Spencer Digby Photo.)

TWO popular young people, the Murphy Twins (Pat and Joan), have severed their connection with 2ZB. They made their debut over the air about six months ago when they assisted in a radio interview with Ernst Skardasy, Austrian skiing instructor; their contribution to the interview was so bright that they were engaged almost on the spot.

For some months they conducted a recipe and household hints session every morning, later being transferred to the afternoon. While they have been at 2ZB they have received upwards of 7000 letters

from listeners, including, during the past week or so, many expressions of regret that they are leaving the station.

Apart from their regular sessions, the Twins conducted several interviews, including one with Barry Caulfield, skiing instructor at the Hermitage, and four with Mme. Stella Rubenstein, of the famous cosmetic organisation.

Apart from the fact that they have contributed the only radio twins in Australia or New Zealand, the Murphy family is well known in New Zealand for its prowess at skiing. The Twins, Brian and younger brother John are all expert skiers, being numbered among the first ten in New Zealand in the sport.

The family used to have charge of the Dawson Falls Hostel on Mount Egmont.