

Crucial Year in World History?

CIVIS (Khandallah): At this, the beginning of a new year, I wonder how many readers of the "Record" are turning their thoughts toward what the coming year may hold for the world? From several points of view 1939 may prove one of the crucial years of the world's history. About a year ago it was forecast by reliable political observers that the autumn of 1938 would bring a European crisis, and sure enough it did. What, then, will the European summer and autumn hold this year?

Hitler, having restored Germany to her old position as one of the great Powers, is almost sure to have to face the (possibly) last struggle of democracy against dictatorship. That democracy is indeed working up to determined opposition to the forces of totalitarianism is becoming increasingly apparent. That there will ultimately be a struggle, armed as well as economic, is also becoming increasingly apparent.

And where do we as individuals stand at the beginning of this crucial year? It is a matter to which every citizen must give much thought. May

What Does 1939 Hold In Store For Us? . . . Not Many Drunken Drivers Over Christmas . . . Appreciation Of Dashiell Hammett Serial

I hope that this letter will do something towards this end?

Drunken Driving

Another Motorist (Auckland): In the issue of the "Record" dated December 30, I noticed a letter from "Motor," of Napier, saying that he was distressed at the number of motorists he had seen who had had too much to drink. As a motorist of many years' standing I would like to take exception to his remarks. I travelled some thousands of miles over the holiday season and I did not see one driver who was obviously the worse for drink. Certainly I saw some reckless drivers, but it does not take drink to make a driver reckless. It would appear that the Hon. R. Semple's campaign against drunken drivers is bearing fruit, and that ultimately the drunken driver will indeed be purged from the road. Force of public opinion is right against mixing drink and driving, and motorists as a class are sensible people, and just as

law-abiding as any other section of the community.

Exciting Serial

Canadian (Wadestown): Congratulations on the Dashiell Hammett serial, "The Golden Horseshoe," which is as exciting and diverting a yarn as I have read for a long time. Some of your readers may be a little distressed at the frankly American flavour of the dialogue, but it's certainly crisp and full of action. And if one wants real American dialogue I would suggest a good course of Damon Runyan. We can do with more serials of "The Golden Horseshoe" type, and less, much less, of the Barbara Hutton type. Heaven alone knows how relieved I was to see the end of the gilded Miss Hutton.

Stamp Man

C.J.W. (Dunedin): I think your correspondent who wrote the paragraph in this week's "Record" about the "Stamp Man" is a little hard on him. "I have one complaint," the paragraphist states, "the speaker has a very dull, colourless voice, and if his material wasn't good, he'd be hard to listen to." Now, in my opinion, that is entirely wrong. The Stamp Man's voice is certainly American, but it is very pleasant all the same, and if some of our New Zealand announcers, in either service, had as clear a diction, and as pleasant a voice to listen to, it would be all to the good. As for the Stamp Man's material, well, I for one was amazed that there could be so

all in favour of British institutions such as Christmas and roast beef, but this Christmas, for once, I had more than my fill of carol singing. We had a fair amount of it over the air, and on top of that, one night—I forget which night it was—my sleep was very rudely disturbed by an itinerant band of carol singers singing "Good King Wincelas" very lustily under my window. Now round about Christmas time there is always excuse for a little harmless frivolity, and I will confess that I had been having some of the same the evening before. Therefore my pain and disgust at being woken up were all the more acute. Next Christmas I am starting an anti-Christmas carol movement.

Wrong Line

W.B. (New Plymouth): There was a good deal of sense in your article on the need for propaganda to compete with that broadcast throughout the world in the Press and over the air by totalitarian countries, but you took the wrong line. There is certainly room for a campaign on somewhat different lines. It is accepted as true that there is no people of any nation in the world who want war. But nothing is being done to destroy warlike propaganda in dictator countries. Now, peace is the highest blessing we know on this earth. Why should there not be propaganda for peace? I mean propaganda not in the countries of France and Britain and New Zealand, etc., where, goodness knows, there are few warlike spirits, but propaganda in Germany, Italy and Japan. In dreams I see a huge and implacable Peace Movement. It will fight for peace as thoroughly as others fight for war.

It will have tens of thousands of young men trained for the cause of peace as to-day they are trained for war. They will go out into the dictator-ridden countries disseminating their propaganda. They will have spies and agitators and secret service men. They will be willing to risk their lives, for if caught they will surely be shot. They will be supported with huge sums of money by the great firms and governments and firms and communities who see the folly of war. They will spread their gospel all through the world. It was done in Rome by such spies and secret service agents and agitators. They worked underground (like Hitler) in the cellars, only the cellars were called catacombs. They worked until they had bent the Caesar-Dictators to their will. They were called the Early Christians.

"Rubbish"

"Variety" (Palmerston North): A year or two ago, many letters appeared in your columns, criticising the programmes broadcast by the A stations. Extreme views on jazz and crooning on the one hand, and chamber music and grand opera on the other, provided us with a good deal of amusing reading. There was one session, however, that enjoyed a well-deserved popularity—the "Music, Mirth and Melody" programme, which was an hour that really had something in light entertainment to appeal to everyone.

But what do we find today? We find that the two stations which are not on dance music are polluting the air with an almost undiluted dose of Carson Robison and

his Buckaroos. (I must admit that I do not know what a "buckaroo" is, but I can certainly think of several better descriptions of those "entertainers.") I suppose there is a public for this sort of thing, but I have an idea that a few thousand listeners will agree with me that it is the most unmitigated rubbish ever broadcast; so why inflict it from two stations at once?

"SCANDAL"

Housing Shortage In Wellington

"DISGUSTED" (Wellington):

As a new-comer may I be allowed space in your paper to say a few words about the housing shortage in Wellington. I came down to the Capital to live several months ago, and I knew that the shortage was very bad, but I had no idea how bad it was. For months I have been searching almost every day for a house, and without any luck at all. It appears that the only houses to be procured are in the £5 a week class, and what working man can afford to pay that amount?

The situation in Wellington is a scandal, and the Government should tackle Wellington as a separate problem altogether. State houses are all very well, but they are not being put up nearly fast enough. The Government should institute a big-scale programme of workers' flats, as several Continental cities have done. I have seen very little in the papers recently about the shortage. I hope the "Record" is alive to it.

Surely one station could supply the demand—if any. A surfeit of anything good is undesirable—a surfeit of Carson Robison is an atrocity.

Suggestion

J.K. (Timaru): Lately I read that a resident of Bristol, Albert John Grave, aged 86, left £113,000 to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in Britain for the reduction of the National Debt. True, he was a miser. He lived in a single-roomed board and lodging place, never spent more than 27/- a week all told, went to a cheap eating-house, refused to have a fire in his room, rationed himself to one ounce of cheap tobacco a week and dressed only in the shabbiest clothes. But all the same he left a fortune to the State. Why is it that so many New Zealanders who die well off, after lives of luxury and plenty, never seem to leave their money or any part of it to the State? Yet we all sing "God Defend New Zealand" loud enough.

Public Trust Office

STATEMENT FOR NOVEMBER, 1938.

ESTATES of a value of £422,167 were reported and accepted for administration by the Public Trustee during the month of November, 1938. The total value of the estates and funds under administration by the Public Trustee on the 31st March, 1938, was £80,815,306, and the new business for the eight months ended 30th November, 1938, was £4,367,663.

Grants of administration made by the Court in favour of the Public Trustee numbered 180 for the month. During the month 416 new wills appointing the Public Trustee executor were prepared on behalf of testators and lodged for safe custody, and 309 existing wills were revised to provide for changes desired by testators. The total number of wills now held in the Public Trust Office on behalf of living persons is 2034.

Weekly Crossword Puzzle

By RICHARD H. TINGLEY.

- ACROSS.**
- Thick cord
 - Knock
 - Layers or seams
 - Annealing chamber
 - One of King David's chief rulers (3 Samuel XX-29)
 - Flute-like instrument
 - Companion
 - Manifest
 - A fruit (pl.)
 - Hallowed
 - Strong caustic solution
 - Fine travellings
 - Bleat
 - Open space in a building
 - Definite periods
 - Decorated
 - Slightly tapering
 - Wagers
 - Ship's company
 - Herb of the bean family
 - Aggrieved
 - Before
 - Honors
 - Small streams of water

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LAST WEEK'S ANSWER.

- DOWN.**
- Play boisterously
 - Roughly elliptical
 - Fretful
 - Adversary
 - Cut with violence
 - Fit for ploughing
 - Extenuate
 - Braggart
 - Declines
 - A limited portion
 - Sow
 - Small enclosure
 - Chair
 - Cut short
 - Metric land measure
 - False
 - One who drives back
 - Gnawed
 - Great body of salt water
 - Declares
 - Water pitcher
 - Reposer
 - Swedish coin
 - Plunder
 - Clothe
 - Regular
 - Sell
 - Lank
 - Account
 - Place of bestiality
- ACROSS.**
- Consumes too much
 - Parasitic insect
 - Inclination
 - Gain as clear profit
 - Let escape undesignedly
 - Ceases
 - Endeavor
 - Sea bird of prey

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BEST WISHES

Happy New Year To the "Record"

THIS is an appropriate time of the year to wish everybody the best of everything, and I would like to take the opportunity of conveying good wishes to the "Record." I have watched the "Record" progress for several years, and I have always found it a progressive paper. The recent move you made of enlarging both the size and scope of the paper is worth while. This coming year, I hope, will see the "Record" go on the same. So to all the people who write for our amusement, a happy New Year.

much useful information to be dug out of a hobby like stamp collecting. My three boys take an exceptionally keen interest in the session, and naturally I encourage them.

Carols

Hampson (Auckland): Just a small addition to the number of letters which have been appearing in the "Record" on the subject of Christmas carols. Normally I am