

"Live and Let Live."

I LISTENED to the special programme on a recent Monday night and enjoyed every section of it. Now I know it is impossible to please the individual tastes of all listeners; but I think I can safely say that the programme would not suit about 50 per cent. of the listeners. But what about the other half? Why cannot those who so dislike the "canned American twang" get their Wednesday night's programme from the same source as they did before the new idea was conceived? If the proverb "Live and let live" were adopted by all New Zealand radio listeners, I am sure the greatest satisfaction possible will be attained.—D. W. Harris (Masterton).

An Excellent Suggestion.

SOME months ago lectures on the language Esperanto were given over the air by, I think, station 3YA. I am wondering whether, during the coming winter, lessons on French or Spanish could be fitted in on the programmes from one station or another. I feel sure if a census of opinion could be taken it would be found that such an item on the programmes would meet with much approval.

While we welcome the expressed views of listeners on topics pertaining to radio, we ask that these communications be kept to minimum length, as heavy demands are made upon space. Mere reiteration of arguments cannot be accepted for publication, and we cannot take responsibility for views expressed. Address communications to the Editor, and sign all correspondence, though a nom-de-plume might be used for publication.

I suggest—and this is merely my personal opinion only—two evenings per week of, say, half an hour each. I have named French or Spanish, but I have no doubt French would be the more popular choice. If this language could be explained and taught "over the air"

by an expert French linguist, it would assist many who are studying it at present, and possibly interest many who have never bothered to learn it, and arouses them to a desire to attempt the study of the language.—J.E.A. (New Plymouth).

On the International Recordings.

I NOTICE on the "Mailbag" page of a recent issue some protests about 2YA's silent night being eliminated and special recordings of overseas programmes presented. I refer to "English Mother," L. J. Retallick, and H. B. Clapham.

Personally I was a very interested listener to 2YA on the Monday night when the first of these programmes was presented, and I considered it well worth listening to. Yes, L.J., I certainly agree with you when you say the boy and girl dance party number was "trash," but remember we must take the bad with the good. What better could one wish for than Dr. Eugene Ormandy's Salon Orchestra, or "Handsome" singing in Mexican? "English Mother" must have forgotten that there is a little switch on the set. Why not give the crystal set owners of New Zealand a chance to hear what American programmes are like? Everything the R.B.C. does to try and entertain us is picked to pieces by dissatisfied people who can find fault with anything.

I much prefer the so-called American twang to some of these so-called cultured English voices that we find on records. I have been a listener to 2YA for three years now and whatever the directors see fit to do suits me splendidly. Carry on with the good work, 2YA, and the Broadcasting Company.—"New Zealand Father" (Hastings).

Criticising the Critics.

IT was with amusement tinged with regret that I read the criticisms of the American programme broadcast from 2YA on a recent Monday night. To L. J. Retallick, "English Mother," and H. B. Clapham, one feels like saying, for guidance for future Wednesdays: "Do as you did other Wednesdays—don't discourage the fellows that try to help you."

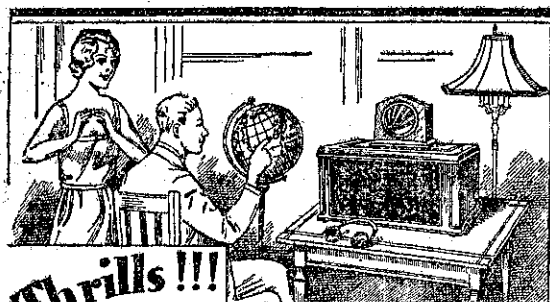
I realise, however, that such sweeping criticisms deserve a more lengthy retort. Now, I am going to suppose that my three friends are musical, and I ask them can they, as musical critics, tell me of a New Zealand musical combination as good as the Ormandy Orchestra? Personally, I believe that Signor Truda and Mr. Dixon would award the palm to this fine combination. To the musically inclined the tone, quality, rhythm, balance, etc., is really exceptional. Certainly they may not play our old favourites, as our local combinations do, but being far from the musical centres of the world we have naturally a poorer idea of the many classical works than the people of some American cities and Europe generally. I look forward to hearing Strauss's "Waltz Dream" and the "Song of India." Hy-

Wide and Handsome, if you listened carefully, brought in quite a lot of information disguised as dialogue—remember the interesting fact that bats eat mosquitoes? As a country yokel I often hear stupid and uninformed criticism of our birds and minor reptiles. Why cannot some of our radio uncles make up little sketches on Hy-Wide's lines, and educate our children on animals, trees, wild life, protection, etc. In the form of a dialogue, they would be very popular. Down south here we often did not bother about the agricultural lectures, but since "Farmer Brown" started to feed us facts stripped of the usual lecture clothing and padded with a chatty dialogue, we are keen listeners.

As a vocalist Hy-Wide in my opinion is a plane above anything we hear locally. The children at the party took me back a number of years, and listening to them made me think of my schooldays. Didn't it you? It's terrible to see someone write and say he noticed several errors in grammar. I'll present my lucky half-penny to the child, male or female, who can converse for, say, twenty minutes, without a grammatical error. I nearly said I'll double the stake to Mr. Retallick, but as a farmer I cannot be rash these hard times. On the jazz side I'll have many supporters, and the way the production was staged might set some of our local combinations thinking. Now the terrible question of accent. It's really momentous when you consider it. Our claims to be judges of what spoken English is are mostly based on the idea that anyone whose vocal chords give off a different tone to our own is wrong—in fact, an outcast. We laugh at the alleged Oxford accent—we laugh at cockney. In some parts of England we would hardly understand the natives. If the cockney is wrong, and the aristocrat as personified in the Oxfordian, is absurd, I suppose we must fall back on the "middle class." Most English novelists say, "There ain't no such animal."

Again we often consider our local elocutionists as affected in speech. Can "English Mother" tell me what good English is? Summing it all up, do not let us show a petty spirit in this matter. Personally, I thank the Radio Broadcasting Company for their efforts. Our D.X. friends seem to thrive on Americans, and I think thanks are due to Mr. Harris and his associates for letting us hear what others are doing on the air. I will not repeat the hackneyed paraphrase on "You can fool some of the people, etc." But let things rest with a wish to all critics to remember that individually they represent one sixtieth-thousandth of the listeners, and it is not sportsmanlike to spoil another's fun. Criticise, by all means, but please criticise constructively.—Cromdale (Otago).

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