

Entertainments or Culture?

BEFORE the Broadcasting Company's turn was up, it submitted a scheme of improvements, and also stated that listeners should have a share in that scheme. It is now nearly nine months since the Broadcasting Board took over, and many people who were not satisfied over programmes and hours are now more than disappointed over the present-day programmes. The board certainly abolished the international programmes, but so far as the artists and records are concerned, I do not really see much difference.

The extended hours at 1YA, 3YA, and 4YA are taking a long time to become a reality. The news session which so many country listeners, without daily mails, depend on, has been considerably cut down. I wish the persons responsible for this would come and stay at least a week to know what a loss this is. What does it matter what London's by-laws of 300 years ago were, or whether Mars is inhabited, when we want to know the happenings of to-day? Why are there now no "request items?" As far as I can see, the listeners are to pay for what the board thinks we should have, which seems to be, in fact, to educate the listening public up to the high standard of its members. Many of us are too busy in providing exports for New Zealand to have to be so highly cultured. What we want is to be entertained. The surprise nights are certainly a delight. What the board needs to do, to ensure a greater number of listeners, is to study what we want, not what it thinks we should get.—"Farmer's Wife" (Putake).

More Sports Relays Wanted.

THIS is not a complaint, but a request which I am sure may be taken as coming on behalf of not only myself, but also a big majority of listeners. Does 2YA realise that the only sports relay we are privileged to hear is Saturday's football matches? I must say they are a treat, but to come to the point—when are we to hear a relay from 2YA of a boxing or wrestling match? The B stations we know relay these sports, but many (like myself) are in a locality which renders it impossible to tune in these stations. These sports, especially wrestling, are now demanding a huge following, so 2YA, keep up with the times.—"K.O." (Wanganui).

A Bouquet.

I CANNOT understand why the brilliant presentation of that beautiful little play, "The Flowers are not for You to Pick," given by Mr. Victor Lloyd and Company, did not find universal approbation. I personally consider it by far the best item I have ever heard—over the air—and know of many others here who hold the same view. I am looking forward with relish to the day when we shall hear Mr. Lloyd again, and hope that the day will not be far distant.—"Tua!"

Lighter Programmes Needed.

AS a journeyman who has to make living out of selling sets may I state that on all sides the opinion that whereas since the Hon. Mr. Hamilton took over the radio service some few insignificant improvements have been effected, the reception, and especially the programmes, have not improved. The chief obstacle to sales is the dullness and want of character in the YA stations. Of course we do some business, but only half of what could be done if a bright orchestra, one Maori

night, less symphony and chamber music, as well as less talks, especially crime talks, were introduced. Complaint is made that for nights, sometimes in succession, programmes at all stations are classical or semi-classical, with songs such as "The Swallow" are anything but entertaining.

Would-be customers have returned approval sets, saying they have tried all YA stations, often on the same night, to find all of them on classical programmes, which are uninteresting after a hard day's work. One really classical programme a week most seem to think should be sufficient—the rest should be bright, tuneful, and humorous to be popular, and help sales. I know sales are not everything—but why run dull programmes, growled at by most, including qualified musicians, and only listened to by a handful of what one prospective customer called "long-haired, old-fashioned foreign fossils?" I find the best selling item is Mr. C. Drummond's announcing.—R. M. K. Stapleton (Masterton).

Bird Life in the Antarctic.

IN your issue of September 16, "In Phase and Out" columns, I read of the talk by Mr. Ninnis from 2YA of "Bird Life in the Antarctic." I enjoyed the same talk, but we must remember that Mr. Ninnis gave talks from 2ZW some time ago. It seems to me that it takes the B stations to find

good talent, and then, of course, they lose it. Mr. Ninnis's talks from 2ZW were most interesting.—39MC (Marlborough).

More Wrestling Relays Wanted.

IN this little corner of the South Island the most interesting and prized items of the week's radio entertainments are the weekly wrestling matches from 1YA—made more absorbing certainly by the announcer's knowledge of the wrestlers and the wrestling game. Every Monday night we gather around to hear the thuds, smacks and dry comments, and on Saturdays, at 10.30 p.m., we listen in to the Bohemia Stadium, Brisbane.

Now, what I am getting at is that we never know when and where wrestling is to be relayed—sometimes by accident, we find it at 2ZW. Sometimes 1YA and 3YA have advertised it, and even then 1YA has disappointed us twice after advertising a relay. Could you do something about it? If wrestling transmissions cannot be advertised I for one would be glad to pay for a collect wire on occasions when a match is to be broadcast by any other station except 1YA.—"Interested" (Tokanui).

[We believe that generally the Wrestling Association is averse to prior announcements being made concerning relays of wrestling matches, because of the effect on attendance. We are sorry we cannot help you.—Ed.]

Quips

From the Questionnaire

"I suggest that at least half the items broadcast on Sunday afternoons should be of a sacred nature."

"For heavens sake make the Sunday music livelier; it's deadly at present."

"Local artists! Forsooth—you have only two in New Zealand worth broadcasting."

"We prefer the original to tuned music, so vote for local artists."

"Give us more opera and oratorio; more relays from English stations. We are not getting our money's worth."

"This is from a satisfied family, who appreciate such good entertainment at one penny per night."

"I don't think that the programmes could be better arranged, except that there is a preponderance of classical music."

"Very satisfied with service, but could you not keep . . . off the air, his lower notes are awful."

"Give us more humour, please; these are trying times."

"I've never heard a humorous item over the air; alleged humour: Yes."

"Not enough Scottish music."

"Could we have an Irish night once a month?"

"More old-time songs, and plenty of Scotch ones."

"We enjoy 2YA band nights (Sundays) best of all."

"The Sunday night concerts from 2YA are a disgrace. It's a sacred day; why not have sacred music throughout."

"Why 100 per cent. of rotten jazz—it is not music."

"Give us dance music earlier in the evenings. Why should we have to wait up for what we want when the 'Highbrows' don't? Be reasonable."

"Cut out the dance session, nobody wants jazz."

"We want you to give us more dance music. It's what we pay our license for."

"Very satisfied with present programmes, but more educational talks please."

"Don't spoil the programmes with too many talks."

"No Maori performers; no Hawaiian; no highbrow music; not much jazz; no steel guitars; and no local artists."

"Not too much classical stuff and jazz rubbish."

"Cut out all American twang records and give us pure English."

"Can't you get Amos and Andy records; they are the only comedians worth while."

The Advisory Council.

ONE has noticed in your journal from time to time references to the Advisory Council or its alleged doings which would seem to indicate that the writers are under the impression that they themselves are the final arbiters of what should or should not be done in radio matters, and that what others think or do is necessarily "stupid" or "ridiculous." A few weeks ago a gentleman rejoicing in the mellifluous name of Meltzer aired his views at great length.

With quite becoming modesty he claimed to speak for "thousands" of people, and, naturally enough, had to indicate, what small beer the council was. This week your contributor, "Spark," ever so self-assured and didactic, speaks of "the ridiculous suggestion of the Advisory Council," and proceeds, as is the way of the cocksure and ignorant, to set up an Aunt Sally to his own satisfaction, and then to knock it down again.

Perhaps "Spark" would be good enough to say what the suggestion was, why it was made, and why it is ridiculous?

This may be a good opportunity, too, to suggest with due humility and with all deference to Meltzer, Spark and Co. that the Advisory Council does not consist of a collection of congenital idiots; while, on the other hand, it would be absurd to suppose that Providence, mysterious as are its ways, had centred all the wisdom in the joint heads (or should we say the joint and several heads) of these critics—T. T. Davis (New Plymouth).

Views From the Country.

FIRST of all I must congratulate the Broadcasting Board for the improved programmes and new innovations. Personally I think we have too much concert orchestra from 2YA—not that I dislike the orchestra, but it is on the air too many times in the week. I enjoy Frank Crowther's orchestra, but if it were broadcasting as often as the other I certainly would get tired of it, too. I would like to hear a few more band items and also more relays from concert halls, etc., although we are better provided in that respect than we used to be. Take, for instance, the farewell concert to Lex Macdonald in Dunedin. 4YA was relaying 3YA's programme and could have easily arranged to broadcast the concert. We country people cannot attend these concerts and would have welcomed the chance to listen in to "Our Boy" and other notable artists that night.

While on 4YA, I should like to register my protest to the station going back to its old frequency. Certainly it was not a success at 550 k.c., but as its old frequency was not suitable, why was it not put on a fresh one where it would not interfere with another station? My main point in writing this is to ask if it is at all possible for 2ZW to be shifted clear from interference from another station. When this station first started it came out here clear as a bell, but it was not long before a new station choked it. What I do hear of it makes me wish for more, and if I could only get it clear I for one would gladly send along my donation toward keeping it on the air. I have no objection to B stations having "limited" advertising, say, a few minutes each quarter or half-hour. —"Querrie" (South Otago).