

The Cockies' Grouch.

"FARMER'S WIFE" (Putaki) has the usual cockies' grouch and shows little consideration for town listeners when she advocates still lengthier news sessions. Also would she please say from what Y station she is getting less news. The board are guilty of many things, but I wish they were guilty of cutting down the news sessions. Did "Farmer's Wife" not fill in her questionnaire? If so, why accuse the poor board of wishing to give listeners what they (the board) think desirable? Her whole letter is so full of misstatements that one wonders if "Farmer's Wife" is another propagandist. — "Banker's Wife" (Hataitai).

Satisfied.

ON behalf of this family of seven I wish to congratulate the board on the vast improvement effected in the service.

Don Bradman was much appreciated and the literary competition, though too hard for us, afforded us entertainment, "the best ever."

The facing broadcasts are also much appreciated, especially by mother, who, Heaven knows, does not get much other pleasure these hard times. In talking the matter over to-night we cannot suggest in what way further improvement can be effected. — "Content."

Statement Challenged.

I HAVE a bone to pick with R. M. K. Stapleton (Masterton), who infers that listeners frequently get classical programmes the same night from all the YA stations.

As a lover of classical music, my complaint is that I don't get nearly enough, and I therefore challenge the writer referred to to substantiate his statement and say on what nights the conditions he outlines exists. — "Opus" (Ngalo).

The Result of Propinquity.

THE questionnaire seems to have caused quite a lot of talk and goes to show that New Zealand has still a long way to go before she can be considered in the same musical street as the older European countries. There is, of course, nothing detrimental in this; indeed, New Zealand would indeed be a precocious child to imagine that she can equal the musical taste of her elders. I believe, however, that the public education in this respect started some five years ago with the advent of commercial wireless, and it is going on all the time, the process must, in the very nature of things, be a slow one.

Upon the programme organisers rests a tremendous responsibility in this respect, and, judiciously administered, the public taste should gradually be turned more and more toward the lasting works of classical composers. Then, perhaps, if another similar questionnaire were submitted to listeners in 20 years' time, the results might be very different.

As a matter of idle conjecture as to what results would have been obtained from a similar questionnaire in Europe, I should hazard a guess that Italy would have had operas and oratorios somewhere near the head of the list; Germany, classical and song music with perhaps orchestral and band music next; England, light classical, orchestral, song and classical music, and probably humorous items high up, too.

After all, it is somewhat natural that band music should be so popular here; it is the only music that has been readily accessible to the general public,

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through the medium of race meetings, band contests, etc.; and love is often the result of propinquity.

The programmes at present are fairly well leavened with classical music, and are well balanced; the organisers are to be congratulated on introducing the thin end of the classical wedge so successfully.

Now for just a few words of criticism regarding the arrangement of the news and lecture session from 7 to 8 p.m. I am so situated that 2YA and 3YA are my best reception stations. It



Evelyn Shepard,

a prominent Dunedin soprano, and a regular broadcaster from 4YA. With Miss E. Wallace (violinist) she will assist Dr. V. E. Galway in his illustrated talk on "Studies of Great Composers—Bach," to be given from 4YA on Wednesday, October 5.

—Zenith, photo.

is often noticed that 3YA is a day behind 2YA in the latest news items; it is most annoying to hear the same news all over again from 3YA the following night that it was heard from 2YA. Surely this could be rectified. On the other hand, I think 3YA arranges the news in a much better manner than 2YA.

Seeing that the questionnaire was inaugurated to gauge what the majority wanted most in the way of music, surely it is only fair to supply the majority first in the news session also. For instance, if one is not interested in plotting a weather chart, it is still necessary to listen to the beastly thing in case one should miss any of the news which follows. The same thing applies to the market reports; and by the way, in this latter respect, it should be borne in mind that there are a tremendous number of 2YA listeners in the South Island and elsewhere who are interested in the general market reports such as wool prices, etc.; but

who are not a bit interested in the local North Island sheep and produce reports, as they are no criterion of South Island prices. Therefore, the general reports should be given first, and those people disinterested in the following reports could switch off their sets without fear of missing anything. Not only is it a decided advantage to be able to switch off for the foregoing reasons, but it would also often be of no little advantage to battery set owners, whose batteries might be running down, to conserve them for even a quarter or half an hour each night. The great majority of people are only interested in the news and weather forecasts, and possibly the lecturette next; they would then switch off their sets and have a little peace until 8 p.m.

I cannot see that this arrangement would inconvenience chart plotters at all, as they would surely want to hear the news, etc., as well as anyone else. The above reasoning appears to me to be so obvious that I suppose there must be some very good reason why it has not been done before. — J. O. H. Tripp.

Well Pleased.

AS one who has viewed the propaganda against the Y service with disgust, I desire to express the keenest satisfaction with what has already been done to improve matters. There has been considerable initiative shown in providing entertainment of a new kind—in the way of competitions, etc.—and programmes of a much better balance are the order of the day. Anyone dissatisfied with the present service is in my opinion difficult to please. — "Well Satisfied."

Miss James's Talk.

LISTENING last night to Miss Ester James's report of her tour through New Zealand, I was struck very forcibly by one remark she made: that all through her tour she had not had one nasty experience. Now, apart from advertising New Zealand goods, doesn't that say something for the character of our people, that a young girl could walk that distance by herself from one end of the country to the other and no one to molest her, and as she said, not one nasty experience? I wonder if the same could be said of any other country. So cheer up, New Zealand, our folks are all right! Why worry!

Also, I would like to congratulate Miss James on her very fine voice and manner of broadcasting, every word so distinct. She knew what to say and how to say it, and said it. — M. M. Markborough (Blenheim).

Unwanted Artists.

I AM another listener who is glad that the wiles of the propagandist have been laid bare by the Control Board's plebiscite. It was always patent to me that disgruntled artists and B station supporters for their own selfish ends were behind most of the criticism of the service. Wellington is not the only city where a disgruntled and unwanted artist is actively "anti-board" and "pro B station." We have several of the type here, and one in particular is doing his best to discredit the Board and its management—particularly the

latter. He is taking up the view that the management should be compelled to tell artists why they are not being engaged. I suggest that the Board could best silence this criticism by having published in your columns the correspondence it exchanges with these unwanted artists. Listeners would then be able to appreciate the true worth of the criticism emanating from these. — I was going to say "undesirables." — "Plain Talk" (Auckland).

Enjoyable Programmes.

MIGHT I add our mite of praise to the Radio Board for recent features. The literary competition was grand, and Don Bradman was par excellence. Congratulations to the general manager, who is quite obviously the right man in the right place. — "More Than Satisfied" (Auckland).

Not So Complacent.

YOUR issue of September 16 exhibits in its Mail Bag, editorial, and elsewhere such extravagant complacency with regard to N.Z. broadcasting that it might be as well to indicate that we are not all complacent.

Concerning the plebiscite, forty per cent. of the listeners returned presumably completed forms; you observe that of the other sixty per cent: "... it can generally be assumed that they were fairly satisfied with existing conditions." Is it not possible that this sixty per cent. were so disgusted with the crudeness of the plebiscite that they refused to indicate their views in such an unsatisfactory and contradictory manner? And if we assume for a moment that the plebiscite was so skilfully drawn up, why was it so necessary continually to exhort the listeners to complete it, and to extend the original date of possible return? You publish two letters which, if they are meant to prove anything at all, prove that N.Z. programmes, and 2YA's in particular, are the best in the world—for prior to this English programmes were so considered. Would that they were half as good as Australia's! It may be that English programmes are poor (having heard them, I am very considerably inclined to doubt this), but they at least have on them one of the finest symphony orchestras in the world, the pick of the military bands, of octets, of sextets, quintets, quartets, and trios; they frequently include performances by the world's recognised musical masters, by famous variety and vaudeville stars, and, indeed, by anyone who has made his mark in the entertainment world; not only this, the relays they carry out are the equal of any anywhere, and their announcers are the best in the world—all these things and a thousand more are on English programmes, and N.Z., ladies and gentlemen, has a concert orchestra!

It might interest some of those who marvel at the munificence of a ten-and-sixpenny fee that the B.B.C. frequently pays more than five hundred pounds for an hour's performance by a world-famous artist. I am perfectly well aware that the R.B.C. couldn't afford anything like this sum, but I am not prepared to believe that some of the alleged singers, humorists, and so on that we hear represent the best in N.Z., or that their performance was not purchased for two shillings a night. If the board is paying more, here is an indication of possible economy. Of the YA's, I listen most frequently to 3YA.

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