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THE RADIO PROGRAMME - ITS GOOD AND BAD SPOTS

"Observer" Thinks American Public is Getting the Flapdoodle That It Wants

(The Daily Mail, while it finds "Observer" articles interesting and popular, does not always agree with what is said, and is not responsible for the writer's opinions).

So far I have never touched upon the radio in this column. This is not because I consider the subject of little importance, but because other matters seem to have been more relevant at the time of writing. Now, however, I propose to devote a few lines to this popular subject.

Within the last decade the progress of radio has been swift and phenomenal. Hardly more than twelve years old, the industry has grown until it bids fair to rival the movie in universal popularity. Like most other industries that are closely dependent upon popular taste, the radio programme may be taken as a fairly accurate indication of the people's wishes. It is with the programme aspect that I wish particularly to deal not with the mechanics of radio.

I say that the quality of the programmes may be regarded as a fairly accurate indication. It is not a fully accurate indication. When we look over the field of offerings in this line we note some great differences in various areas. In the United States the commercial type of programme has almost an exclusive field. Advertising is the primary factor. Sponsors may seek the talent, but more often talent seeks a sponsor. And talent of any particular kind had a good or a bad chance of finding a sponsor according to how much the sponsor thinks the programme will appeal to popular taste.

Although advertisers are primarily interested in selling their product, they are not at all anxious to run counter to public desire in choosing a specific programme. They are anxious to give the public what it wants. And there is no doubt at all that the American public wants just what it is getting, the most unmitigated flapdoodle. To those whose tastes are somewhat above the wisecracks of half-baked comedians, and the futile efforts of announcers and advertisers to be funny, the thought must often come, "Is this sort of thing what the public really wants?" The answer, of

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360 KING STREET

course, is no. It is not what all the listening public wants, but it emphatically is what the majority wants.

The minority who would like to hear more programmes of a higher class, in both music and speech, are a singularly inarticulate lot. For every hundred listeners who write in to a station to express their approval of the jazzy type of programmes, only one or two would ever write to express a preference for a symphony orchestra or a Shakespearean Drama. Now, a direct expression of opinion from the radio audience is all that the station authorities and the sponsors have to go by. So the result is that the whole listening public are forced to put up with the type of stuff that the jazz-hounds want; simply because the latter are so prompt about expressing their desires.

Of course it is possible to get away from all this. One can switch over to London, or Berlin, or Rome, if one has that kind of a set, but not everybody has. When we tune in the foreign stations we are in another atmosphere altogether. What a blessed relief to sit back and listen to a programme of good music, either instrumental or vocal, uninterrupted by sappy remarks and irritating advertising.

I have never been one of those who constantly decried the well-meant efforts of the Canadian Radio Commission. Though that body is now defunct, it still has to its credit a worthy attempt to achieve a higher standard of programmes than prevailed before. It may have failed to secure the services of the top-notchers, but that was through lack of money. And even then most people objected to paying the two dollar license fee, talking ridiculously about the air being free. The air may be free, and so is water, but it costs something to have it piped to your house. I will say, in all fairness to the Canadian Radio Commission, that I much preferred its offerings to the commercial programmes emanating from the United States. And we didn't have to take all the advertising along with it.

I admit that there are some good commercial programmes on the air. Or rather there were. Major Bowes was good, but he is getting hackneyed. Also the thing was imitated and burlesqued by every little two-by-four organization in the United States and Canada who were at their wits' end to devise some kind of a programme. I think any concern that now advertises a Major Bowes Amateur Hour should have their heads examined. Yes, there are a few good programmes but is there really anyone who likes to have good singing interrupted to listen to goofy remarks about Palmolive Soap?

The whole thing comes down to this. Since I honestly believe that I am speaking for a considerable group of radio listeners, I would say this. Write in to the stations and sponsors and make your preferences known. The chances are good that you will be listened to. They listen to the others. No sponsor likes to think that his programme is being consistently tuned off the dial. If you are doing that with some programme write and tell them so. You may help to drive it off the air. Don't let the jazz-hounds have everything their own way.

OBSERVER.

BUILD UP PACIFIC COAST DEFENSE

VANCOUVER, Oct. 5—During the past nine months the Federal Government has given careful consideration to Canada's coastal defense, particularly on the Pacific Coast, Hon. Ian Mackenzie, Minister of National Defense, said on his arrival here recently. The Minister said the Government was considering the establishment of a northern coastal air base in British Columbia, with the possibility of an intermediate base between the Queen Charlotte Island and Vancouver.

Mr. Mackenzie said \$375,000 would be spent on the Jericho Air Station here in the immediate future, and the contract had been let during the past week for the first of this work.

INCREASED REVENUE OF \$770,309 ON C.N.R.

MONTREAL, Oct. 5—The gross revenue of the all inclusive Canadian National Railways system for the 9 day period ending September 30, 1936 were \$5,916,339 as compared with \$5,146,030 for the corresponding period of 1935, an increase of \$770,309.

JAPANESE BY TAKING THOUGHT ARE ADDING CULTURE TO STATURE

Dr. Heiser, of Rockefeller Foundation, Explains "Magic Growth Powder"

NEW YORK, Oct. 5—The basis for recurrent reports that Japanese scientists have discovered a "magic growth powder" which will add inches to their height was revealed for the first time today by Dr. Victor G. Heiser, famous authority on oriental diseases and hygiene, who added that there was some truth in the rumor.

Dr. Heiser, writing in Collier's states that he started the story himself in Tokyo, and has been plagued ever since with thousands of plaintive appeals from men who want to add to their stature. Now associate director of the International Health Division of the Rockefeller Foundation, Dr. Heiser decided to explain the story publicly, so as not to raise further false hopes.

"The Japanese, who are sensitive as to their small stature," he writes "have emphasized extensive research on diet as it affects the size of human beings. Many travellers have explained that the Japanese are short because they habitually sit tailorwise. But Turks, Arabs and Persians, all tall people, also sit with folded legs."

A more likely explanation may be found in the national foods, mainly polished rice and fish which lack in organic salts and vitamins A and B. The Director of the Japanese Imperial Institute of Nutrition conceived the notion, brilliant in its simplicity of drying a certain species of fish in which vitamins and salts occur richly, and grinding them into a powder. This was sprinkled as seasoning on the noonday food of a selected group of Japanese school children.

"Now, after four years of this regimen, the sturdy experimentees suffer from fewer childhood maladies weigh on the average between four and five pounds more, and are actually several centimeters taller than the other children. The powder would almost seem to possess the properties of the miraculous foods which Alice found in Wonderland."

"When several Tokyo reporters were asking me for a story, I referred them to this laboratory scientist who, by taking thought, was adding cubits to the stature of his race. The next day the local papers carried a feature about the 'magic growth powder,' the story was picked up by the international press services, and I began receiving letters from all over the world from people who wanted to grow twelve inches. I am still approached by hopeful persons in the most out-of-the-way places."

In discussing the subject of diet deficiencies and their effects on whole peoples, Dr. Heiser revealed that beriberi, the scourge of the Orient is directly attributable to the inventiveness of Western countries.

"Rice is the universal staple diet of the Orient," he said, "among the poorer classes. The inventive genius of the West contrived a high grade milling machine which removed the coating from rice, and with it the Vitamin B. Orientals liked the white polished rice and ate it. As a result, a hundred thousand of them die every year of beriberi; far more are made ill or crippled."

"Beriberi could be wiped out if each Eastern country would levy a small tax on polished rice. Such a tax, even a few cents, would lift the price out of reach of the poorer classes. They would then buy unpolished rice, thus involuntarily saving their own lives by the thousands."

Dr. Heiser tells of an amusing yet highly revealing diet experiment conducted with a group of white rats. They were all of them from one parent stock, yet they differed from each other as the English from the French, and the Pathans of India from the Japanese.

"In the first cage," he says, "was a heavy, stocky rat with rough hair and bristling whiskers, ready to fight at the drop of a hat. From the time he had been weaned he had been fed on white bread and jam, boiled beef, boiled mutton, boiled fish, boiled vegetables, boiled tea—the English workmen's daily fare. It was apparent that he and his fellows partook of the nature of Britons, and never never, never would be slaves."

"Next to them, eyes round and placid, rats brought up on the perfect Sikh and Pathan diet amiably nibbled their vitamins. They were as large as the British rats, but their fur lay sleek and smooth; they were gently disposed toward men. In the cage beyond, the rats grew short and wide in the middle, with oily hair and whiskers twisted to fine points. It was easy to see they were French rats, accustomed to pot-au-feu rich in fats, meats flooded in fine sauces, and salads drenched in fine dressings."

"Their next neighbors lacked the Gallic paunch; instead they were short and wiry and scurried around energetically, making a great potter. Fish, highly polished rice and occasionally sukiyaki or a crab had been the foods of these Japanese rats. "The astonishing diversity of the

progeny of the laboratory Adam and Eve, rats long, short, wide, thin, bold meek, agile and deliberate, seemed scarcely credible."

Dr. Heiser's conclusions from his long experiments, studies and observations, are summed up in the title of his article: "We are what we eat."

**BOY SCOUT NEWS****No Hitch-Hikers These!**

A 750-mile "bike hike" around southwestern Ontario, with pup tent and cooking tent, was the summer holiday of Sea Scout Ted Horton of Owen Sound and Scout Keith Solomon of Meaford. The averaged 70 miles a day, had no accidents, and returned "healthy as a pair of boys could be."

Rope-Fulls of Orphans

One of the jobs of Toronto Scouts on duty this year at the Canadian National Exhibition was showing the sights to a large number of orphans who were enjoying the annual Shriners' treat. To prevent them getting lost, the children were taken round in batches of twenty or more on a rope, with a Scout at either end.

Scout Totem Pole Halts Sightseers

One of the lecture stops of Ottawa sightseeing buses is Dominion Boy Scout Headquarters, where conductors point out the tall Indian totem pole on the lawn. The pole was carved during a winter by junior Scout leaders, and reproduces a genuine Pacific Coast Indian tribal totem. Like the original, it is brilliantly colored. The three-foot replica of the original which was used as a working model, is occasionally borrowed by Ottawa public school teachers when discussing early Canadian history.

Scout Minstrels become Boy Radio Stars

Boy Scout minstrel shows proved the step into radio for Wolf Cub Bob Harron and Scout Leonard Robinson, who are playing the leading boy roles in "Lonesome Trail," a safety-promotion broadcast of the Motor Vehicles Branch of the Ontario Department of Highways. Both boys are members of the 30th Toronto Boy Scout Troop. Don was noticed during a Scout show by a radio executive, and invited to take an audition. Leonard had taken part in Scout minstrel shows for some years. "Lonesome Trail," a CRCT broadcast, depicts the adventures of two boys in the Northern Ontario woods, and aims incidentally to interest children in greater safety precautions on the street.

A Village That Ran Out of Boys

After a lapse of two years a Boy Scout troop is being reorganized in Queenston, Ont. Reason for lapse—the village had run out of boys.

Scout Tracking Found the Lost Child

Boy Scout training in track reading brought a happy ending to an 18-hour search by police, and some 200 people for a three-year-old boy who had wandered into the bush at Emma Lake, Sask. The sharp eyes of a Scout who had joined the search picked up the impression of a small foot. The trail quickly led to the child, lying under a bush and covered with mosquito bites.

Scout and Mounties Guard Quebec Bird Sanctuary

Boy Scouts and the R.C.M.P. are to share the guardianship of a new bird sanctuary established on Montreal Island by the Quebec Society for the Protection of Birds, with the authorization of the Dominion Government. The sanctuary is situated between the villages of Senneville and Ste. Anne's, and consists of 1,500 acres of woods and lake shore. Scouts share the guardianship of wild life sanctuaries in several of the provinces.

The Prisoner Gave the Police a Holiday

A party of English Boy Scouts hiking on the Continent prepared to spend the night on an island campsite. One of the rules was that lighting fires was strictly forbidden unless permission was obtained from the police. The Scouts sought the police station and made their request of the only person about. "Certainly," the man agreed. "Go ahead." The man not being in uniform, one of the Scouts inquired who he might be. "Oh," was the reply, "I'm the prisoner. I'm looking after the island while the police are away."

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Lv. 9.50 a.m.	Moonlight Inn	Ar. 5.00 p.m.
Lv. 10.30 a.m.	Kingsclear	Lv. 4.30 p.m.
Ar. 11.00 a.m.	Fredericton	Lv. 4.00 p.m.

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