



The care of the Eyes in Industry

There are many men and women, now working in factories for the first time, who suffer from headaches and tired eyes. Here are a few tips which will help them.

- (1) If you are provided with goggles, wear them.
- (2) Try to work with the light on the job and not on eye level.
- (3) Get as much fresh air as you can.
- (4) If you get a foreign body in your eye, report at once to the First Aid department. Don't rub the eye.
- (5) Bathe your eyes night and morning with an approved medicated lotion. Optrex is used by thousands of workers. It helps keep the eyes healthy and comfortable.
- (6) If headaches persist and your eyes continue to ache, water or irritate, consult a Qualified Practitioner.

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"THE MAN BORN TO BE KING"

Famous Religious Plays By Dorothy Sayers For New Zealand Listeners

NEW ZEALAND radio listeners are now to have the opportunity of hearing Dorothy Sayers's series of religious plays, *The Man Born to Be King*, which aroused a vigorous controversy in England when the BBC first broadcast them. Recordings made by the BBC have arrived here, in time for the first play to be broadcast on Easter Sunday, April 9, at 5 p.m., from 2YA.

The time at which they will be on the air will be a constant reminder to listeners of an important aspect of these plays—they were commissioned and written for the Children's Hour, and though it would be absurd to suggest that the possibility had not occurred to their author that adults also might take a keen interest, yet it should be remembered that they were written for listeners who would be assumed to approach them with a mind more or less free of preconceived notions of Christ the human being, and free also of the sort of inhibitions that might make it difficult for them to accept an Englishman's microphone voice as the voice of Christ.

Author's Three Conditions

The point in dispute in Great Britain was the question of what constitutes blasphemy. Miss Sayers accepted the BBC's invitation to do the series on three conditions:

- (1) She must introduce the character of Our Lord.
- (2) She must be allowed to use the same kind of realism as she had used in "He That Should Come" (a Nativity play which the NBS has broadcast here).
- (3) The plays must be in modern speech.

When these conditions were put before Dr. J. W. Welch, the BBC Director of Religious Broadcasting, he replied that they were not only acceptable but exactly what he had wanted and had hoped for.

The work was done in 1940 and 1941, and as Dr. Welch testifies in his foreword to the published plays, it was aided by "great Biblical and theological knowledge." Miss Sayers sent in the twelfth and last play with a note that she had "worn out one Greek testament and amassed a considerable theological library."

Some Strong Opposition

Then, 10 days before the first broadcast (the Sunday before Christmas, 1941), Miss Sayers attended a Press conference to discuss the difficulties she had faced, and some of the solutions she had adopted. As Dr. Welch says, "the storm broke" when the nature of the projected plays was made known; but he seems to dispose of the whole argument at one blow when he points out the remarkable similarity between the terms of abuse thrown at Miss Sayers and the terms of abuse thrown at the central figure of her plays in His own lifetime. Inaccurate reports originating at the Press conference were partly to blame. Newspaper correspondence columns had letters condemning plays which the writers had not heard

as "blasphemous," or "vulgar," or "irreverent."

Nevertheless, the BBC was bound to take notice of protests from licence-holders and of a question asked in the House of Commons. There was no time to call a meeting of the BBC Central Religious Advisory Committee before the first broadcast, but copies of the second and third plays were sent out to its members (who are leading representatives of every important denomination in England; all ordained, and having an average age of 60). Telegrams came back showing their

powers at the disposal of the Lord Chamberlain are very limited—a licence once granted means that the play is available to any group of persons who like to use it. It may be carefully and artistically handled by one producer but sensationally exploited by another, so in the case of the personality of Christ, the risk is normally not taken. The difficulty could be overcome by granting a limited licence to cover one production only, the play to come up for re-licence on each subsequent occasion when permission is sought to produce it.



★ FEEDING THE PORCUPINES: A photographer at the London Zoo secured this picture of Dorothy Sayers, the creator of the detective character Lord Peter Wimsey, who has in the last few years turned her hand to lively religious writing, with "The Man Born to be King" as her most noted achievement. With Sir Richard Acland and the poet T. S. Eliot, she spoke at the Malvern Conference in 1941, and strongly criticised the Church for its failure to tackle modern life. ★

enthusiastic approval: only one member was doubtful, and he subsequently came round.

Much of the opposition came from people who objected to the so-called "impersonation" of Christ, and who cried out about the blasphemy of the project before they had heard or read a line of a play. Not only that, when the broadcasting time arrived, they refused to listen to the Gospel preached in an unfamiliar way, and even organised opposition to prevent others from doing so.

The Legal Position

This state of affairs was partly the effect of the English laws forbidding the representation on the stage of any Person of the Holy Trinity. People had come to think that all such representations were intrinsically wicked, and so their minds were already closed when this new project came to light. The

Film companies have treated this problem in various ways in pictures dealing with the New Testament era. Sometimes they have merely suggested the presence of Christ (for instance by a voice, as in *The Great Commandment*, or by a hand, as in *Ben Hur*). But *The King of Kings* contained an actual representation of Christ (the part being taken by the late H. B. Warner), and it was banned in Great Britain as a result. So was the famous negro conception of God and Heaven in *Green Pastures*, which had a brief season in New Zealand. Much of the outcry against *The Man Born to be King* came from the sort of person who would have objected to *Green Pastures* or *The King of Kings*. Of course some of the opposition could not be taken seriously. Dr. Welch received a letter from one opponent who even accused

(Continued on next page)