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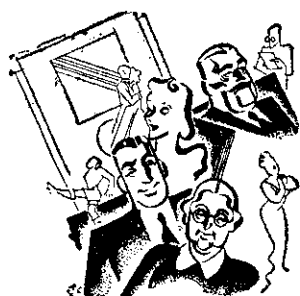
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A Christmas Party

FOR 25 minutes the other evening 1YA broadcast the annual Christmas party held at the New Zealand Institute for the Blind. A few carols were sung by the children's choir, a few greetings spoken, and a three-tiered cake was cut; after this the microphone was disconnected and the party doubtless became more riotous. It was a homely, natural session, and the intention seemed, very wisely, to make listeners feel that they were sharing a party, rather than being present at a carefully planned demonstration. The NBS does well to allow us to be reminded in this simple but strangely effective way that within this Institution many people of all ages are working hard to build useful and perhaps even happy lives in spite of their handicap. One may pass daily the big brick buildings beside the Parnell tramline without ever trying to form a picture of the community they house, just as one may take normal sight for granted until the Institute's Christmas party sends its greetings over the air "to the blind and the sighted."

Sleepers Awake!

ONE used to be able to sleep for the first half of Sunday afternoon in perfect confidence that one was missing nothing, but as I dialled idly to 12M just before 3 o'clock the other week, I heard the last few bars of Bach's Mass

RADIO VIEWSREEL

What Our Commentators Say

in B Minor. When I rang the station a courteous American voice told me that the complete recording had been broadcast in two sections on consecutive Sundays, that details of this session were announced at 8.30 p.m. on Thursdays, that they often played long works, that these records had been lent by a kind friend, and that no, he guessed they wouldn't be playing this work again for a while. As the NBS does not own the complete Mass, this was quite an occasion, though so quietly celebrated. And if you find that you have automatically refused a taste of real Old Scotch offered by a stranger, just because your own household keeps its lemon syrup in a bottle labelled "Old Scotch," you had better join quickly in the laugh against yourself; so nobody laughed louder than our local Bach addicts when they found that they had missed the Mass because it was labelled "Music We Love."

Radiant Health for Hens

I HAD thought that the humour of backyard fowl runs had long been exhausted, but Judith Terry in "A Fowl Experience" from 1YA the other day showed that if one goes in for a few hens with a light heart



and adventurous mind, new wit and sense can still be scratched up. Mrs. Terry has a good radio voice and personality, and can temporarily convince one that it is good fun to breed beetles and worms for the hens, and to cultivate special patches of their favourite weeds; recent warnings about the coming shortage of food show that it is good sense too; in practice, it is hard work and

most of us will hand out the traditional mash and grain while supplies last. But I have noticed that the hens that do best are those whose owners have persuaded themselves into enough affection for the brutes to delight in devising little treats for them, and in hanging over the run with words of soothing endearment and approval.

If Winter Comes

I HAVE a drawing of Harriet Cohen by Edmond X. Kapp, which shows a smoky-dark, intellectual beauty with ethereal hands, surrounded by daffodils and daisies. This suggestion of femininity is belied by her playing, which is so dexterous as to suggest the flexible steel wrist and the muscles of whipcord. Yet her Mozart Sonata in C from 4YO was so fresh and charming that the aura of springtime was appropriate enough. If the history of piano music may attempt a comparison with the seasons, surely Haydn and Mozart are its Spring, whose fresh green will never fade. Bach and Beethoven are its magnificent Summer flowering, Chopin and Schumann its fruitful but somewhat over-ripe Autumn, leading into the frosted Winter of the modern intellectuals, followed by what? A resurrection, a resurgence, another Spring?

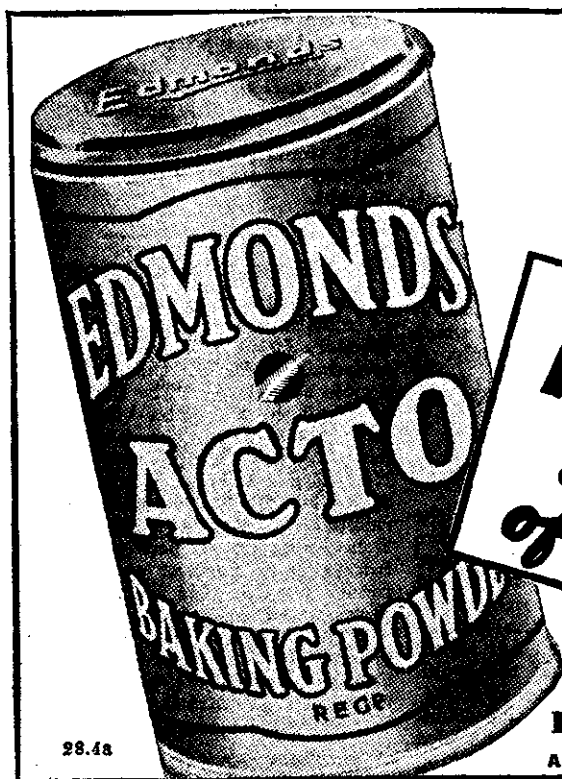
Potted Plays

WAS it Professor Sinclair, some years ago, who prophesied that we should soon be having potted literature, on the analogy of potted operas and symphonies, and denounced the prospect? At all events, the BBC has been and gone and done it, in a recorded series entitled "Chapter and Verse"; and after hearing Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* treated in this manner (3YA, Sunday, December 3) I regret to say that I approve. There seems to me little wrong with presenting bits of a play to those who may never hear the whole, but clearly only some plays, and those of the rather shapeless and unsubtle sort to which *Faustus* belongs, are suitable. If anyone tries to give the essence of *Hamlet* or *Paradise Lost*, I shall certainly join Professor Sinclair (was it?) on the mourner's bench.

Musical Avalanche

THE first of the Technical College concerts this year in Dunedin was broadcast, but the second was not, and for the benefit of those people who failed to hear either concert, some trial recordings were made and played from 4ZB on successive Sunday mornings. While allowing for technical difficulties and the fact that records taken at a concert cannot be as good as those taken in the studio under ideal conditions, I felt that I ought to warn any Northern listeners who may hear this delayed broadcast that it is not a fraction as good as the performance put up by these hundreds of young musicians at their actual concerts. Dr. Vernon Griffiths, who started over ten years ago at the Dunedin Technical College what turned out to be a musical avalanche, has a genius for fostering enthusiasm, and no pupil who has ever

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