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AT ALL STORES

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Broken Music

THIS practice of breaking programmes up into, roughly, ten-minute episodes assumes that the listener will be bored with too much of anything. But why should anyone be bored with, say, a whole hour of piano, or singing, or violin, or orchestra? The singing enthusiast who heard "Wenlock Edge" from 4YA would probably switch to 3YA's song recital while the great Chaconne of Bach was being magnificently played by Winifred Gardner, and the piano addict who enjoyed Busoni's thunderous arrangement would undoubtedly find himself in strange waters when it was followed by some Walton songs. It would be too late for him to hear the Schumann Quintet from 2YA, even if he could hear Wellington at all plainly, which is problematical, so he might be reduced to hearing, for the hundredth time or so, our old friend Rachmaninoff in C sharp minor. After that, presumably, both he and vocal enthusiast, being highbrows, would retire to bed, unless they both like Dvorak. I know we can't please all of the people all of the time, and that it

RADIO VIEWSRE

What Our Commentators Say

centre to provide an entire evening's may I plead for more of the longer works, performed in their entirety and in their original form, rather than "selections" and "arrangements" and "fantasias upon" which I am sure please none of the people.

Good Talks

THOUGH the week-end programmes on the whole seem to be planned (mistakenly, I think) on the assumption that our wits are then dormant, there is an oasis at 1ZB at 10.30 each Sunday morning in a session called You'll Enjoy Education. This is arranged by the W.E.A., and for some weeks now I have heard P. Martin-Smith choose each time a topic which is important, com-plex and interesting. There is no window dressing about these talks: they



demand and merit our undivided attention for 15 minutes. On February 4 the subject was adult education itself, what it is and what it might become. My own feeling about adult education is that it will never grow to the stature we hope for it until it casts aside its hard, formidable name, for although it includes so wide a range of interests that there is something in it for everyone, the name must prejudice those who have not enjoyed their schooldays; and, what's more, people who are given to painting pictures, or doing metal-work or learning the flute, just for the fun of it, are often most disconcerted to hear their activities described as adult education.

News Begins at Home

SINCE the Viewsreel page began just over three months ago, I have carefully watched 1YA's evening programmes for talks, because a good talk always contains something that is worth passing on. Before 7.30 there have been "Back to Mufti" talks, sports and gardening talks, and one or two other specialist series, but I have not once during this period been able to find talks by local people or visitors on subjects general interst given from the studio during the main evening programme. I know that the spoken word is not very popular in some households, and by the time we have heard one or

would require a dozen stations to each two news bulletins, the BBC and American commentators, and perhaps a programme for each type of listener; but BBC programme and a serial, we don't want a great deal more. But in keeping in touch so indefatigably with the outside world, perhaps we are losing touch with our own community. Is there nobody in this city of a quarter-of-a-million people who could say something on any subject that would interest and entertain us for a few moments? One cannot suspect 1YA of harbouring a prejudice against local talent, for in the same period 29 different women soloists have sung to us from the studio.

For Insomniacs Only

I HAVE never been able to understand why the NBS reserves opera for persons of abnormal habits. Most people who work during the week and get out of doors at the week-end like to get to bed early on Sunday. They are therefore put to inconvenience if they want to hear an opera. The NBS has a fairly large repertoire of recorded operas, which go on tour of the main National stations in such a way that there is usually at least one opera in progress every Sunday night. But if it is 2YA's turn, as for instance it is on February 11, with Boris Godounov, the work doesn't even start until 9.50 p.m. If it has started straight after church it is subject to an "interval" lasting one hour and five minutes, starting at 8.45 p.m. The other YA's have a shorter interval (a mere 37 minutes or so) in the case of operas that begin before nine, but 2YA happens to be my station. However, say I want to hear Mozart's Don Giovanni from 3YA. The space between the church service and the National Service talk is occupied by a Rossini overture, a studio recital, and some music by Elgar, for which (as far as one can see) another night would have done. This leaves only the period from 9.22 p.m. until the 11.0 p.m. news for Act 1 of Don Giovanni, and some of it had been cut-evidently to prevent the disaster that occurred during the finale when the opera was last heard (at 2YA). The rest is to follow a week later, again timed to start at 9.22 p.m.

I MYSELF will gladly forgo two early nights if that is the price I must pay. But others in the house complain, and worse, no one will join me, so that I am made to feel that listening to opera is a sort of vice to be indulged in solitude. Opera listeners are probably more numerous in the cities, and sparse in the country. The NBS knows that this is true of chamber music and uses the city-coverage auxiliary stations to broadcast the bulk of it. If operas were given from 1YX, 2YC, 3YL and 4YO, they could all be done in one night (not necessarily Sunday, either) and at a reasonable hour.

Billy Mayerl

WHEN the highbrows at last make their great purge of the broadcasting situation, I hope they will not decide, in righteous wrath, to consign Billy Mayerl to whatever limbo they have in store for the writers of popular jazz. There was a quarter of an hour devoted to him from

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