

stir the case caused at the time, but it requires a speaker like Richard Singer to bring the matter before us in true perspective. Sancho and Vanzetti, arrested for murder, were condemned mainly because of their suspicious behaviour when picked up; in spite of appeals, public indignation, and the lack of concrete proof against them, they were subsequently executed. Their suspicious behaviour was due, they confessed, to the fact that they were Communists, and in view of the public vindictiveness against anything remotely labelled in America as "Red," they had lied in order not to draw attention to their political activity. When the furore had died away it was practically certain that, whoever the murderers were, they were not Saccho and Vanzetti. However, by the time the travesty of justice and mistaken sentence were publicly admitted, it was too late. Two martyrs had been added to the long list of victims of mass hysteria.

Explaining the Romantics

FROM 4YA recently Koa Nees has been giving recitals of Chopin Etudes, working systematically through them and omitting none. With the interesting performances given by Mrs. Nees this has been an exciting series, and it might well be extended to include other artists, other instruments, and other groups of compositions. The Chopin studies were prefaced by the announcer with a deal of unnecessary explanation regarding technical details and literary emotions which have been associated with them by the composer, his friends, and succeeding generations of romantics. It is not a great help to append an emotional description to a piece which the composer thought fit to designate merely by an opus number. A mistake in the opposite direction was made by the same station on a recent Sunday, when Myra Hess' recording of Schumann's "Carnaval" Suite was played with no preliminary announcement save the title. This is programme music in a very definite sense, and Schumann himself labelled the movements with precise literary descriptions, "March of the Davidsbundler Against the Philistines," "Harlequin," "Chopin," "Paganini," and so on. It is these titles which lend the work its unique character, and to omit to mention them is as bad as it would be for *The Listener* to print its page of photographs of People in the Programmes without mentioning who any of them are.

Bach in the Studio

FROM time to time I decide that Bach has more than his fair share of lime-light on this page, and that I, for one, will not be a party to mentioning his name again for a long time. And then something happens, and off I go again. Station 1YX has just begun a tour of the 48 Preludes and Fugues at the well-judged pace of two per week. The pianist is Edwin Fischer. These are intimate pieces, meant to fill a room rather than a hall, and for this reason (and perhaps because when they are well played they sound a great deal easier than they really are) the virtuosi of the concert hall have mainly discarded them in favour of the more lush noises of Bach-Liszt, Bach-Hess, Bach-Busoni, etc. Why are our local pianists so slow to realise that the conventions and necessities of the concert hall are not those of the broadcasting studio, and that nothing is more suited to the radio than this restrained

and essentially domestic music? Though we now occasionally hear a French Suite, and even a Partita or Invention, the programmes of studio recitals still show a preponderance of piano transcriptions of violin sonatas, cantatas, and organ fugues. Why leave the 48 entirely in the hands of Edwin Fischer, even if they were the most skilful hands in the world?

Facts and Fancies

I AM glad that my congenital taste for fairy tales did not keep me away from the A.C.E. Talk on "Fairy Tales About Food," for it dealt not so much with the fancies promulgated by the fairies at the bottom of the garden as with the myths bandied over back fences by old

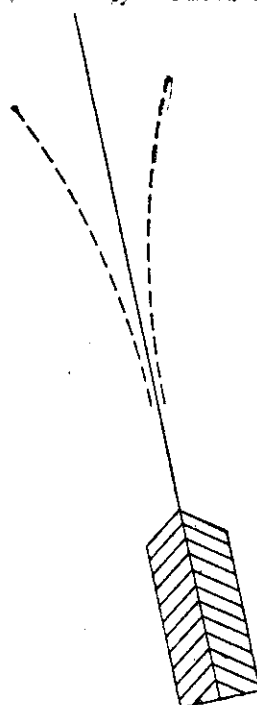


wives, and young wives, too, for that matter. It is no use, apparently, refusing your pint of milk for the sake of a slim figure, and then eating a little piece of cake or chocolate which will contain more calories in a less worthy form. It is no use holding your nose and swallowing raw egg when lightly-cooked egg is more digestible; or expecting beef tea to restore a wasted frame unless you eat up the solid beef as well. As for the "apple a day" legend, some of us have seen through that lately for ourselves, for since apples have been scarce we do not find more doctors on the doorstep than usual; and this may be because we are taking plenty of milk and greens instead, or there may be other reasons. Yet the belief in the prophylactic value of chewing raw onions and garlic, which I had always vaguely brushed aside as pure superstition, turns out to be gaining scientific support.

Love and Hate

ONE of 3YL's recent literary readings was entitled "A Chant of Love for England," written by a certain Mr. Cone and spoken by Henry Ainley. The interesting thing about this piece, not mentioned in the broadcast, but quite clear from internal evidence, was that it was intended as a reply to the notorious German ditty of World War I, the "Hymn of Hate." I have never been able to discover how popular the latter was in the Germany of its day, but its remarkable lack of literary merit, together with the natural reaction of the English people to such an address, made it a never-failing source of humour. Perhaps the best example is that from a 1915 *Punch*. During one of the odd Christmas truces of the trench war, a German shouted across to the British to know if they would like some carol singing. Sentry: "No! Sing us something foony—sing us the 'Ymn of 'Ate.'" But a better joke was that which befell the memory of Ernest Lissauer, the author, under Hitler. It was condemned and proscribed because of the imperfectly Aryan quality of Herr Lissauer's corpuscles. In view of all this, Mr. Cone's opus hardly has a chance. If you set out to write a serious reply to something treated as a pure joke, you are in grave danger of being regarded in the same light. Not that Lissauer's Hymn does not achieve something of the heavy malevolence characteristic of the less likeable elements of German thought, and perhaps it isn't altogether funny.

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