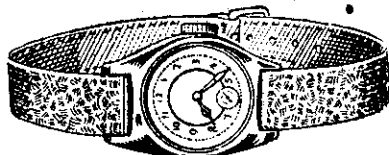
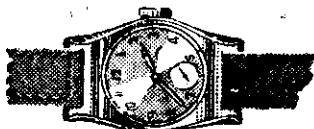


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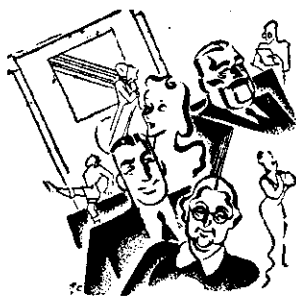
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## Parliament For All

DURING a recent broadcast of Parliament a member suggested that reception of 2YA and 2YC is often abominable in other towns than Wellington, and the proof of his assertion was the fact that I, listening in Dunedin, was unable to catch the name of the speaker, who I think was Mr. Algie. The solution, he added, was that perhaps less time could be taken up with Parliamentary broadcasts, but that debates could be relayed to local stations, resulting in better reception for people at the extreme ends of the Dominion. The spate of complaints from various enthusiasts for classical music, jazz, serials, boxing matches and other broadcasts, when they tuned in to find every main station rebroadcasting Parliament, may well be imagined; but the member was assured by the Government benches that the matter is now under consideration.

## Toad of Toad Hall

THE music known by this title is fairly commonly heard from Christchurch stations, and in fact takes rank as a favourite recording with Arthur Askey Blacking-out the Flat, which for some reason is heard on an average once (I should say) in six weeks. But the Toad music deserves its popularity, chiefly because it restores the true batrachian spirit to A. A. Milne's stage version of Kenneth Grahame's "Wind in the Willows." This last is without doubt one of the supreme achievements of the English muse and numbers its devotees in all lands; and there is little doubt that A. A. Milne did not really improve it—the author of Pooh Bear, surprisingly

# RADIO VIEWSREEL What Our Commentators Say

enough, overplayed his hand when dealing with the Rat, the Mole, the Badger and the Toad, and not infrequently lapsed into mere whimsicality. Pooh and friends—the difference probably lies here—were by nature philosophers, staring at the world in a dreamy and acquiescent bewilderment ("Isn't it funny how a bear likes honey? Buzz! Buzz! Buzz! I wonder why he does?"), while Grahame's characters, more confident and at terms with their environment (the Toad in this respect trespassing beyond the limits of restraint), hastened through life, imbibing and relishing it with every pore, nerve and muscle. In fact, they were true animals; the denizens of the Forest were a small boy's dolls come to life and the difference was very considerable.

## Let Sleeping Dogs Lie

GLUCK'S "Orpheus and Eurydice" was broadcast from 2YA recently and I listened very carefully for the barking dogs—three of them or three heads anyway—which so troubled both commentator and readers some little while ago. It



was no doubt this hoarse baying which gave to the description of which the opera was an illustration the flavour of a sports commentary. There may be arguments in favour of an impassioned elaboration of the plot in a broadcast of one of those modern operas where feelings run high and voices and orchestra are mixed so inextricably as to need elucidation but the remote and serene music of Gluck needs nothing to explain its simple beauty nor any assistance to elevate the spirit, least of all anything melodramatic.

## Not More, But Better

A FIERCELY partisan controversy lately raging in a Dunedin newspaper, regarding various musical subjects, provided correspondents with an opportunity for suggesting improvements in local broadcasts. From time to time the jazz-versus-classical addicts burst into print, but seldom do they advance any suggestions except for the complete abolition of the other man's preference and the substitution of their own. A more reasonable correspondent stated that he did not ask for an extension of the hours devoted to good music, but for an improvement in the method of presenting the music. I agree, with the stipulation that I don't consider Dunedin the worst offender. The practice of serving mixed grills instead of a well-balanced meal is a general complaint, and the inability of the programme organisers to concentrate on one subject long enough for the listener

to get his teeth into it has often been mentioned in these columns.

AN example of this was the 4YA Orchestra's presentation of a Grieg programme. This was interesting and well-arranged, including music for strings, a suite for oboe, horn and strings, and orchestral items. It began at eight o'clock, and came to an abrupt end just before the half-hour! There followed Schubert, Tchaikovsky, Newsreel and Commentary, and a Schumann concerto. Those who like Grieg can surely endure him for more than half-an-hour, and if there was to be a concerto in the programme why not one by Grieg? This is not the worst example of the sort of unbalanced programme listeners are complaining about, but it shows the tendency to include, seemingly, as many different composers in one programme as is possible.

## The Riddle of the Sands

THE BBC feature on "Robinson Crusoe" has already been discussed by one of my colleagues, but I should like to add two comments that occurred to me when listening to the 3YL broadcast—neither being actually original. The first is that perhaps the BBC over-emphasise the book's romantic appeal—lonely islands, exotic parrots and the rest. To the eighteenth-century public—a hard-headed commercial middle class—is it not more likely that the excitement of the book lay in the fact that it depicted an ordinary, unromantic, bible-reading sailor, keeping himself alive with the familiar tools of a craftsman's everyday trade? An intense realism, rather than romanticism, is surely the keynote, and there is all the world of difference between Robinson Crusoe's Polly and Long John Silver's Captain ("Pieces of eight") Flint. The other problem is less philosophical, less historical—how in the world or out of it did Friday manage, as is expressly stated, to leave in the middle of a large sandy beach only one solitary footprint?

## One Woman's Meat

WHEN 2YA brought a housewife to the microphone in the "I Know What I Like" series, we had an interesting example of a taste bent towards items which are related to life in the most simple and obvious way, and which make little demand on the imaginative faculties. Christopher Robin's prayer, for instance, had happy associations with the time when the children were young; Clapham and Dwyer on renting a house appealed to this civil servant's wife who had faced the problem personally. "The Lonely Heart" summed up her grief when her sons went overseas and "The Floral Dance" her joy when they returned. In theory nobody has more time for radio listening than the housewife; in practice nobody has less opportunity for concentrating without interruption on developing a more specialised and subtle taste. If we were to presume 2YA's housewife to be typical, we still would not be much further towards knowing whether she liked these

(continued on next page)



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