Sam Weller, of the policeman made into sausages and "has anyone seen the sergeant?"—all this the de Quincey programme, not having world enough or time, left out of its account of him; so that the picture is not really complete.

## Days of Creation

ANOTHER of the literary programmes of the Christchurch Sunday is the "Days of Creation" poetry and music series of recordings, which as I write

has reached its fourth part. They consist of readings from the English poets, chosen with reference to one of the seven days of Genesis. Like the earlier "Poetry and Music" series, the choice made is interesting and unusual and shows a definite trend to the lyrical and mystical—Vaughan, Blake, Emily Dickinson, A. E. Housman, the early Wordsworth and Tennyson, Yeats—the field is is wide, but there are common characteristics. I wonder nevertheless whether there is quite enough to bind each programme together as a whole; the several poems have not that Noah's Ark air of wondering how they came together that afflicts many anthologies, but one listens (perhaps one ought to) for each poem in its own right, not for its bearing on the general subject—which itself is rather vague, unlike the earlier series, which chose such themes as "Swans," "Streams," "Trains," and stuck to them. For all this, the series is good.

## A Song But No Saga

DEAD men tell no tales; and, unfortunately, make no complaints. I do not know who concocted "Song of Norway," an operetta on the life and music of Grieg, music from which was broadcast recently from 2YA. I do not know where it has been or will be performed, whether on the stage or in the cinema; but I hope I shall never have to endure sitting through it. Here is music by Grieg, splendid in its lyric spontaneity, put through a sort of sausage machine by some arranger with more enterprise than responsibility. The individual character which distinguished respectively the piano concerto, the lyric pieces and the songs is lost in the mediocrity of commercial rehashing. This is a form of deliberate plagiarism which ought to be firmly suppressed.

## "Elijah" in Dunedin

LISTENERS to the augmented Dunedin Choral Society's "Elijah" were in for a disappointment. Keyed up to welcome Denis Dowling home, and to exult in his rendering of the oratorio's title role, they were to hear only a brief section of the work before the singer was forced to abandon his performance. Knowing how successful Denis Dowling's overseas career has been, how magnificently he sings this particular music, and how soon he departs from New Zealand once more, the audience nevertheless regarded the calamity of throat indisposition with commendable equanimity; they settled down to enjoy the splendid performance of the choir and soloists in a work which, after all, is more important as music for its own sake than as a vehicle for solo talents. The broadcast was particularly notable for the fact that no break was made for the nine o'clock chimes, the music being allowed to continue without interruption until the interval, and the entire performance being broadcast. I am sure other listeners were as thankful for this discreet handling of the situation as I was, and I hope the same thing can be done whenever such an important broadcast goes on the air.

## John Drinkwater

JOHN DRINKWATER followed up his recent 3YL address on "The Speaking of Verse" by another in which he put his precepts into practice by reading a series of his own poems. I had not been altogether convinced by his doctrine of strict adherence to the rhythm of each line, and am less so now for having heard him. This is chiefly because he combines with it the questionable habit of making no pause or indication at all between lines: the two went imperfectly together. Also, there were too many poems crowded into a short broadcast, so that Drinkwater had to pause only for breath after each before announcing in a slightly admonitory tone the title of the next; and his poems, which are short, exceedingly delicate, and come out of a background of literary rusticity with very little meaning for New Zealanders, require separate and concentrated study. In job lots like this, they rather recall the famous line of Horace: "carmina quae scribuntur aquae potoribus," which being translated means "songs written by (or for) water drinkers." In spite of all this, the programme was worth taking time out for.

## The Brothers Karryimoff

IF a Spitfire pilot flying over enemy country has to take his crate down to fix engine trouble, it is pleasant for him to have a brother in the same squadron who lands beside him to help. It is even more pleasant for the third brother—a prisoner in enemy hands—that his gang of slave workers should happen to be passing the spot at this very minute, that the guards should fail to notice the two Spitfires, and that he should be rescued with a minimum of shouting and shooting. Thus the premier of 1ZB's new episodic serial, "Footsteps of Fate." The link in the serial is to be a blind man sitting in a window divining people's emotions from their passing footsteps. In this case one did not need the acute hearing of the blind to notice the difference between the footsteps of Mr. Semple (for such was his name) as he dragged along worrying about his p.o.w. son, and his loud gallop as he rushed past to ring the church bells with the good news of the rescue in his hand. It is no use jibbing at fiction of this kind, when truth is (as it is said) even stranger; no use, either, wondering about what happened at the next vestry meeting which would have to deal with Mr. Semple's personal use of the church bells.