

strange was the atmosphere and vocabulary in which these happenings were clothed that they have ever since enjoyed vast popularity with those who cultivate and relish literary backwaters, like the school of critics in Chesterton's *Napoleon of Notting Hill* who declared "Next to authentic goodness in a book (and that, alas! we never find) we desire a rich badness."

### Opus One

THE Bach Partita in B Flat Major, which was played the other night by Owen Jensen from IYA, was specially recommended for universal exhibition by the composer himself. At the age of 41, with many of his now well-known works already long in private circulation, Bach chose this Partita for his first actual publication, and modestly labelled it Opus 1. If it is not too late, one would like to congratulate him on his choice. It has a more melodious and immediate appeal than any other of the keyboard suites, and for lasting qualities there are only one or two to rival it. Mr. Jensen will soon be suspected of having a weakness for Bach, as he has now broadcast several of the Suites. In playing this very lovable Partita, he went much further than most people towards giving it the kind of treatment it deserves. This is a cheerful work, but the cheerfulness is of a gentle pastoral kind, never dramatic or exuberant—that, at least, is the way Mr. Jensen took it, and it sounded convincing. He demonstrated also another virtue of this amiable piece, which programme organisers might note as it applies to the other suites too: that is the accommodating way it fits into those awkward moments between 7.30 and U.S.A. News. Each of the short, separate movements is in binary form, and repeats may be taken as optional. By judicious manipulation of these repeats to suit the needs of the studio clock, the performer can make the suite finish at precisely the right minute and save listeners the jarring effect of a fill-in.

### Peace Festival

THE King Edward Technical College in Dunedin wound up a successful year with a Peace Festival more ambitious than the concerts they have given so far, innovations being the augmenting of the choir to a thousand voices, and the appearance of the Symphony Orchestra. We are so used to a high standard from these musicians that we are apt to forget, especially when listening by means of radio, that they are such young performers. But judging by adult standards the choir is still an excellent one, and its enthusiasm is immediately transferred to the audience. Perhaps I may be thought pin-pricking over one point, but I should like to ask whether the College intends to go on presenting Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus" at future concerts, as it has done at past ones? No doubt the learning of such a work is an inspiration to pupils, but audiences will regard it as less of a thrill if they hear it too often; also, its proper place is at a performance of *Messiah*, where it is heard to best advantage. The College has collected no less than £3,000 to pay for new instruments, in a matter of a few months—proof of the interest of the people of this and other cities in its musicians.

### Heroes and Hero-Worship

RICHARD STRAUSS' tone-poem *A Hero's Life* burst forth from 3YA this week, arousing sentiments of a lively

distrust in at least one listener. The peak of the composition is an extremely vivid and energetic rendering of the idea of strife and battle, and according to the introductory remarks it is uncertain whether the battle is taking place between the hero and his foes or within his own inner self. But the discouraging truth is that with this type of hero there is no difference between the two. This is the hero as imagined by Thomas Carlyle and sundry Germans—he who sums up and expresses in his own personality the conflicting tendencies of his age. What does it matter then whether the battle is external or internal? He is the battle which rages outside. Finally, having ended the strife and solved by the transcendent quality of his self the contradictions that gave it birth, "the hero," says the introduction, "withdraws from the world," which no doubt applauds discreetly. The trouble with all this is not only that it leads German historians into strange excesses, not only that such a Hero can never be a human being (indeed, he never existed), but that he can so easily turn into the Fuhrer, who incarnates not an age, but a race.

### Spotlight Music

MUSIC at its best is an expression of abstract ideas, pictures wholly of the imagination, whose subtle and nebulous character defies any attempt at a more graphic description. This is music of sonatas, symphonies, fugues and concertos. But music in its time has been handmaiden to more than one of the other arts. In the early days of the century it was co-opted to assist the new miming of the cinema, and scurries and soft lush harmonies as accompaniment to screen excitement and romance were added to its repertoire. A partnership, never completely happy, was arranged between sight and sound. Music to-day plays the same role in radio drama but, as a unity of sound, the collaboration is far more satisfactory. Walter Goehr's music for "Radar" is a clever bit of orchestration, ingenious if ingenuous. It does not pretend to be music existing for its own sake, nor even an accompaniment. It is a spotlight on important entrances and exits and an auralisation of the principal character, the cathode ray tube.

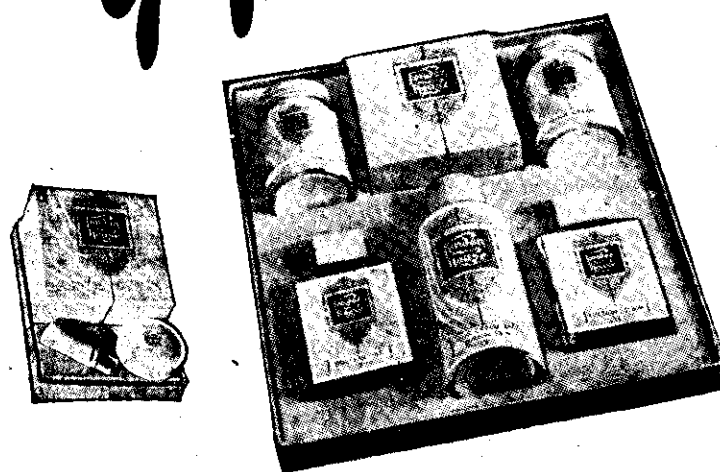
### Keeping It Dark

THE "Listeners' Own Classical Corner," a request session from 12M, opened appropriately the other evening with Mendelssohn's "Hebrides" Overture. Marian Anderson, Elisabeth Schumann, Tito Schipa and Artur Rubinstein then contributed short pieces they had been asked for—very pleasant items some of them, but all one-side-of-a-record affairs. I was just rousing myself to switch off, thinking that this session was going to be like a good many others that one can hear at any time, when the next package from the bran tub was Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Granted that this particular assortment of items had been arranged in what was probably the best order, there still remains the unfortunate fact that no warning was given that a major work was to be played, though there must be many people who would have been glad to listen had they known about it. If 12M would put a finishing touch to its very good intentions by announcing the details of this hour when it begins at 9 o'clock, it would appeal to many besides those who are sitting by waiting to hear the items they have themselves bespoken.



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