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Donoghue was: the jockey who had a personal and intimate understanding and affection for horses, who made of riding a profession and an art; in every way the opposite of the mechanical expert, engaged simply in thrusting steel and petrol to the maximum speed for a fixed commercial return, whom we, half-distrusting our own civilisation, see in the speedway rider or record breaker. Will this popular nostalgia remain? Or, if and when we become more completely confident in our mechanical world and more forgetful of any other, will horse racing lose its amazing ascendancy?

## The Shropshire Lad

ONE cannot but suspect that many of those who admire A. E. Housman's poems, especially when they are sung, do not listen to the words, which are almost always of a disturbing bitterness—sometimes declining into a positive

## Hirohito

(The Emperor of Japan has issued a rescript disclaiming his divinity.—Press report).

*ALWAYS the voices about me crying,  
A god! A god!  
Never the candles dying  
From the altar place:  
The ruthless gongs declaring  
The light of heaven in my face.*

*THE waves of worship flowed  
Toward me, the air  
Rippled with prayer:  
It was then that the flattering incense  
Drugged me into a sense of deity,  
Yet I knew myself to be a man  
And like another limped with infirmity.*

*THEY bowed, the people I could not  
know,  
Expecting always the shining word.  
But their desire, finding no warm  
Divinity,  
But only the wall of my mortality,  
Fell like a broken bird.*

*BUT now I go down to them, having  
shaken  
From me the hand of legend,  
And I walk the free road  
Never by Caesar taken.*

*OF my divinity all that remains  
Is the vesture flung down before the  
shrine,  
A strange and shrunken god that there  
must die  
Defeated by the splendour of a Lie.*

—J. R. HERVEY.

bathos of universal misfortune, the delight of parodists: "What, still alive at twenty-two? A fine upstanding chap like you?" says one of them. The difficulty confronting musicians and singers must always be to prevent the music acquiring sentimental qualities that would obscure the bleak terseness and accuracy, as well as the genuine beauty, of the words. This was successfully avoided in the Somervell song cycle, sung by Walter Robinson from 3YA. It was particularly pleasant to hear another version of "Summertime on Bredon."

## Famous Trials

ONE of the delights of Sunday afternoon in Dunedin has been the "Famous Trials" from 4ZB, and it was with regret that I heard the last of these broadcasts. It is almost impossible to imagine a better speaker for this purpose than Richard Singer. He presented bare facts with a minimum of explanation, yet these case-histories came over the radio with more impact than elaborately fashioned fiction. Permitting himself only an occasional emphasis of the most gruesome aspects of his material, and allowing the listener none of the unnecessary luxury of superfluous clues and red herrings, this narrator, in clear-cut legal style and with only a weekly quarter-of-an-hour at his disposal, yet made his programmes so gripping that few listeners could fail to enjoy them. It is true in this case, though trite, that we don't miss a good thing until we have to do without it.

## Too Much Pace

ORCHESTRAS, especially what are known as "light orchestras," often make the mistake of playing songs arranged for instruments. This is legitimate if the arrangers remember that the music was intended to be sung, but unfortunately most of these arrangements go at a breakneck pace and without regard for the original phrasing. I heard Elgar's "Shepherd's Song" done in this way recently, and I am sure anyone attempting to sing with the orchestra would have subsided, gabbling and incoherent, long before the end of the first verse—not to mention the mental anguish of hearing the violins ending a phrase in the middle of a word, and the impossibility of getting in a breath during the gasping mad rush. For those listeners who don't know the song, this wouldn't matter; but for those who do, it is exasperating.

## No Women

THE finals of 1ZB's "Spotlight on Amateurs" brought to the microphone some acceptable if not brilliant talent; but among the nine finalists, if one expects a lone and almost obscured voice in a novelty vocal quartet, there were no women. Dare one draw any conclusions from this dashing emergence of the male? It is commonly assumed that women are more interested in the arts than men are, yet, here, when the pace was cracked on and the going became hard, soprano, contralto, "light vocal," and "pianiste," faded out. One might seek to show that man has a greater sensitiveness to the refinements of art, or an inherent capacity for artistic things, but diplomacy and tact lead one to suggest that it was no more than a fortuitous set of circumstances which upset the balance, no more permanent than a lunar eclipse. After an hour or so of entertainment from boogie-woogie to Handel, and including such novelties as imitations of farm noises and pyrotechnical whistling, the listener however could draw one conclusion. The successful artist, whatever his native talent, is most evidently the one who works the hardest. All these nine finalists, the boys with the home-made instruments, the "straight" singers, the novelty vocal, the "noises off" and most of all, the whistler (he was good), all knew their work thoroughly. And that, if all radio entertainers would realise it, contributes at least half to the listener's enjoyment.

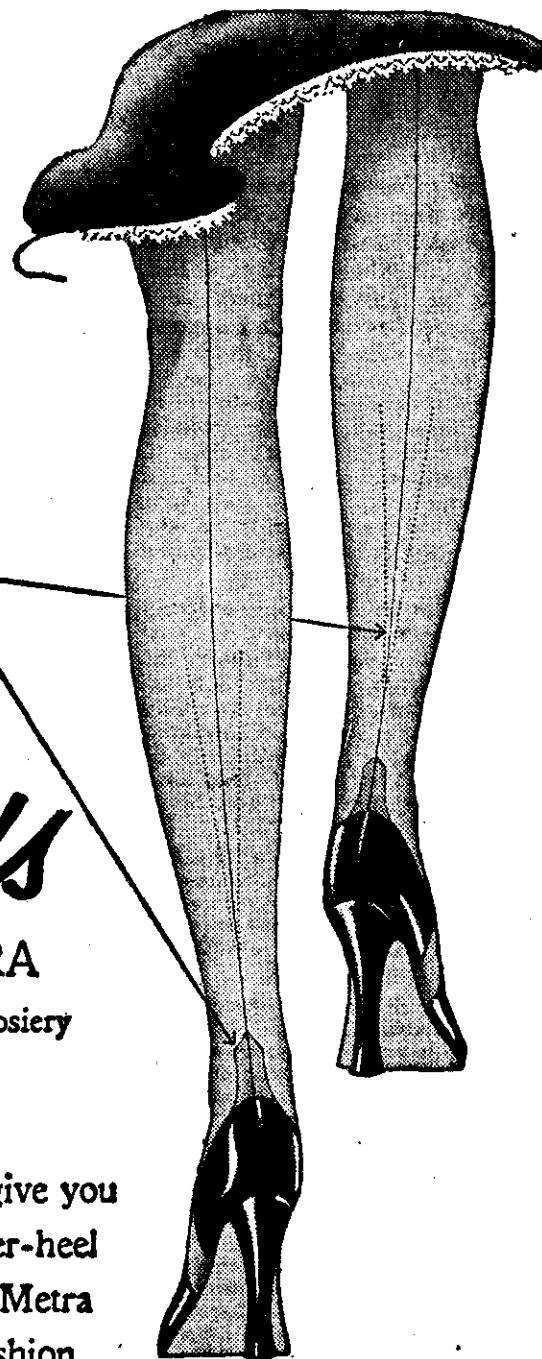
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