

from the programmes that little distinction is made in the engagement of artists, between those — too many of them—whose work is a constant apology, and those who have the ability and take the trouble to produce something fine.

Marian Anderson

SUGGESTIONS and criticisms should be made only with caution to the harried beings who organise programmes; nevertheless, it seems a pity that 3YL's programme on Marian Anderson, in the stations "Famous Artists" series amounted to three recordings only—hardly more than might occur unannounced in an ordinary evening's listening. Is a fifteen-minute programme, with introductory remarks, quite worth separate and prominent advertisement? The introduction was, however, interesting, and significant chiefly for the poverty of incident it had to record in Miss Anderson's life story: impoverished childhood in a community dominated artistically by religious song, a Baptist church choir, professional training; a career entirely free from artistic vicissitudes such as commercial interludes or Hollywood contracts. This must account in part for a quality in her singing which no doubt springs from deeper gifts—a grave devotion, entirely uncorrupted, an artistic integrity created by exclusive concentration on the pure matter of song. Unlike Paul Robeson, at his best almost as great a singer, she has never had to appear in third-rate films or sing tenth-rate songs; and her total immunity from vulgarisation is some part of her unique art.

Vie Boheme

"SO this is Bohemia, old boy? Is it nervous anaemia, or joy? Who are the ladies who cook haddock and eggs in a nook? What are they called, and why are they bald, and are they as odd as they look?" Thus sang Sir Alan Herbert, many years before childhood, and the engaging rhyme serves as well as any other to introduce the most common connotations of the word "Bohemia," now forming the subject of a series of presentations from 3YA and 3YL by the Henri Penn Trio. Bohemia entered the English language in its sense of a land



of artistic and romantic unconventionality from the French, when Murger wrote his "La Vie Bohème," that collection of stories of Latin Quarter student life which so famously inspired Signor Puccini. It was not a native English habit to use that particular European country in that sense: Alsatia, as nearer home, used to serve that purpose. But Murger and Puccini made a hit and displaced London's thieves' quarter from the popular imagination. As for the French, they used "Bohemian" in the above sense because of the Romany people, who moved in from Central Europe and points east. Their native

individualism, in matters of game laws and so forth, was regularly blamed on more respectable Eastern peoples; the French knew them as Bohemians and the name "gipsy" is a hearty English abbreviation of "Egyptian."

Music and the Man

MILHAUD'S Seventh String Quartet, just broadcast from 1YA, is a short work as string quartets go, running some twelve minutes. Milhaud has also written a "symphony" lasting only three minutes—a minute a movement—and his "Concertino de Printemps" for violin and orchestra takes little more than eight minutes. All in all, Milhaud seems to eschew the larger canvas. His style, too, in such of his music as we have heard, is precise and delicate. One imagines this Milhaud as a little man, refinement pictured in his countenance and something ascetic about his mien. But look at his photograph. A fearsome shock of black hair crowns a broad, even massive, face and jowled jaw. "Darius Milhaud is a formidable man," says one writer. "On first meeting him you have the sensation of running up against a wall of granite." The only answer of those who argue that music is a matter of the glands and the liver must be that this time it is a case of inversion.

A Trunkful of Music

TERRY VAUGHAN'S series of broadcasts under the above title has just come to an end at 2YA. It would be agreed, I think, that they were the best things of their kind we have had from any of the studios for quite a long while. Light music, but in no way cheap. Terry Vaughan is an adept at presenting good music in an attractive manner, and his commentary, based on a novel idea, improved with every broadcast. The Salon Players, some strings, a flute, a clarinet, with Terry Vaughan at the piano, had obviously worked hard to produce an excellent ensemble. Balance was not always up to the standard of the playing, but improved in the later broadcasts.

Seasons Return, But Not To Me Returns . . .

THE life of a Viewsreel commentator has, there is no denying, its disadvantages; especially for one whom a certain timidity in musical pontificating drives to take particular note of literary broadcasts for his material. He cannot help noticing when the group of stations which he covers have run through their rather limited repertoire of literary recordings and have decided it is now safe to start over again. There is, seen from the proper angle, no very obvious objection to such a repetition; the commentator (or any other listener) is not so rare and perceptive a being that he cannot very well afford to listen to a Hamlet soliloquy spoken by Barrymore, or Yeats' "Wild Swans at Coole" as read in the BBC Anthologies, or the close of *Paradise Lost* in the "Days of Creation" series, not twice but many more times, without losing anything and even with profit. But he cannot help noticing it, and when striving to make up his weekly quota, cursing the fact that he has written up such and such before and cannot for the life of him think of anything new to say about it. And indeed, though these programmes can well bear repetition, there is something to be said for new blood.

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