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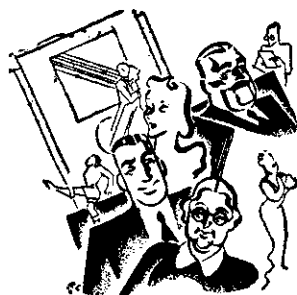
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**Old-time**

STATION 4YA presented a Humphrey

Bishop show called "The Old-Time Music Hall," in which such well-known performers as Florrie Ford and Harry Lauder were imitated, and the songs presented were genuine antiques, including "Who Were You With Last Night?", "Flanagan," and "Little Annie Rooney." I came to the conclusion that only old-timers can get much amusement out of such a programme, and that listeners of the present generation had better just skip it. In a skilful stage presentation, with the accent on burlesque, and helped out by vivid costumes, such fare might go down nowadays; but on the radio the show, well presented and good of its kind, nevertheless fell very flat indeed. I think the main reason was lack of humour. A generation of radio listeners brought up on Arthur Askey, ITMA, and Bob Hope, will fail, somehow, to be convulsed with laughter at the painfully unfunny words of that ancient comedy-song "We All Walked Into the Shop." It is strange to imagine that in fifty years from now, Tommy Handley too will be an old-timer, and that another generation will be deriding us, their grandparents, for still listening to his well-worn recordings.

**Wait For It**

THE 4ZB programme "Peter Dawson

Presents" is a short recital by the famous Australian bass-baritone (confusing, since 4ZB has an announcer of the same name), and sometimes it is well worth listening to. It is not possible, however, to know ahead of time what items will be given in these sessions, and the listener may have to hear three average items before he hears a good one. The other evening, for example, the programme consisted mainly of ballads, including that one of Teresa del Riego, "Sink, Red Sun," in which the singer orders the sun to go down into the west, as though, without his explicit directions, it might decide for once to sink in the south-east. In the same programme as this and other ballads not worthy of Peter Dawson's talent, was a little gem entitled "The Bonny Earl o' Moray" (or is it spelt Murray?) and it was well worth sitting through the other songs to hear just this one.

**OPS**

STATION 3YA's My Lady has been having a rough time. It happens that in recent weeks I have had to do most of my Viewsreel listening in the mornings and have been able to keep some sort of check on what is being served out to her. At the moment the fare alternates between a historical serial called "The Amazing Duchess," and a series called "Thrills from Great Operas." A typical example of this was the session

# RADIO VIEWSREEL

## What Our Commentators Say

devoted to Ponchielli's *La Gioconda*. A synopsis of the first two acts was given; and then we had a potted version of the closing episodes, performed by actors whose tones were unwaveringly thick with passion. All the music that came over was a short edition of our old friend the "Dance of the Hours"; and for a *Fantasia* fan like myself it takes very good presentation of this piece merely to take my mind off hippopotamuses in ballet skirts. Moreover, the actors, by a simple process of logical deduction from the fact that they are speaking words written in another tongue, regularly speak with heavy foreign accents—the same accent does duty for Ponchielli's Venetians, Bizet's Spaniards and Gounod's Germans (I suppose they are). Poor My Lady; much is expected of her.

**The Incredible Flautist**

A NINE-YEAR-OLD boy recently gave a remarkable performance on the flute in 1YA's Children's Session. His playing was clean, swift and rhythmical, and I was quite surprised when he finished up with a piece called "Uncle Dooley's Delight" and did not go on to have a shot at Bach's *Badinerie*. His elder sister accompanied him very well on the piano, but somehow this is always less remarkable. Most children play the piano, many of them play it pleasingly. For the piano is less a



musical instrument than a fine piece of furniture, a household god. Upon its stool each family lays its first-born in sacrificial fashion. The second-born, too, perhaps, for safety's sake; and only when the god is appeased can there be thought of other instruments. In the days when families were families indeed, the living room soon became overcrowded with the piano and its victims, and the younger children had to be given portable instruments that could be practised in bedrooms and stables. In those days there was no lack of people who could play violin, flute and bassoon. Now that we have only beginnings of families, our musical life is clogged with pianists. I do not know how the flute came into the hands of Master Ian Cunningham, but as an only child myself, and therefore a mere pianist, I heard him with amazement, delight and a little envy. He will have grand fun.

**Concerto for Too Many?**

"WE now present Beethoven's Triple Concerto in C Major, Opus 56. The soloists are . . ." And here, as even 1YA's announcer pauses pardonably before these strange names, our minds have leaped quickly to fill the gap. "Yes, yes. We know. They will be Richard Odno-poff, violin; Stefan Auber, cello; and Angelica Morales, piano. Orchestra, Vienna Philharmonic. Conductor, Weingartner." There is no other recording;

for most of us there is no other association but this with Opus 56, nor any clear hope that there will be. I have read that the composer is a little to blame for making one of the solo parts—the 'cellist's I think—more of a virtuoso show than the others. But it always sounds to me as if they were all having a good time and there are surely enough performers now who put the music itself before their own vanity. It is not three soloists that are needed so much as a trio—a rarer find. A trio that understands Beethoven, a symphony orchestra, a conductor who can weld them together to interpret this unusual and unwieldy work—all these assembled in one time and place. The wonder is that it has ever been played at all. New Zealand once had a symphony orchestra; soon we are to have one again. In the interim we had for a while a trio that could indeed play Beethoven. A performance of Opus 56 may be a miracle, but it is a miracle that we could in time make here for ourselves, if we had the will to assemble and hold secure its component parts.

**Delicate Ground**

A FEW days ago I happened to hear for the first time a gentleman who gives periodical talks from 3ZB on forthcoming films. I was pleasantly surprised. The speaker, perhaps by good luck, chose interesting films to talk about and spoke with restraint and some penetration. Here at least was one whose aim was information, not advertisement—unless indeed information be the best form of advertisement—and whose address lacked vulgarity and possessed discernment. If he really disliked any of these films he did not say so, venturing nothing more condemnatory than "not a great film, but . . ." and it would take a long course of regular listening to ascertain whether he ever goes any further. But his use (negative) of the word "great" indicated that he attached a significance to the word other than that seen by the mere booster. If this was advertisement it was advertisement in good taste.

**Forgotten Music**

POSTERITY is always with us. There is no waiting for its verdict, for the judgment of the people is continuous. Listening to Holst's "Fugal Concerto for Oboe, Flute and Strings" from 1YA one realised how unobtrusively names and reputations fade, like some faint star suddenly bright for a night, then lost forever. Not so long ago—indeed up to the time of his death in 1934—Gustav Holst stood well in the world of music, his name frequently in programmes. His "Planets" Suite, they said, was one of the masterpieces of modern orchestration. Now, except for the ubiquitous "St. Paul's Suite," his music is largely being forgotten. The concert audience has turned to newer gods. Other temples also, have gone. Where to-day is Cyril Scott, the "English Debussy," with his quasi-philosophical theories and his dabbling in the occult. Fifteen or twenty years ago his piano pieces were the delight of many concert pianists, they

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