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THINGS TO COME

A Run Through The Programmes

Times and Manners

THAT cunning old trout, The Times, that ranting, canting, trimming old Times, that brazen slut, the stupid Times, and bloody old times," so said William Cobbett, that rousing, rebellious Radical reformer, about what the world regards now as perhaps the most sober and respectable publication in all journalism, *The Times* of London. Cobbett's words are quoted effectively in the BBC programme "Fifty Thousand Times,"



which 3YA is to broadcast on Tuesday April 30, at 9.25 p.m. This programme was produced last year to celebrate the 50,000th issue of *The Times*, and takes the form of a slice of British history, beginning with the appearance, on New Year's Day, 1785, of *The Daily Universal Register*, published by John Walter. This cumbersome title was shortened a few years later and the paper became simply *The Times*. The illustration which accompanies this paragraph has for many years appeared at the head of *The Times* leader column.

How It Was Written

A NEW BBC programme about *Robinson Crusoe*, which is not to be confused with the earlier and shorter "Have You Read —?" programme, is to be heard from 2YH Napier at 8.0 p.m. on Wednesday, May 1. It is one of the series *How it was written*, and 2YA listeners heard it on a recent Sunday afternoon. It is longer, and in general more substantial than the earlier programme, and was produced by Stephen Potter, with the assistance of Professor James R. Sutherland. It takes the form of a discussion between the narrator and some ordinary people who think they have read *Robinson Crusoe*, and it brings to light some of the essential facts about its origins, and Defoe's life, that will be quite new to most of us who likewise only think we know the book. An illustration from a 19th Century edition appears on page 44 in this issue.

Miracle in the Gorbals

THE ballet "Miracle in the Gorbals," which is to be heard from 3YA in the session beginning at 3.0 p.m. on Sunday, May 5, was first produced early last year, with choreography by Robert Helpmann and music by Arthur Bliss. The scene is set in the Gorbals—a most insalubrious part of Glasgow's dockland, and the story, which has a mystic character, tells of the changes wrought in the behaviour of the inhabitants by the visit of The Stranger. The ballet opens with a section called "The Street." Among the people walk "The Lovers," "The Official" and "The Prostitute." A young girl, "The Suicide," enters, dances

a tragic solo and disappears. In a short time her body is brought back, and the Official (surrounded by the mourning crowd) covers her dead face with her kerchief. Then The Stranger enters, overcomes the authority of the Official and restores the Suicide to life. The crowd gathers to adore him, but the Official, filled with jealousy and hatred, incites the crowd against him, and lures him into the Prostitute's den. Finding their god fallen into the ways of humanity, the crowd scream taunts at The Stranger; he is set upon by a razor-gang and done to death. The ballet ends with the reformed Prostitute and the sorrowing Suicide grieving over his body. In the recording to be heard from 3YA, the music is played by the British Ballet Orchestra, under the baton of Constant Lambert.

The Court Masque

THE Court Masque of the early 17th Century is the subject of the third programme in the series "The English Theatre" (2YA, Monday, April 29, 9.30 p.m.), and we reproduce here a costume design, "Cupid," done for Ben Jonson's Masque "Chloridia," by Inigo Jones, the great English architect of that time. The Court Masque was roughly contemporary with the Elizabethan drama of the Globe Theatre and such places, but it was distinctly more refined and exclusive.



Yet it had an important part to play in the development of English drama, and Milton's *Comus* is one of the more notable examples.

Why Not Live in a Tree?

THE picture we print on our cover this week is not, as one of our staff thought at first glance, a drawing by Henri Matisse. Mendoza is the artist's name, and to our observant readers that will signify "BBC Programme." It introduces a light-hearted fantasy by Horton Giddy called "Why Not Live in a Tree?" which has a neat little plot (in the literary, not horticultural sense) and makes fun with the respectabilities of London professional life—in particular the medical world as typified by Harley Street. The programme will be heard from 1YA at 8.26 p.m. on Monday, April 29.

Fairyland for Sale

WE have not yet finished with the fantasy department of this week's new programmes. We draw your attention to another Mendoza drawing (on page 44), which shows you "The Man Who Bought Up Fairyland." He is the central figure of a burlesque which bears his name, or the alternative title "New Fables for Old," written by Michael Barsley, featuring the BBC Revue Orchestra and Chorus, and set down to be

ALSO WORTH NOTICE

MONDAY

2YA, 10.25 a.m.: "Mountaineer's Holiday" (2).
3YA, 9.25 p.m.: "Schwanengesang" (Schubert).

TUESDAY

2YA, 9.25 p.m.: Symphonic Dances (Rachmaninoff).
1YX, 8.0 p.m.: Symphony No. 9 (Schubert).

WEDNESDAY

2YC, 9.0 p.m.: "Orpheus" (Liszt).
4YA, 8.34 p.m.: "The 89 Men" (Play).

THURSDAY

1YA, 7.15 p.m.: "Insects and Man" (Talk).
4YA, 8.0 p.m.: Clarinet Concerto, Op. 73 (Weber).

FRIDAY

2YA, 8.28 p.m.: BBC Brains Trust (new series).
3YA, 8.21 p.m.: Christchurch Lieder-tafel.

SATURDAY

2YA, 8.0 p.m.: "Flying High" (2).
2YC, 9.40 p.m.: "Diabelli" Variations (Beethoven).

SUNDAY

3YA, 2.30 p.m.: "Bleak House" (see page 23).
4YA, 8.0 p.m.: An Evening with Bach.

heard from 4YA at 10.0 p.m. on Thursday, May 2. We are informed that the man in question did not end up in the happy state in which Mendoza has drawn him. At the end he appears in a far less dignified position than he did at the beginning. The whole programme is a thing of quips and cracks, in music as well as words, at the expense of the bullet-headed Big Business Man who invades the regions of fancy—to his cost. But the satire is not confined to the B.B.M. The inhabitants of fairyland do not go unscathed.

Onward and Upward

PSYCHOLOGISTS have frequently (but never very satisfactorily) attempted to explain why mountaineers climb mountains. Climbers themselves cannot fully explain the urge, and we don't propose to try. It may be that, as Tennyson put it, they "needs must love the highest" when they see it, or that they are attracted by the element of danger which Geoffrey Winthrop Young described in these irregular and breathless lines:

In this short span
Between my fingertips on the smooth edge
And these tense feet cramped to the crystal ledge,
I hold the life of man.
Consciously I embrace,
Arched from the mountain rock on which I stand
To the firm limit of my lifted hand,
The front of time and space.

We suggest, however, that listeners tune in to 2YA on Monday, April 29, at 10.25 a.m., to the talk "Mountaineer's Holiday," by Dorian Saker. He may not give the answer, but there will be clues that may point to a solution of the old riddle.