

some local adventurer would win glory by doing two things; leading the Roman populace against the nobility and the Pope, and setting up some sort of short-lived Roman republic which claimed to revive the world empire of the city of Rome. Rienzi—Cola Si Rienzi, known as the Last of the Tribunes—was the last and loudest of these demagogues; and the climax of his career came at a vast popular festival where, dressed in an elaborate version of classical raiment, he pointed a sword to the four quarters of the compass successively and proclaimed—whether on his own behalf or on that of the Roman people has never been satisfactorily determined—"All this is mine." Shortly afterwards he was lynched. But how Wagner must have lapped all this up; and how little of his excitement (I am afraid) is conveyed by the wordless booming of the singer.

Appalachia

THIS, I believe, is the title of a musical work. It is also the name sometimes given to a mountainous district—the Appalachian Mountains—of the United States, whose indigenous music was the latest subject in the Thomson-Glaysher series, "Britons All." The reason for its inclusion is that the local inhabitants, cut off from the world, have preserved much of the folk-song repertoire of their 17th Century ancestors; and many English and Scottish ballads—"Barbara Allen," "Far Have I Travelled and Much Have I Seen," that classic treatment of marital infidelity among them—have an American version, set to the banjo. These extraordinary and fascinating survivals have much or all of the unique quality of the old ballads and have occupied many an American folk-song student. They have also influenced more formal music; and in this connection I wish to fly a kite. I once heard a collection of Appalachian ballad-music—it was the incidental music to a film—in which one phrase, repeated as a refrain—struck my ignorant ear as very like a passage in Dvorak's "Humoresque." Can anyone say whether this work is known consciously to have been modelled on American songs, in the manner of the New World Symphony?

Sergeant Clotho

THE drawing of a major art union provides a broadcast session more dramatic than most serials. Whether or not we hold tickets ourselves, we can listen with a pure unenvious pleasure



as a fairy tale comes true for someone else. But there is more in it than that. We are actually hearing the machinery of fate at work. Mr. A. is there on behalf of the Department of Internal Affairs, Sergeant B keeps an eye on it

for the police, and draws the numbers, a Voice from a third person calls the name of the winner. The numbered marbles are shaken in their vessel, we hear them moving, and in our mind that container becomes the Spindle that turns on the knees of Necessity; as we cannot see Mr. A of the Department of Internal Affairs, nor the Sergeant of Police, nor the Voice, there is nothing to stop us casting them as the three Fates, the sisters Lachesis, Clotho, and Atropos, dressed in white and garlanded as they seal each individual's destiny. In fact, the Viewsreel Commentator finds once more that he has set out to deal with a modern phenomenon, only to remember that the Greeks had words for it, and in this case he must retire in favour of Plato, who has described the whole thing so much better in the last few pages of the *Republic*.

Holly and Ivy

STATION 12B's new quiz session, "What Do You Know," is in full swing. Judging by the questions on the first two nights you have to know your way about to reach the top of the class. Their diversity presumes an education both classical and modern. Questions involving the major poets, race results, the sea, science, medicine and mines, followed one another with a startling eclecticism. "This Above All" is the title of a poem by Shakespeare, "a bilbo is a South American vegetable," "the Napier earthquake occurred on April 12, 1934," were some of the answers that failed to make the grade. The male contestants were completely eclipsed by Holly and Ivy, whose intelligence was equalled by their easy assurance before the microphone. Ivy was the first scorer in the quiz when she showed she knew something about cochineal and went on to demonstrate her versatility by an almost surprising familiarity with the poet Pope. But it remained for her friend Holly to achieve almost a sensation in the eighth tough question with a ready knowledge of medicine. She was not troubled by neuritis, arthritis, bronchitis, or endocarditis, but while nerves, lungs, and heart stood the strain, she surely felt it in her bones that something was going wrong, and muscles failed. She went down with myositis.

The St. Matthew Passion

TO give thanks in a paragraph for the broadcast of the St. Matthew Passion is almost an impiety; not to give thanks at all would be a grievous discourtesy. This must be accounted one of the most notable broadcasts of the year, not for any perfection of achievement it may have attained, but for the simple fact that it did happen. It is heartening to know that there are in the country conductor, choir, soloists, and instrumentalists willing and able to undertake the preparation and performance of a work which involves a good deal of self-immolation. One entertains a new respect for a broadcasting service which goes to the trouble of recording it. The standard of performance and recording was much higher than the average in New Zealand, and whatever the faults, they were transcended by the obvious sincerity which characterised the whole broadcast.

ISSUED BY THE STATE HYDRO-ELECTRIC DEPT.



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EXPLANATION

The electricity shortage is due to the substantial extra demands on power by hundreds of new factories set up during the war and afterwards to manufacture essential short-supply goods, and to a big increase in domestic and farming use. This position has been aggravated by droughts in generating areas and by the fact that it was not possible during the war to proceed with all new generating installations planned.

That is the position. We must get by on a supply that at best is no more than adequate. Every switch turned off helps.

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