

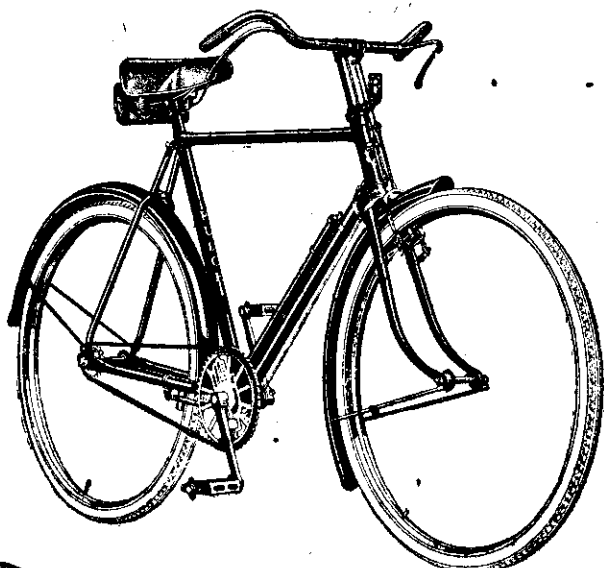
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RADIO VIEWSREEL

What Our Commentators Say

Build-down

NOW and then, accidental listening yields delightful results. It was quite by accident that I heard a "Starlight" programme from 4YA, featuring our old friend Tommy Handley. In his own inimitable fashion, Tommy introduced a pianist, Alan Paul, with a rapid and derogatory résumé of Mr. Paul's childhood, youth, and subsequent career. His further comments on Mr. Paul's supposed "concerto for Jew's harp, bagpipes, and three-and-ninepenny alarm-clock" were a none-too-subtle parody of the more boring type of music critic. But what followed when the subject of his remarks sat down to play was most delightful—a tricky and elegant essay in the classical variations form, decorating that old nursery tune "A Frog He Would A-Wooing Go." Thanks, Tommy and Alan; another of the same, please!

Merry Madrigals

IT is not often that we have the privilege of hearing madrigals sung on the radio, and it was exciting to find two local choirs tackling them, round about the same time. The Christchurch Liederkränzchen, conducted by Alfred Worsley, included in its programme Dowland's lovely air "Come Again, Sweet Love," and Morley's jolly "What Saith My Dainty Darling"; these were also sung by the Cecilia Choir, Dunedin, conducted by Meda Paine, but I thought the choice of the remaining items in the bracket was better in the case of the Dunedin choir, who gave us also Bennett's racy "All Creatures Now Are Merry-Minded," and that most princely of madrigals (my favourite) Gibbons' "The Silver Swan." According to musical historians, there was a golden age of music when common folk such as you and I, reader, would get out the madrigal books of an evening and indulge in part-singing for pleasure, just as moderns indulge in bridge. Those days, alas, are past. Few of us nowadays can carry a tune, let alone read an inner part at sight. We leave our madrigal-singing to be done for us by trained choirs, and it is lucky for us that we have choirs willing and able to prepare such rare and welcome programmes.

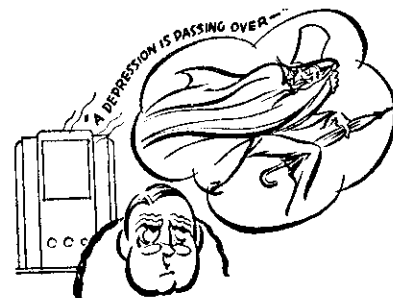
Armchair Listening

LISTENING on the radio to a singer of the artistic calibre of Angela Parselles, one can't help feeling a little guilty. It is so nice to hear a concert artist from the depths of one's armchair, but the thought persists that all this is much too comfortable, and that for the proper appreciation of music, the wide-awake awareness engendered by a hard seat in a concert-hall is really indispensable. Armchair-sitters are punished for the sin of sloth, however, when the broadcast ends after a too-brief excerpt from the singer's programme, and they are left wanting more, and without the means to gratify their wish. After Miss Parselles had sung her bracket of Brahms and Richard Strauss, I certainly felt a mild animosity that 4YA must thereupon go on to other fare;

a voice of great beauty, used with such artistry and restraint, comes our way too seldom.

A Deep Depression Lies

THE weather report is drama in the grand manner. "A deep depression lies over Marlborough and is moving slowly to the north-east"; and one imagines the implacable, inevitable forces of nature casting their shadow over the



countryside. Actually, I am not at all sure whether a depression is a bringer of rain or fair days. When I hear that the weather in Auckland will be "cloudy and mild" my doubts are of a different quality. Shall I need an umbrella, or does this mean that the change to winter underwear may be deferred another week? Were the weather office not so obviously wedded to this dramatic form of presentation one might suggest something considerably brighter. Something like this for instance: "Calling Auckland, the Waikato and the Bay of Plenty Rugby Union. Don't worry about those clouds to-morrow. They have their silver lining. Sunshine for Saturday; all sports as usual. Don't forget to take a packet of seeds home to-night; it'll be grand growing weather next week." What an opportunity for an enterprising sponsor, radio's best selling session—gumboots, goloshes, or golf balls; sunshades, sandals, shoes, or, for that deep depression, sal volatile.

Soul Beneath the Harrow

THE Christchurch stations have evidently gone about to freeze the blood in the listening ear. We were already attending apprehensively to Poe from 3YL when from 3YA *The Music of Doom* boomed upon us. *The Music of Doom* proves upon enquiry to be adapted from Mrs. Radcliff's *Mysteries of Udolpho* that early (mid-18th Century) example of the spine-chiller which burned up Horace Walpole, and incurred the reproof of Sir Walter Scott. However, its presentation in radio form is not likely to disturb anyone's sleep; the little of it I have so far heard suffers from the most common fault of radio serials, the interminable explanation by the characters of what has gone before, exchanged among themselves in tones of genteel anguish. As for "The Black Cat," "The Assigination" and the works of Poe generally, the 3YL presentation reduces them to the level of any other radio serial. "For those who like that sort of thing," said Abraham Lincoln, or somebody, "that's the sort of thing they'll like"; and those whose souls are harrowed up and whose young blood frozen

NEW ZEALAND LISTENER, JUNE 14