

by that sort of thing will attain the desired reaction. This commentator, however, remains fretful and no more; he had hoped for better things.

Love's Labour Lost

I MUST confess that I adopt a commercial attitude to the ZB's and listen only when I can get something out of them, household hints in the mornings and hard cash from quiz sessions in the evening. But last Thursday night I listened to 22B, motivated solely by the desire for entertainment. The session was *Hollywood Theatre*, and though I did not expect anything up to the standard of Grauman's Chinese, I was nevertheless disappointed. The secondary purpose of the programme (the first is to advertise soap) is to publicise a new Hollywood starlet, Miss Rita Corday and we are informed at the end of the play that Miss Corday is admirably suited to playing the title role as she is a Tahitian princess by adoption. But although the drama itself is the usual White Boy Meets Brown Girl, and there are the customary obstacles to their union, we were just sitting back waiting to hear the Tahitian equivalent of wedding bells when the heroine took a leaf out of Peter B. Kyne and renounced the hero. Anyhow what's the point of being a South Sea siren if you can't sport a sarong?

Mixed Brew

RUMOUR has it that Disney intends making a film of our old radio friend *Peter and the Wolf*. If this is so, the old queries will of course be raised; can you—and should you—present in an additional medium what has already



been composed (to the composer's satisfaction) for presentation in another? It is interesting, if irrelevant, to note that the same complaint was made by James Agate against the film version of *Henry V*—which, he said, was already perfectly apt for presentation on the stage, so that any presentation in another medium was an impurity. As for *Peter and the Wolf*, however numerous and faithful its devotees (of whom this commentator is one), they cannot deny that its basis is a clever and charming but essentially primitive alternation between music and narrative; and probably pictorial representation can be added without doing lasting harm.

On Her Selection

STATION 2YA's Saturday night session *I Know What I Like* is not to be confused with 2YD's *You Asked For It*. In the second the announcer takes all care, but sometimes gently declines responsibility, in the first both are proudly assumed. A recent programme was presented by a 14-year-old school-

girl, whose comments were less pert and more pertinent than tradition would allow in one of her age and sex. The programme itself was roughly the type of thing we expected—a better selection than we ourselves would have been capable of putting forward at the age of 14 when our musical thought ran rather in Tin Pan Alley channels. There was Mozart's "Turkish March," the "Flight of the Bumble Bee," "Deep River," the Mendelssohn *Violin Concerto in E Minor* (which our schoolgirl liked because of its "wistful" quality), but probably most appreciated of all by listeners was Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*. A well-chosen programme, Miss 14-year-old,

Run, Rabbit

LAST week's Radio Stage offering from 2YA—"Love on the Run"—had about as much relevance to life in New Zealand as a publication of the "Etiquette for Young Officers" variety. The setting is Monte Carlo, and the curtain rises as the hero staggers from the Casino after having lost his last sou. The plot depends for its humour on the fact that the hero has no money and no manners and the heroine too much money and too little modesty, whereupon the hero, who has a self-respect worthy of a nobler object, is compelled to flee her through labyrinthine ways, but always behind him hears the pursuant purr of her automobile tyres. It was mildly amusing, and the sort of thing we might occasionally read in the 6d. magazine we buy with the knitting pattern in, but in this case we didn't get a knitting pattern. However, one thing in the play impressed me—Penelope Knox's ingenuity in thinking up expletives for the hero to voice each time his escape mechanism proves defective—expletives with force and without offence. He began, I think, with "suffering cats," and prefaced the climax of the chase with "Ye Gods!" So did we.

Confessions of an English Opium Eater

IT was quite by chance that I tuned in to 2YA last Friday in good time for *Trial by Jury* and heard "Confessions of an English Opium Eater"—a 15-minute dramatisation of the life of De Quincey. Seldom have I heard a radio play so eloquent or so moving as this—the tragedy of a man who, to quote the script-writer, "lived for the mind alone, and yet knowingly and deliberately set out to destroy the mind." Passages from the "Opium Eater" are, as they stand, ideal radio drama and in this case skilful commentary and dialogue enhanced and heightened the effect. A nightmare theme such as the gradual domination of the conscious mind by the phantoms of the unconscious is difficult to present visually without bathos, and mere reading is powerless to evoke the full horror. But here radio comes into its own. To hear the gasping anguish in the voice, the agonised prayers for deliverance, that last strangled cry from the heart, "I will sleep no more!" without seeing the dreamer or the material form of the visions, is an emotional experience that can be provided only by radio. And in this case radio has fulfilled its obligations, both to De Quincey and to the living.

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