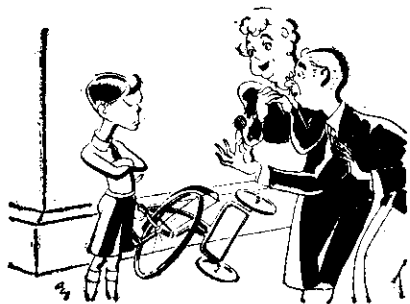


more important professions, the manufacture of cosmetics a prosperous trade. Woman, cashing in on her physical attractions, believes it pays to advertise. But does it? In the dear departed days of Queen Victoria, woman made herself a mystery, and was progenitive. To-day, when make-up and dress are among the fine arts—and quite respectably too—the birth-rate declines. It all depends on how you look at it, but there are many who would say that the pay-off from this advertisement is a poor one. This, of course, may not be all the story; but we will leave that to Mr. Martin Smith.

The Problem Child

LISTENING to an A.C.E. talk is the nearest one can get these days to living in Cranford. The reader's voice is soft and low, an excellent thing in woman, and one gets the impression that domesticity is in general an unhurried



and gentle occupation, redolent of the still-room rather than of the gas-stove. This is not to say that the talks are uninformative—they are as full of nourishment as an egg is of meat, and, like the A.C.E.'s coddled egg, daintily prepared so as to be easily assimilated. But after a diet of eggs you long for a slightly underdone steak. However, the new series of A.C.E. talks just started from 2YA deal with topics closer to life in the raw than "Cooking of Egg and Cheese Dishes" or "Knitting for Exhibition Purposes." The talks on "The Problem Child" were prepared by Mrs. Calvert, assistant lecturer in Education at Otago University. I heard the first last Friday, and found it helpful and stimulating. So far, however, Mrs. Calvert is running true to A.C.E. tradition in presenting eggs that are neither particularly bad nor particularly hard-boiled.

Roast Beef Music

THE Sunday afternoon concerts being arranged by the National Broadcasting Service in conjunction with the Wellington City Council are a good thing. The first, broadcast by 2YA from the Wellington Town Hall on June 2, was a programme well chosen to counter the soporific effect of the mid-day dinner. Mozart's "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik" goes well with the savoury; there was organ music by Lawrence Haggitt as a digestive, and Ken Macaulay, in some of the more popular of Tchaikovsky's songs, to add zest to the coffee. It was an attractive programme for the listener, but not so good, perhaps, for the performer. Either he must forgo a second helping of roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, or else—well, the NBS Strings in the Mozart seemed to lack sparkle, and the Tchaikovsky songs did not carry that

rhythmic punch that is almost their only virtue. Broadcasting from a concert-hall is a tricky business and it may have been that the acoustics were playing tricks with the ear. The Town Hall is over-large for the intimate music of the strings and, in the organ concerto by Alec Rowley, they were quite overwhelmed. Despite these comments the programme was pleasant broadcasting and obviously much enjoyed by those in the hall. Indeed, if the applause was an indication, the audience there would agree with this commentator, that it was an auspicious start to a good idea.

Men in the Kitchen

AT first I thought it a waste of brilliant talent to see Richard White's talks, *Men in the Kitchen*, relegated to a series of morning sessions from 4YA. This speaker's manner is so fluent, his matter so masterly, his style so crammed with the *bon mot* and the epigram, that it would seem a pity not to allow more listeners to hear him. But there may be method in this apparent official madness. During the morning he addresses presumably a majority of women and these mainly housewives. Perhaps the NBS desire is to stimulate the housewife in the direction of an improvement in the culinary art. Having written these words, I envisage a deluge of letters-to-the-editor, stating that the New Zealand woman's baking is the best in the world. Quite so, replies Mr. White, but can she contrive an omelette? The other varied dishes which, in these talks, insinuate a persuasive aroma into the listener's kitchen will perhaps suggest to the cook in some lucky household that there are other ways of showing culinary supremacy than in the preparation and decoration of the ubiquitous sponge-cake.

Arsenic and Old Lady

A PLAY from 42B's *Passing Parade*, entitled "The Old Lady Who Smiled," promised to be different, beginning as it did with a deathbed. The author couldn't tell us why the old lady was smiling as she died, as she didn't have time to explain before doing so; but her bereaved descendants thought it was because her peaceful 97 years of doing good deeds and spreading sweetness and light had entitled her to a preview of the heaven to which she was so obviously going. It just proves, readers and listeners, that you never can tell. Actually the old harridan was a cold-blooded murderess who had skipped to America after a Scottish jury had brought in a verdict of "not proven"; and it seems her story was a true one. I was disappointed when the arsenic entered the tale. Too many fictional radio murders predispose one to be cautious about a true case. One wonders whether radio writers are aware that there are nine other commandments, the breaking of any one of which would form good material for a play?

In Three Bites

I LISTENED right through "The Assignment," latest in 3YL's Edgar Allan Poe series and, with the sole comment that this is a tale neither of mystery nor of imagination, I will pass on to inquire why it has been thought fit to present Poe's stories in three instalments? The vehicle of Poe's uncertain art is the short story, which is essentially a unit, to be told at one shudder; and serialisation, however forceful and imaginative, cannot but be an error.



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