

intends presenting in these series. It is a most commendable intention. We hear too little of such music and it is for the amateur and the local talent, artists with inquiring minds and time to follow their own interests, to give it to us. In Christchurch we have several such—R. R. Beauchamp and Gerald Christeller among them—and it is good news that Miss Thomson will continue to swell their ranks. However, I was a little puzzled by Miss Thomson's introduction; it seemed to assume the existence of too great a continuity between the most primitive folk-music and that which survives underground in the most sophisticated industrial nations. Certainly one should not underestimate the great age of folk-music or the extraordinary power of survival its various themes and idioms possess; but Miss Thomson did seem to be laying too much stress on the Stone Age. However, she opened her programme with a lullaby sung by Australian aborigines; so her point may have been rather the survival of the Stone Age in odd corners of the modern world.

### Homunculus His Love-Life

ADMIRAL BLANDY, having let off his little firecracker the other day, reported that the event had been accompanied by no tidal waves, earthquakes, "or other unnatural phenomena." He was wrong. Within twenty-four hours of the detonation listeners to a Christchurch station heard Frank Sinatra singing "Old Man River." Listening to this extraordinary piece of misplaced effort I was moved to reflect on the place of personality in the sentimental warbling that enjoys such great popularity to-day. Popular singers in other veins—Dawson, Tauber, Robeson—derive much of their

the expression of one emotion only, among all that are known to man, and seek no diversity, humanity or individuality in the manner of its presentation.

### No Place Like Holmes

THESE half- or quarter-hour radio sessions with the sleuths give you just the bare bones of a plot, minus the ceremonies of character, background and, usually, atmosphere. Crime fiction is revealed for what it is, merely an intellectual or not so intellectual exercise. Considered purely as puzzles, therefore, the *Professor Burnside Investigates* series from 2YA seems to me superior to the more pretentious radio mysteries, for Miles Horton uses the same technique in these as he does in his Photo-crime puzzles—he presents all his evidence, tells you the evidence is complete and that the vital clue has been revealed, then after a short pause takes you back and explains the solution. And simple though the solution usually is (I should like to place on record that I solved the Case of the Curious Caretaker and the Case of the Poisoned Passenger almost unaided), there's a certain satisfaction in knowing that if you were Inspector Frost, Professor Burnside's role would be a walk-on and not a lead.

### Dr. Bainton

HAVING been regular members of Dr. Bainton's flock since he began his twice-weekly broadcasts from 2YA, we feel, now that they have reached their logical conclusion, rather like sheep without a shepherd, and next Tuesday and Sunday will probably see us looking up hungrily, and being fed on other fare. Though Dr. Bainton's recitals were probably equally enjoyed by cognoscenti and uninformed, it was probably to people like us, with enthusiasm but insufficient knowledge, that they were most valuable. The recitals were a happy blend of bush and wine, and Dr. Bainton's bush was almost as happily phrased and as cunningly presented as the wine it advertised. This was especially noticeable in the talks on modern composers, when Dr. Bainton invoked the aid of many a well-known Victorian (from Dickens' Fat Boy to Gladstone) to prove his thesis that the new is usually distrusted and the old eulogised, until in turn the new becomes the acceptable old. Moreover it was a welcome change to have flesh-and-blood illustrations instead of the usual recordings, so that if Dr. Bainton thought it necessary he could step out of the groove to explain to his audience exactly what was being illustrated.

### Odds Bodikins

THE Reserved notice that marks the spot at 7.15 on Friday night from 2YA was moved aside last Friday to reveal a rather interesting BBC programme by Jennifer Wayne, who wrote the *English Theatre* series, this time on the Eccentricities of English Men of Letters. The first of this series was fairly general in its approach, and partly devoted (the BBC is as fond of morals as the Duchess in Wonderland) to pointing out with John Stuart Mill that eccentricity is a flower that blooms only in the Garden of Liberty. Though Miss Wayne is hardly likely to be short of material for her session—there's Swift and the hole in the table-cloth, Dr. Johnson and the hot potato, and countless others as hard to forget as 1066.

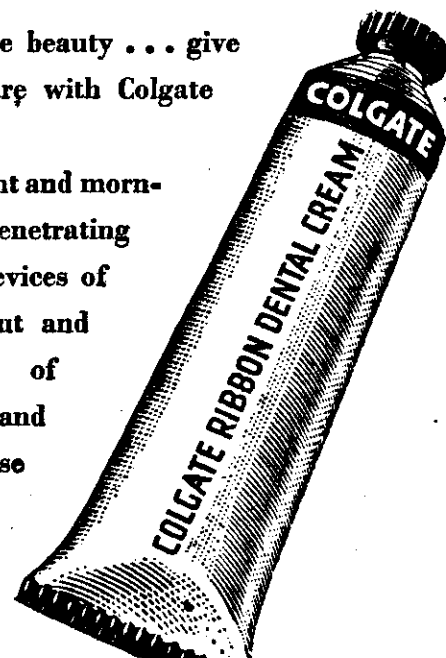
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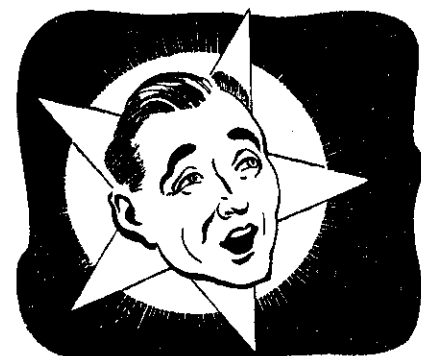


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success from the impact, made via the radio, of a definite style and character upon the listener. But this does not seem to be so with the male crooner, at least; I can distinguish, if the desire to do so should awake, between the voice of Mr. Crosby and the voice of Mr. Sinatra, but their personalities do not seem to me so very diverse. And I do not feel that those who admire them receive their pleasure from the personality of the singer. It is perhaps not so with some of their female counterparts. In the radio style of Miss Shore and Miss Lynn I seem to detect a certain wry humour which makes me wonder what these ladies think of their songs; by which I don't infer that they dislike or despise them — rather their distinct superiority over others of the same feather seems to come from the fact that they are enjoying themselves and infusing vitality and amusement into their work. But "standardisation" is the epitaph for most of this world; they desire