

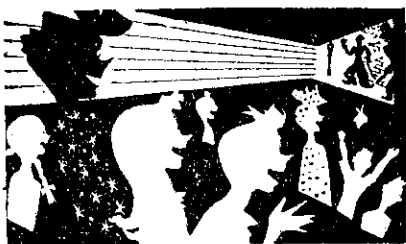
non-bloodthirsty tendencies. Surely it is time we scrapped the Occupation as a theme for spy-stories, since the true stories of those times are so much more gripping than any manufactured drama.

Sausages and Red-Hot Poker

THE *English Theatre* series from 3YA has now reached the stage of "Pantomime," and what with this and "Melodrama" and "Music Hall" it is clear that the authors have taken a deep plunge into the 19th Century, which is beginning to be recognised as a great age of popular entertainment, thronged with mute inglorious Dickenses. Under traditional fog, reinforced by industrial soot, in streets and between houses without doubt the ugliest ever inhabited by Western man, there was furiously alive a spontaneous plebeian culture, native especially to London, as anonymous and as capable of infinite variations on familiar themes as the folksong cultures one had believed confined to primitive peoples. An odd sidelight on this culture is its reaction outside England: there was a definite school among French aesthetes of the mid-19th Century which saw London as a sort of ogre's den, filled, with macabre and grotesque, (but unquestionably romantic) horror. These gentry had put their refined fingers on something very real; Dickens interpolates the pages of *Pickwick* with three stories and a poem of this very quality and there are besides two or three anecdotes, told chiefly by Bob Sawyer and Sam Weller, which reflect the common trick of Cockney wit in finding uproarious humour in picturesque methods of decaise. One of Sam Weller's tales, you recall, was that of the old gentleman "who in a fit of temporary insanity rashly converted himself into sausages." This brings us back to the pantomime and the policeman made into the same article of diet; and it is the case that the French school found one of their most exquisite shudders in watching certain versions of the *Harlequinade*.

The Film and You

E. A. OLSEN talking from 1YA in the Winter Course series on "Criticism and the Cinema" pointed out that "you can't go to the cinema without being a critic," but, as he suggested, you do not need to be a bad critic. The



cinema to-day is not only a colossal purveyor of entertainment, but also one of the most influential mediums of propaganda. This is not necessarily blatantly conscious propaganda, but more importantly a subtle moulding of our habits and tastes. By developing our critical powers we can turn the cinema away from the imitation of the fictitious and illusory, to reflect what we believe to be better things. The rapid rise of film societies, whose members have opportunities of studying some of the best examples of film available, is a sign of an awakening consciousness among film-goers, even if it is not yet much reflected in an awakening conscience among film exhibitors. Mr. Olsen's talks was a forceful and convincing introduction to the subject of film appreciation,

and it was only a pity that he was not launching a series on that topic, instead of winding up one on the practice and principles of criticism, with which, in fact, he did not deal very fully.

"By Jove! That was Grand"

"THIS is beautiful football. Isn't it exhilarating? It's a wonderful day and there are 35,000 people here—just listen to them. . . ." And the crowd roared, all 35,000 of them, as a background to the best sports commentary I remember hearing. This, of course, was the Kiwis-Auckland match from 1YA, a honey of a game. The commentator, who was, I understand, the one who did the commentaries for the Kiwis on their English tour, brought this broadcast alive. Seeing is believing, they say. But the point about seeing in relation to belief is not so much the verification of fact, but the translation of fact into feeling. You see, you feel, you believe. Most radio commentators give an accurate account of facts, but their very infallibility kills feeling. You may wish you were there, but you do not always recapture the reality of the experience. The commentator on the Kiwis-Auckland game did not pretend to omniscience. One or twice he missed out on players' names and he quite shamelessly admitted on a few occasions that he did not know why the whistle had gone; but this all added to the zest of his talk, for he gave you his thoughts spontaneously. They were the thoughts of yourself, if you had been at the game, or of any other enthusiast. You overheard rather than heard. You saw through the commentator's eyes and to his "By jove! that was grand," you echoed "I'll say it was!"

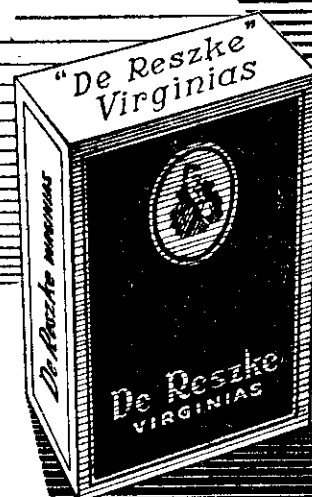
Mid-day Talks to Farmers

FROM Monday next, August 5, a well-cooked lunch as food for the body won't be the only mid-day attraction for Canterbury Farmers. There will be something else—special food for the mind, served by Station 3YA. This will take the form of short topical talks on farming, heard at 12.35 p.m. on Mondays.

An advance glimpse of some of the talks scheduled suggests that there will be something for every farmer. The staff of Lincoln College and officials of the Department of Agriculture are helping with the series, and from these and other sources it is intended to present a wide range of talks. L. W. McCaskill, Rural Education Officer at Lincoln, is to lead off on August 5 with a talk introducing the session, and on the following week George Holford, of the Department of Agriculture, will speak on "All Flesh is Grass," a true generalisation which has particular application to this country of grassland farming. Third talk is "The Care of the Fat Lamb Flock," by D. B. McLeod, of Lincoln. Among other talks listed or contemplated are "Barley Growing in Canterbury," "Troubles with Poultry," "Recent Trends in Land Values in Canterbury," "Improving the Farm Garden," "Lucerne on the Mixed Farm," "The Sheep Dog," "Recent Work on Sheep Dipping." It is hoped also that, now and then, farmers will be told something about farming in other lands. And the talks won't be confined to actual farm work. There will be something about the use of leisure—reading and hobbies. The women of the house will not be overlooked.

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