

THE WAY OUT

A Kiwi Escapes in Italy.

By MALCOLM J. MASON.

PRICE 14/6.

Just published, *The Way Out* promises to be the most remarkable story written by any New Zealander about his war experiences. Captain Mason tells of his three escapes from Italian camps. His nine months' wanderings in Italy, the kindnesses he received from peasants, hunger and ever recurring alarms about Germans in the neighbourhood, the fear of recapture must all be part of the experience of many other Kiwis. Mason writes simply, without affectation, using (where printable) the language of a typical New Zealand soldier. His book is full of vivid incident, humour and lively characters, whether Italians, or Germans or other escaping prisoners met on the Italian roads of 1943.

The Way Out is beautifully printed and illustrated with line drawings.

THIS NEW ZEALAND

By F. L. W. WOOD.

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Professor Wood has the unusual ability to write a book at once authoritative and popular. *This New Zealand* written for America and recently reprinted here is a valuable and comprehensive survey of our history, economics, politics and social life. It is a book that repays everyone's reading; and to send abroad too, to anyone who wants to know what New Zealand is really like, it has no equal.

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RADIO VIEWSREEL

What Our Commentators Say

He Held His Audience

IT is surely the fear of many a radio artist that he is broadcasting to empty air, and the dream of all that each has the ear of every listener. One artist recently had, no doubt, complete confidence in being able both to attract and hold his audience, and he must be well in the running for the year's highest listener rating. This was the Minister of Finance announcing the Budget. Whatever one's opinion about the financial statement, whether one thinks in terms of a new suit or a few basin for the bathroom, or gloomily sees the vision of cheaper cigarettes fade away, one can yet applaud the heroic two hours or more of talking. Millions in subtraction or addition were juggled with a breathless assurance as if by an Einstein who had not yet discovered the theory of relativity. This was not oratory—it wasn't meant to be—but it was plain speaking of a kind which made complexity intelligible to the man at home. And it also demonstrated one of the most important uses of radio—to report things at first hand.

Bedtime Music

EARLY morning and the dying hours of the night call for the most carefully chosen programmes. And, late at night, I think, needs the greater care; for the quality of sleep assuredly affects the next day's temper. Maybe there are many who sleep on *Music, Mirth and Melody* counting the sheep with Jack Hulbert, or swapping chuckles for snores with Arthur Askey. I am sure, also, that the *Masters in Lighter Mood* are food for jaded mental appetites staving off night starvation with a candied novel. But there must be others than myself who, like Bach's Goldberg Variation patron Keyserling, would appreciate a more substantial nightcap. As far as I can make out, a curfew for symphonies, concertos and chamber music is set at 10.30 p.m. I am quite willing to exchange with those dance band fans who complain that their music rarely comes early in the evening, two overtures and a symphony at eight o'clock for a Mozart quartet at ten-thirty.

A. & M.

"THE ENGLISH HYMN," a BBC study (undenominational) recently heard from 3YA, was an interesting if tendentious survey of the rise and progress of a characteristically English religious art-form. It developed, it seems, from that unfortunate invention of the Puritans, the Psalms versified, for easier singing, into the flattest and most repellent metre ever moulded by the lips of man; and some traces of this still remain, I should imagine, in the metres and airs which are the lowest common denominator of Hymns Ancient and Modern. More important, this versification set the standard for the later and greater hymn-writers, Isaac Watts and

Charles Wesley; both of whom consciously and deliberately made of hymn composition a writing down, an adaptation, of the simplest words and most rudimentary tunes to the needs and abilities of an illiterate congregation. (Suppose, though, the hymn-writers had instead exploited the tradition of English folk song; but that was not the eighteenth-century way). The aim in those days was not the poetical conveying of religious feeling, but the expression of sound religious doctrine in such a form that the whole congregation could join in declaring their beliefs—an informal credo. The speaker of this study was able to show by analysis how many hymns so written nevertheless attained real literary heights. But as literacy progressed, the writers of hymns set themselves a new goal—that of poetry and art, providing an artistic vehicle for the statement of religious emotion rather than simple belief. This the speaker deplored; it was his wish to return to the old ways. Did one detect in his voice that imperfectly-adjusted creature, the Plain Man who distrusts art and subtlety? And can one have religion without either? The Puritan still walks.

Twenty-Five Years

STATION 3YL had an interesting if slightly dated broadcast the other evening; called "Cavalcade of Guest Artists," it was made in the Silver Jubilee year (which now seems like the days before the Flood) and aimed at giving by means of recordings a selection of the great artists, beginning with (I think) Galli-Curci and ending with Melchior, to be heard in London from 1910 to 1935. It was interesting to hear the voices and manners of the great—Caruso's surprisingly full and strong non-"Neopolitan" tones, Pachmann's cackling asides—but one was left with a vague feeling that the programme should have been reviewed by someone like James Agate, someone who had lived for ever, possessed a fabulous memory, had known everyone and everything about them. For lesser mortals this array of cosmic luminaries was like being shown over Westminster Abbey.

The Artist and the Music

WE are enjoying an unusual musical experience for New Zealand. Two fine pianists have arrived here so hot upon each other's heels that comparison of their styles is not only possible but inevitable. The comparison is almost forced upon us in that Solomon has begun with a programme that includes works already played by Lili Kraus. This is not a bad thing at all, for music grows in the mind and lives in the heart, nurtured by familiarity. And when familiarity is attained through such noble pianism as these two pianists can produce, the circumstance is even better still. To say that Solomon's "Waldstein" from 2YA the other night was the masculine counterpart of Lili Kraus' interpretation is only part of the story. The player's personality filters through the music however much he may attempt to

(Continued on next page)