

# RADIO VIEWSREEL

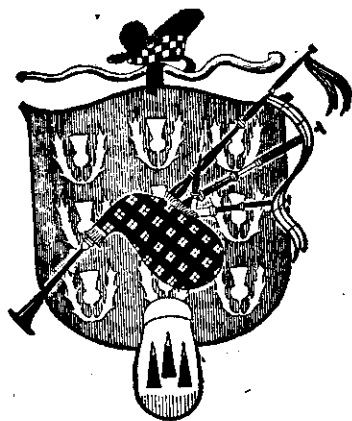
## What Our Commentators Say

### Heart of Furious Fancies

"THERE was an Old Person of Lyme, whose conduct was far from sublime; he ran up and down in his grandmother's gown, which amused that Old Person of Lyme." Such grand and grotesque figures one had thought confined to the pages of Lear, illustrated with those large-headed, tiny-footed figures, canted forward or backward at perilous angles, ancestors at once of Thurber's and of Emmett's goblins; but one was wrong. "What Is An Eccentric?" the first of a BBC series from 3YA on that entrancing topic, overwhelmed the listener with an elves' army of citizens from real life, in no degree less strange in their mode of conduct than Lear's gallery of oddities. The distinguished naturalist who sought to be bitten by a vampire bat (the bat unflatteringly refusing), who harnessed a crocodile, and held his sprained ankle (not the crocodile's) under Niagara Falls—as more efficacious than the kitchen tap—who sat on tree-tops at 81 to watch birds; this sort of thing in no way falls short of Lear—or for the matter of that, of the White Knight. The BBC manner lends itself to the urbane yet sharp tones of those who explain, to a world impressed yet never entirely convinced, the logic of unreason. And we are promised further philosophical speculation on the place and significance of eccentricity in society.

### Scots Wha Hae

A SCOTSMAN is a match for a wrestler any day; or so it seemed the other day anyhow. Sports events tend to take precedence over most other broadcasts, certainly over music, and in the event of a clash of times, these less aggressive programmes are relegated to a minor station. Only a month or so ago the advertised broadcast of the rarely played Milhaud Violin and Piano Sonata from 3YA was diverted to 3YL to make way



for a wrestling-match. But not so the other week. Wrestling at Auckland was pushed through the ropes to 12M. Who was the winner? Why, the Auckland Scottish Pipe Band! Maybe it's the doughty Scot! or maybe it's just Auckland. I didn't, as it happened, listen to either. I was patiently trying to dis-

entangle some music from the mass of static and interloping wavelengths which ambushed 1YX. There was no other music.

### Rich in Talks

SUNDAY evening, October 6, was more rich in radio talks than usual. At 8.45 we had the regular Sunday night talk from the National stations given by J. D. F. Green of the BBC and at 9.30, from main National and Commercial stations, we were flattered with a thoroughly adult and thought-provoking address by the American radio dramatist Norman Corwin, who was in the country five days on the last lap of his flight round the world on the Wendell Willkie One-World award. The first talk was of course of particular interest to farmers: Mr. Green has visited Canada, the United States and Australia and has just spent a month in New Zealand visiting farms here and comparing his impressions; he is director of the farm services in the BBC and a farmer himself in Gloucestershire. He spoke of the New Zealand farmer learning from the British farmer and also of the British farmer learning from the New Zealand: he sounded extraordinarily impressed by the wealth, the goodness of our farmlands and he issued a very strong warning against greed—greed which in a few dozen years could overwork those rich lands and turn them into greenless wastes "where no birds sing." Mr. Green's talk was something to sit and brood on; but there wasn't much time, for the dynamic Mr. Corwin began to speak in his quiet, incisive tones at 9.30. Where Mr. Green sounded a warning Mr. Corwin sounded a hope for the part New Zealanders could play in the one-world future he foresees. "Why should great poems and paintings and symphonies have to be imported to this magnificent Dominion?" he asked, and suggested that New Zealanders should exchange students with other countries (he mentioned England, America, Russia and China) in the effort to achieve the One World specifically envisaged by Wendell Willkie but contemplated in general by many before him. This talk was, to me, a model of everything a radio talk should be.

### Learned Friends

STATION 3YA has another new series of talks on historical personages, this time on *Famous Figures of the Bar*, delivered by Richard Singer. Mr. Singer speaks with the dry yet vivid precision of a Dickens character; he has relish, wit and information. The two figures he has so far dealt with are Thomas Erskine and Daniel O'Connell, both lawyer politicians of the reforming and radical era of 1790-1830. Erskine, who possessed a power over juries little short of magical, won a name by defending liberal-minded persons accused of treason and conspiracy in the frequent governmental panics of the days of the French Revolution. A Scot and himself a radical, he averted many of the more scandalous miscarriages of justice that marked the day. O'Connell was an Irishman foremost in the fight for Catholic civil liberties and Irish self-government. An even more picturesque figure than Erskine, he killed a man in a youthful duel

(continued on next page)

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