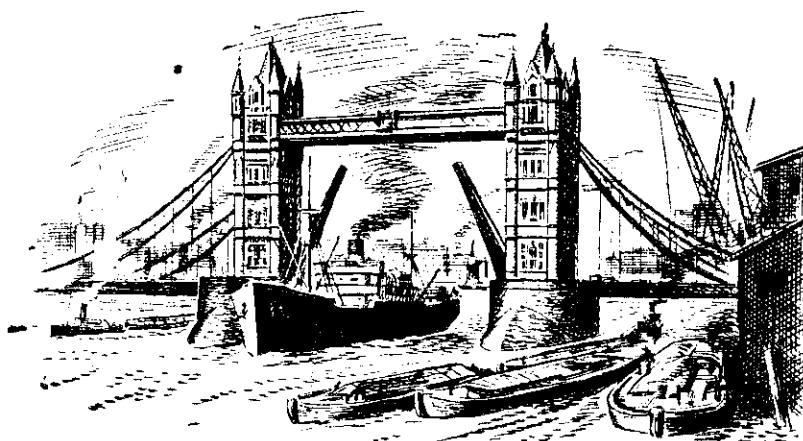


Blighted Prospect

THERE was the prospect of a pretty good half-hour from 3YA between 5.45 and 6.15 p.m. on Sunday. The first quarter-of-an-hour was taken up with Walter Gieseeking playing Debussy's *Children's Corner Suite*. I have heard musicians quarrelling over Gieseeking's presentation of some of Debussy's Preludes and have felt myself, in a rather vague way, that something was wrong, or that Cortot would have done it differently, but his *Children's Corner* is thoroughly satisfying in the way it is interpreted, and my complaint was never of his technique, which is stupendous. From 6.0 to 6.15 there was a light programme of verse and music: *Limericks and Ländler*. Ländler were explained pleasantly, and a few of these sportive dances were played by Lili Kraus and Alfred Cortot, while limericks were pulled out at intervals, like plums from a pie. It was a good idea and could have been a most entertaining quarter-hour, but I regret to say that the script was careless and the reading not up to standard. It is a New Zealand tradition that a length of baling-wire will hold a sagging gate indefinitely, and near enough is good enough, but making do with clichés on the radio is not good enough. Far better to have no introduction to a limerick than to say "Have you heard this one?" or "This one may be acceptable," and far better to have no limerick than to read the last line in such a way that it does not scan.

Adrift on a Stormy Ocean

THE BBC Pacific Service has been running a series of talks on Sunday evening on British foreign policy. This is a somewhat controversial subject, and I shouldn't be surprised if by now the talks director is wishing he had never had the idea. The series was started by four talks from E. H. Carr, Professor of International Politics at the University College of Wales, and author of several authoritative books, including *Conditions of Peace*. Professor Carr was as lucid and logical over the air as he is on paper, and although his assessment of Britain's present power would have distressed Mr. Churchill, he did not say anything particularly devastating. Another gentleman, whose name I forget, commented for a couple of weeks on some of Professor Carr's conclusions, and then A. J. P. Taylor, Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, was introduced for a series of three talks. He gave two of them in an urbane, precise, Oxford manner, wielding a polished hatchet against America and the military mind. It was a very sharp hatchet. The third Sunday he did not appear, and we had some music. The talks director produced some pianissimo experts for a week or two after that, and I lost interest and listened to something else, but I fear he has again stumbled on someone who has a prickly outlook, and again it appears that the Foreign Office has been breathing down his neck, for last Sunday it was announced that in place of the scheduled talk on British foreign policy we were to hear some Beethoven dances. I hope the talks director, who is obviously doing his best, has escaped the Foreign Office's gorillas and is safe in the bosom of his family.

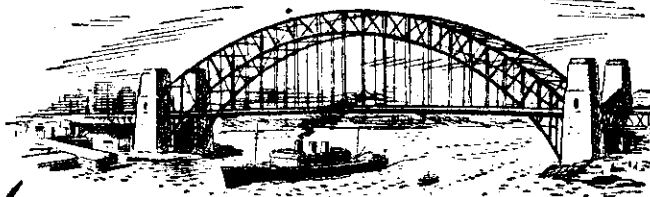
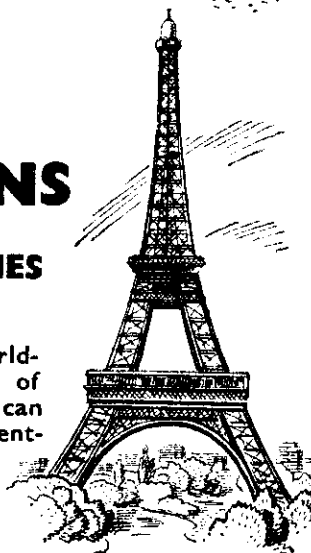


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