

RADIO VIEWSREEL

What Our Commentators Say

Storytime

MISS MARGARET BAKER, who conducts a session of Children's Book Reviews from 2ZB on Sunday nights, takes her seat firmly on the Plot Revelation horn of the reviewer's dilemma, a natural position for one who addresses the very young, on whom presumably any talk of stylistic achievement or philosophic framework would be wasted. But I feel that she perhaps took undue advantage of her position the other Sunday when she allowed the author of her second book *Artie and the Princess* to assume the responsibility for at least two-thirds of the session, she herself taking on the minor role of Tusitala. The result was a very pleasant little quarter-of-an-hour (Miss Baker has a clear and delightful voice, not yet perhaps the Voice of Experience but none the worse for that), but I feel the purpose of the session would be better served if more books were included and the available time divided more equally between them. As it was Parachute Pup ("Is full of fun") had little chance of pitting his probable charms against the more publicised amiability of Artie, the Endearing Dragon.

Recital for Three

THE other Friday, 2YA broadcast a recital by local artists which should settle the Correspondence Column argument about their desirability—for the three members of the New Zealand Concert Party, Rena's Gage, Reymond Windsor and Wilfred Simenauer provided listeners with half-an-hour of exciting musical entertainment. It was in fact difficult to believe that such developed musical artistry was consistent with the youth of the performers. My only criticism was of Miss Gage's choice of songs. As vehicles for her virtuosity the hackneyed highfalutings of Crupps's *One Song in My Heart* and Ronald's *Oh Lovely Night* were appreciated, but Miss Gage lacks the emotional maturity to make convincing their passionate expression. Judged solely from the dramatic viewpoint she seemed to me more at home in the pure and airy uplands of *I Heard a Blackbird in a Tree*. Her bracket of numbers formed a strong contrast to the Bach *Fantasia and Fugue* which preceded it and the 'cello numbers which followed, and although this effect was probably intentional I feel that the session would have been even more enjoyable had the contrast been less marked.

Late Appointment

IT is not very often that I listen to a radio play after ten at night. By that time, usually, I have had a couple of hours of what is known, popularly, as "classical" music, supplemented possibly by a talk or play; and in spite of the protests of other listeners about the almost complete cessation of good music at ten o'clock, I find that the eight till ten period is enough for me. It is true that the attention flags and revives several times during an average night's entertainment; but to revive interest after ten o'clock the programme must be a great deal better than average. The play which kept me sitting on the edge of my armchair till after 10.30 was one of the *Appointment with Fear*

series, and it was called "The Case." The final moment in this play was one of incredible anxiety and suspense, compounded with horror, excitement and fear, which remained with the listener even after the play was over. I should dearly love to explain the adventures of the film extra who succumbed to the temptation of stealing someone's suitcase on a railway platform, and of what happened when it began to exude a peculiar sticky substance . . . but no, the atmosphere of mounting suspense simply couldn't be communicated by a description of those terror-stricken scenes, and the best thing I can do is to tell you the name of the play, and allow you to find it in the programmes when it occurs again.

Rogues' Gallery

I OFTEN tune to 4ZB on Sunday evenings for *Prisoner at the Bar*, but so far I have found this a generally depressing programme with little to lighten its prevailing gloom. The rogues' portraits displayed herein reveal a monotonous similarity, with only a few characters whose vivid personality acts as leaven in the criminal dough. Murderers, abductors, thieves, charlatans, tricksters, perpetrators of all the crimes in the calendar, have been paraded for our inspection, and the prevailing theme



of mental and moral aberration makes *Prisoner at the Bar* a programme whose appeal is mainly for those of us who love to see a murder when we're out. This is well enough when the theme of "crime doesn't pay" is featured; but it is surely time to protest when a proven criminal is represented as rather a glamorous individual (as in the Gilbert kidnapping incident) and no antidote is provided to his poisonous creed that "living honestly isn't exciting enough." What we need is a genius to provide programmes which will sell the world the idea that honest living can be made as exciting as the imagination desires.

The Crackling of Dry Thorns

A HAND unknown at 3YA has made up and presented a special half-hour programme entitled "Ordeal by Music: A Primitive Custom in Modern Dress." It consisted of a selection of modern musical pieces, played one after the other without much effort at arrangement, and furnished with a commentary. The session opened with a truncated

(continued on next page)



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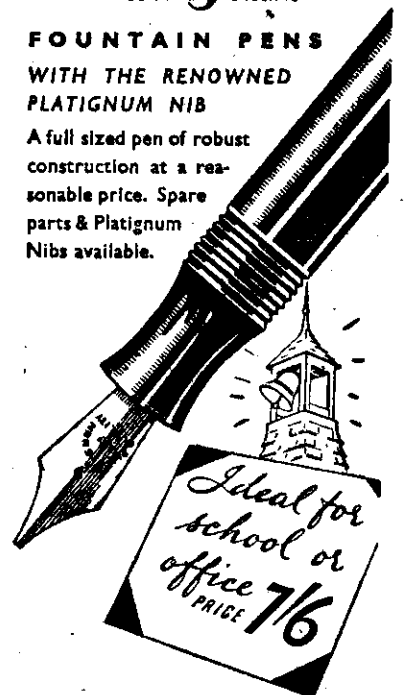
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