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and the Wolf and The Sorcerer's Apprentice, to mention two, make their appeal not only to children, and Raymond Windsor in the Mendelssohn Concerto would have been worthy of an adult audience. All of which merely adds up to the fact that I couldn't hear all the broadcasts over the air on account of those — restrictions, and that I wished I had been aged 12 or so, and a member of those enthusiastic audiences which greeted the orchestra with such interest and joy. These school concerts (it cannot be repeated too often) are a most valuable part of the work the orchestra is doing in educating the audiences, and possibly the performers, of the future. If through the more popular type of orchestral item young listeners can learn to accustom themselves to the tone-colours of the symphonic combination, the instruments should become old friends to them, and orchestral music on the radio should in future be something to hear with interest, instead of being (as it usually is at present) something to switch off in favour of the latest blood-and-thunder serial.

Ships that Pass

"TRANSATLANTIC LINER" has added Christchurch to its list of ports of call, and now arrives regularly for the benefit of housewives, hospital patients, and the unemployed. (Me, I just heard it by chance.) It consists, as far as I could gather, of a series of incidents, complete in themselves, which take place on board a liner travelling between London and New York; the link is provided by the purser and a gentleman called O'Shea, whose exact standing I forget, but whose role is clearly that of the purser's confidant. This week's story was one which should strike a sympathetic chord in any listener; it was intimately concerned with the question of hot bath-water, abundance of, and (or woe is us!) lack of same. It seemed a little hard on the housewife, but probably she thinks of other things anyway; like the woman in Margaret Halsey's book who was asked what she thought about in the kitchen—"This morning I was wishing I could find a policeman in tears so that I could say 'My cop runneth over.'" But perhaps she didn't have a radio to listen to. This particular ship could have provided her with 15 minutes' entertainment with all types of passengers—it caters for all classes; Chaucer, we may note, had the same idea 1,500 years ago, but he called it a pilgrimage.

Serial Story

"JALNA" (episode 1), broadcast from 3YL on a recent Sunday evening, was all a first episode ought to be. I am specially interested in first and last episodes, having a regrettable lack of the perseverance necessary to follow a serial throughout; in fact, I cheat. And I have a hearty admiration for the many who see them honestly to the end. A certain school once sent out forms to all its parents asking them which serials (if any) their offspring listened to in the evenings; one parent, in an excess of truth or exasperation, replied "All of them." That child, if persistence and endurance count for anything, should go far. "Jalna" is from the novel by the Canadian Mazo de la Roche; I think the

author actually produced a dramatized version of it herself some years ago, under the title of "Whiteoaks." The series—there are seven of them, forming a sort of saga—was very popular; "Jalna," the first, is the story of three generations under the rule of a tyrannical old matriarch—and does Grandma spit tacks! The last episode will be worth hearing if only in order to find out who the old Tartar leaves her money to in the end.

Thrilled

SO the black flag has been hoisted and 2YA's *My Son, My Son* is no more; and Monday night serial addicts emerge from their wanderings in the murky caverns of the parental mind to find themselves in the clean upper air of Edgar Wallace's London dockside, where the murk is purely physical, and subject to instantaneous dissolution when pierced by the clean bright flash-lights of Inspector Wade and the Boys in Blue. Naturally listeners are thrill-

ed. For one thing, mere actional suspense is a much easier burden for the listener to bear from week to week than the emotional variety. Emotional forces are largely incalculable; there is no way, short of the final instalment, of evaluating X. So the listener spends week after week grappling with the unknown, knowing no peace till the end is reached. But the serialisation of a straight adventure yarn is a horse of a brighter colour. If a represents Inspector Wade and b the Indiarubber Men, then it is obvious that a must always be greater than b. This naturally, is a great comfort to the listener; and perhaps Edgar Wallace's chief claim to radio inclusion is not so much that it is impossible not to be thrilled by him at the time, as that it is equally impossible to suffer the agonies of suspense from one Monday to the next.

La Tosca

FOR a really sordid story of lust and crime it would take a lot to beat Puccini's *Tosca*. Naked passion and naked weapons are usually pretty prevalent in any opera worthy of the name, but in this one they run riot. Taken from the original work by Sardou, the libretto here seems to restrict the composer's scope rather than extend it; Puccini merely supplies some very fine incidental music. He does, however, miraculously succeed in finding lyrical moments to which he does full justice. It is in works such as this, where the libretto is more than a mere peg on which to hang the music, that the radio version seems least satisfactory; the announcer's detached voice summarising the whole thing as if it was a weather report makes it all a little ridiculous. It is like trying to gain an impression of *Hamlet* from a few quotations and the dust-cover summary. But the programmes are well worth listening to, and it is a pity that in order to fit it in on a Sunday evening a work like this has to be split in half. After one has been interrupted to listen to the Sunday Evening Talk and then the News, it is a little difficult to pick up the not-so-appetising thread of *Tosca* and follow it to its bitter end. But for a real crime thriller it can't be beaten.

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