

in *Jane Eyre*, among current radio serials, do we find the formula perfectly worked out.

## Head, Heart, Feet

I DON'T know quite what to make of a new fortnightly session from 4YA—*Moods in Music*, conducted by one "Musicus." I shall have to hear it several times before I make up my mind. The first session of half-an-hour began with a brief explanation of the emotional possibilities of music and the speaker also quoted a classification of music into "Music which appeals to the head; to the heart; or to the feet." The example chosen of foot-appeal, or



J. S. BACH

in other words, dance music, was (very sensibly) not a modern jazz recording, but a lively movement from Mozart. As "heart" music, too, I suppose the luscious Tauber record was appropriate, although I thought an opportunity was missed here of presenting something better (something from *Tristan and Isolde*, for example). But why not have rounded the circle with a little "head-music" in the shape of Bach, the ever-living example of intellectual appeal? However, it ill becomes me to cavil at a new session at first hearing, especially since "Musicus" seems to be presenting his session in an original and interesting manner. I am looking forward to further instalments.

## The Wrong Filling

AN example of a programme unimaginatively arranged was a recent Saturday night when three singers broadcast from the 4YA studio. The selections of the two women singers, Betty Naylor and Alison Tyrie, contained examples by the best modern British composers of songs. Miss Naylor gave us Armstrong Gibbs, Bantock, and Quilter. Miss Tyrie's recital was better still, since it contained four fine songs by composers whose works are not often represented on radio programmes, and for this reason her programme is worth quoting in full—"Epitaph" (Besley), "Close Thine Eyes" (Plumsted), "Beauty" (Herbert), "Defiled is my Name" (Greville). It is interesting to note that the words of the second song are by Charles the First, and the words of the last by the ill-fated Anne Boleyn; also that these two settings are by women composers. These four unusual and beautiful songs can be recommended to singers searching for something "different" and also worth while. But what was the point of sandwiching in between these carefully-chosen groups of items a bracket, by a third singer, of very ordinary ballad-type songs, which by contrast seemed even more banal than such songs usually do?

## Light Verse

IT is not often that I disagree with the selections of Professor T. D. Adams when he reads to me on Friday nights from 4YA; but his programme "Light Verse of Yesterday and To-day" contained, as an introduction, a long versification by someone whose name I didn't catch—in effect, an historical summary of English light verse. When I tuned in, the writer was talking about Chaucer; later in the programme (much later, it seemed, although perhaps the poem wasn't quite as long as I imagined), he arrived at A. A. Milne, by way of Pope, Byron, W. S. Gilbert, and a

host of others, all mentioned by name in a lengthy list of undistinguished excerpts. It was, no doubt, a quick way of covering the literary ground; but my complaint was that it took up too much of an all-too-short programme, and I was left with a feeling that I would have preferred to have had the time occupied by more of those delightful readings which concluded the entertainment—such gems of light verse as "The Dormouse and the Doctor," and "The Hippopotamus."

## The Bard Again

RECENTLY on the air I heard four famous passages from four famous plays—Mark Antony's Oration, The Potion Speech, Portia's Mercy Speech, and the Seven Ages of Man—all delivered in irreproachable style by Otis Skinner and Cornelia Otis Skinner. It is not the place here to comment on the merits of these particular speeches; it would be blasphemous even to suggest that Shakespeare drools a little in the Mercy Speech: but their popularity is beyond question. They are so well-known, in fact, that they really require a well-known name or two—apart from Shakespeare's—to assure them of a hearing. There are very few who want to hear "just anybody" speaking a passage they feel they know by heart themselves, but one listens to the Skinners just in case they've thought of a different way of delivering them. They haven't, of course—nobody could. But listening to Cornelia Otis Skinner, I found myself thinking (most irreverently) not of Portia nor of Juliet, but of the irrepressible heroine of *Our Hearts Were Young and Gay*—condemned by an unfeeling parent to wear an embarrassing safety pocket tied round her waist beneath her skirts. And for all their misadventures, the Shakespearean ladies in question never had to suffer any such indignity quite so hard to bear.

## Win or Lose

HAVING followed with interest the discussion on the merits and demerits of Cecil Lewis's adaptation of "The Rocking Horse Winner" I was glad to take the opportunity of hearing this play when it was broadcast from 3ZR the other evening. It was well-produced, well-acted, and kept as closely as possible to the original story; yet it was not, I think, a success. For a listener who does not know D. H. Lawrence or the original, I can well see that the only possible reaction might be derisive laughter—laughter at what is apparently a sensational stunt that doesn't quite come off. With audiences who hoot scornfully at most of the well-meaning attempts to invent new manifestations of the mysterious and the miraculous, script-writers have to cast about far and wide in the hope of finding something different. I think audiences could not be blamed for thinking the "Rocking Horse Winner" a new and particularly foolish venture. The "whispers" in the house sounded—invariably, I'm afraid—like an asthmatic beggar and his starving family. And because the approaching climax is suggested in the story by what for want of a better word we must call "atmosphere" in the play the end seems to be reached without any real climax at all. The whole significance of the original story just didn't get across. But whether it is nonsense, blasphemy, or a legitimate use of undoubtedly powerful ideas depends rather on individual opinion and understanding of D. H. Lawrence and his medium than on any impressions to be gained from a second-hand radio version.



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