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The congregation waits agog,
To hear the words of Rev. Mogg —
But Rev. Mogg has strained his throat
And left his Bants in his week-day coat
And the smirking choir boys sit and grin
While Rev. Mogg runs home for his tin.

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RADIO VIEWSREEL

What Our Commentators Say

Resurrection

THERE are two programmes on letters and their writers running from 2YA at the moment, the BBC programme *The Written Word*, on Sunday afternoon, and Norma Cooper's series *Letters Home* which is being heard on, Friday nights. If you are easily disturbed, as I am, you may well find that these sessions give food for a certain amount of concern, for their material is provided almost entirely by people who did not intend their letters for publication. Those of us who find it difficult at the best of times to put pen to paper to send that letter home would do well to ask ourselves whether it is worthwhile to take the risk of having sacrilegious hands prising open Aunt Susannah's moth-proof trunk to find out how life was lived in the Wellington of 1947, or whether it might not in the long run be better to make it a toll-call. Consider the case of Charlotte Godley, extracts from whose letters were read by Miss Cooper last Friday night. Picture her in billowing negligee seated at her writing-desk on a summer morning of 1850, racking her brains to think of some little item of her daily life, something not so sensationally topical that by the time it reaches *Home* in six months' time it will have lost all interest, nor anything so banal that it is unnecessary to write it. It is fortunate that the innocent Charlotte is, unlike Cicero, unconscious of the fact that a predatory posterity will seize upon and devour with relish every detail of her daily life. So she records unselfconsciously, the little snippets of life in the colony, her description of her tame kiwi, of the trip to Otaki, of the strange customs of colonials who "drop in unannounced," and as she seals each letter (does she write to Mother weekly, fortnightly, or monthly?) probably says with thankfulness, "Well, that's that." It isn't, which is just another of the things our pioneer women had to put up with.

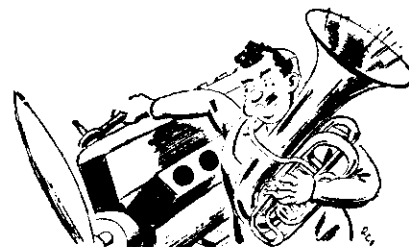
Two Plays

ADAPTATIONS of two W. W. Jacobs short stories were heard from Wellington stations last Sunday, and assuming both to be NZBS productions I was inclined to praise a policy of talent economy which ensured that accents laboriously conned and effortlessly tripped off the tongue for the first production *Alf's Dream* could be turned to good account later in the evening for *The Cook of the Gannet*. However, my theory was given its death blow when I realised that *The Cook of the Gannet* was no NZBS production—and that discovery left me at a complete loss to account for its presence on the air. *The Cook of the Gannet* is certainly not one of W. W. Jacobs's happiest or even saltiest comedies. Mrs. Blossom wins neither our sympathy, our respect, nor our laughter, and her alleged triumph over her gross supplanter is somewhat bathetic. Mrs. Pearce, in *Alf's Dream*, is a much more menacing figure, and her spectacular table-turning at the conclusion of the comedy wins our unwilling admiration as well as Alf's Uncle George's unwilling hand. This whole production had that authenticity of place and atmosphere which the NZBS production department consistently strives for and so often attains, and it was good to find this wealth of talent

employed in the interpretation of a nice human little comedy about one base motive triumphing over another.

Big Catering Job

WHEN I found a Sunday afternoon programme from 4ZB labelled *To Suit All Tastes*, I couldn't help wondering how the programme arranger intended to go about so colossal a task. I suppose some such title might be selected to describe the entire programme



output of all stations, National and Commercial; few critics would claim that there exists a listener who cannot at some time or other find something on the radio to suit his taste, the main argument being over the vexed question of whose taste shall occupy most radio time. Since it isn't possible to *Suit All Tastes* in one programme, the next best thing is to do what 4ZB is evidently intending, and *Suit One Taste At a Time*. On this Sunday it was the turn of the Brass Band addicts. In the announcement we were told that the brass band is very popular, that many composers of note have written especially for the medium, and that various distinguished composers have been pleased to accept the invitation to conduct the Massed Bands at the British festival which used to be held in the Crystal Palace. All this can be allowed as fact, but I still don't like brass bands, and when the Fairey Aviation Works Band began its programme with Kenneth Wright's "English Rhapsody" and "Scherzo," I felt that both would have been so much more attractive if scored for an orchestra. After two items, I confess I switched off. This will be discounted by band enthusiasts as merely the bigoted highbrowism of an orchestral enthusiast—but it would help all tastes, I think, if 4ZB would print in the programmes an indication as to what section of listeners it is catering for under the title, *To Suit All Tastes*. I'll be listening on the Sunday when they present Symphony Orchestras.

The Working Week

FAR from being conscious of the hell we commentators inhabit (to quote Mr. Dermot Cathie), I thoroughly enjoy being a radio commentator. But this week I am rather conscious of Programmes I Need Not Have Listened To. (Moral—never mislay a Listener.) On Tuesday, the Pig Talk ("The Freezing Industry") obviously intended for stouter ears than mine; the same day, an Appointment with Fear ("The Gong Cried Murder") which I need not have kept, since Fear failed to turn up anyway. On Thursday, a rather dull debate on the Dairy Bill. On Friday, a good three-quarters of *The Gold Diggers*, billed as a witty comedy, certainly lavishly decorated with bright boudoir backchat, but, like a palindrome, having an end implicit in its beginning. On