

announced, "Ranfurly Shield (2nd Challenge of Season) Southland v. North Auckland (from Rugby Park)." This was printed in the issue which appeared in the shops before the Big Game (1st Challenge of Season) when, as 21,000 spectators and probably an equal number of radio listeners now know, Southland lost the famous Shield to Otago after having kept it down there for the last nine years in the deep south. Obviously the writer of the fixtures for *The Listener* couldn't have known who would win the first challenge, yet he calmly gave us his unequivocal prophecy by public announcement—was the gentleman born in Invercargill, perhaps? Anyhow, it was a great game as heard over the air; I don't remember hearing anything like the cheering of the Otago supporters when their team got ahead with only 10 minutes to go. But why, on conclusion of the match, did the band burst triumphantly into the Invercargill March? Was it just tradition, or, with the certainty of victory (basing their confidence, perhaps, on the idea that nothing seen in print can possibly be mistaken), had they just omitted to practice "Hail Caledonia"?

Organ Recital

USUALLY lovers of organ music have to be content with hearing the instrument in the background of a broadcast church service, but a recent Sunday afternoon brought listeners to 2YA an all-too-short recital of organ and vocal music by Murray and Lyla Fastier. They wisely concentrated their attention on the 18th Century, the golden age of organ music, and on Bach, with two excursions into Handel. The result was emotionally and aesthetically satisfying, though I should have preferred to plunge into the next programme with echoes of the Bach Prelude and Fugue in my ears rather than the Handel concerto. Lyla Fastier's soprano has a depth and dignity which make it particularly well-suited to organ accompaniment.

The Norths at Home

OF all the radio characters who have a regular date with Christchurch listeners, my sympathy goes out most of all to Mr. and Mrs. North. This unfortunate pair have a quite remarkable affinity for corpses—three or four in an evening is nothing to them. And in spite of this over-indulgence in the sensational, they are not in the least blasé about it all. One could well understand Pam, when confronted with her 47th corpse this season, merely yawning a little. But no: she manages the appropriate reaction, the scream, the hesitant "Is he—dead?" as she gazes wonderingly at the honeycomb effect of the bullet-holes. Hardened listeners may find their suitable reaction a little more difficult to come by. It is not easy to register surprise when Pam finds a corpse behind the curtain—a murderer in the baby's crib—a body in the bath; these things happen to the Norths every day of their radio lives. Of course, there always remains the question of "Whodunit?" but as the wise murder-fan knows, all things, even the answer to that, come to him who listens to the end.

Requiem

IT is not often that the hardened listener pipes an eye at the conclusion of a serial. Usually he is not present at the obsequies, losing interest perhaps after the first 20 appointments, and thereafter restricting his appreciation to an involuntary, "What, still going strong?" if in the course of his knob-

twiddling he should chance to hear the once familiar voices. Yet final instalments are significant occasions in the radio listener's life — sometimes merely because they happen, like Haley's comet, only once in a lifetime, or so it probably appeared to followers of *The Japanese Houseboy* or *Eb and Zeb*. Less often a final episode is significant because it is in itself artistically satisfying and also because its finality evokes in listeners genuine regret for the passing of something beautiful and significant in their listening lives. 2YD's *Man of Property* was such a serial, and its final episode the swan-song script-writers dream of but seldom achieve. Now we are to hear *Anne of Green Gables*, who will probably have a longer life and, in her own way, possibly as respected a one. But her harum-scarum youth provides at the moment too glaring a contrast to the epic stability which was lost to us with the passing of Old Jolyon.

Miniatures

TWO programmes on the same Sunday afternoon from 4YA had similar titles; the first a studio recital by the pianist Gil Dech, "Miniatures of the Masters," the second a BBC production featuring a group of performers (including Reginald Kell, clarinet), "Music in Miniature." Of the two, I enjoyed Gil Dech's recital best. It consisted of a group of true miniatures (taking that word to represent a tiny but perfect work of art in any medium), and all the items were taken from the same early period of musical history. There were some delicately constructed yet charmingly effective pieces here. (John Blow, Couperin, Rameau, etc.) and the pianist did not at any time let us forget that the true medium of presentation for such works is the harpsichord. The second programme was equally interesting but represented no special type of music or period (Haydn being in the same programme, for instance, as the "Keel Row"); and since none of the works presented was in any exact sense miniature in style, length, or conception, I could see no reason for the title of the programme. This "Music in Miniature," however, has a sub-title, "Light Classics," and proves excellently that good music can be "light" without lowering itself as far as standards of performance and musical value are concerned.

The Masque Revealed

MY LADY has recently been favoured with a series of programmes from 3YA on the English Theatre—and if activity with the broom or egg-beater suffered as a result of this morning session, one can only say it was well worth it. The last of the series dealt with the Court Masque—that elegant frivolity so beloved of Elizabeth's courtiers. Told chiefly from the lips of the stage-manager—and is he not the housewife of the theatre menage?—it gave an excellent impression of the elaborate machinery these productions required, of the constant demand for "something new" in the way of spectacular effects, and of how, with the aid of Mr. Inigo Jones's sets and a lot of ingenuity, this was achieved. From the other side of the footlights one caught a glimpse of the intoxicating effect of the music and dancing, set among fountains that really played and clouds that really floated, while the elaborate flatery of showers of blossoms and snowballs made of scented lambs' wool descended on the heads of the courtly audiences.



Interesting Teapots

No. 3: Chelsea

This very rare teapot is one produced by a pottery at Chelsea, London, about 1745. The curious design of a Chinaman holding a parrot, which is the spout, was carried out in a plain, cream-coloured porcelain with a high glaze.

BELL

Such china as this sells at auction for hundreds of pounds, but remember—your usual teapot will make good tea if you put in BELL.

THE TEA OF GOOD TASTE

6.7



SUTHERLAND & COMPANY, CHRISTCHURCH