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BBC Religious Plays

TIX plays, marking the first attempt in radio to present the individual stories of the Old Testament prophets in a connected and intelligible sequence, will shortly be heard from Station 2YA. Seton Pollock and Wilfrid Grantham, who devised and wrote the series (which has been recorded by the BBC Transcription Service from the original broadcast), set themselves to re-create the story of the Hebrew prophets from its beginnings among the mists of early history to its climax in the coming of Christianity.

Among the problems which had to be solved to achieve their aim the authors were confronted with the necessity for devising a style which, without being consciously archaic or aggressively modern, would blend perfectly with the fine language of the Old Testament oracles while, at the same time, revealing the sharp relevance of the prophetic insight to the problems of to-day.

"Creative Inspiration"

It was not enough to write six plays about six great men. Though each script can stand entirely by itself, the authors sought to give continuity to the whole series by providing a fixed observation point from which the listener could watch the march of events through the centuries. The use of the enigmatical personality of John the Baptist as this link (described by one London critic as a "creative inspiration") transforms the sequence of episodes into one drama. As play succeeds play, the personality of John steadily takes shape, his spiritual development serving as a mirror to the development of the prophetic drama itself. And in the last play, John steps forward to dominate the stage and to gather into one pattern the strands of the five earlier plays.

Some may wonder what use it is to bring before the public a work dealing with men who lived so long ago. All of them (except John) lived long before Socrates and two of them were elive when Rome was founded. But the chief effect of the series on the listener is

(continued on next page)

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