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companies visiting New Zealand, the choreography of Robert Helpmann will mean little to any listeners unless they are students of the dance and have studied the technical descriptions of the ballet; likewise, descriptions of the theme, the costuming, and the action produce no authentic mental picture of what must be a striking and significant ballet when actually seen. All that can come to us by means of radio is the music. It doesn't help our appreciation of Bliss's score to be told, for instance, that the chorus are at one place wearing replicas of Adam's costume, or that in another place one of the *dramatis personae* "writhes on the floor in an agony of gestation, and the curtain falls"—we merely mutter, "And about time, too!" Operatic commentary, although necessary to enable listeners to follow what the singers are singing about, is a trial to the listener's patience; how less than necessary, then, is a description of the antics of dancers we cannot even see! Until the day of television dawns, it is surely better to confine comment on ballet music to a mere statement of the ballet's creators, and a very brief preliminary account of its general theme.

### Racial Nonsense

MOST of us have felt, especially since Hitler first began to exalt the Nordics, that the idea of racial superiority is nonsense; but it was good to have our opinions confirmed in no uncertain manner in a talk from 4YA by Dr. W. E. Adams, Professor of Anatomy at the Otago Medical School. Many people, however, while stating their abhorrence of the Teutonic idea of a Master Race, will shirk the implicit assumption that if no race is superior to their own, then no race is inferior. Especially when the vexed question of the colour bar arises, the same hater of Hitler will claim that certain of the coloured races are "undeveloped," "backward," and so on, which is merely another way of saying that they are inferior to himself. Dr. Adams made short work of such woolly thinking. In all ways, physical and psychological, he said, the difference between races is negligible compared with the differences between individuals belonging to the same race. In any case, a nation is not synonymous with a race; migration, conquest, and other factors ensure pretty successfully that no race remains a pure stock, and Defoe was right when he referred to "that heterogeneous thing, an Englishman"—W. S. Gilbert notwithstanding.

### Duel With Ink

I WAS vastly entertained when 4YA presented a BBC feature, *This Correspondence Must Now Cease*, in which two redoubtable writers crossed pens (a mightier thing often than the crossing of swords) in the public Press; no less a correspondence than that between Benjamin Disraeli and the Editor of *The Globe*. The Editor declared that

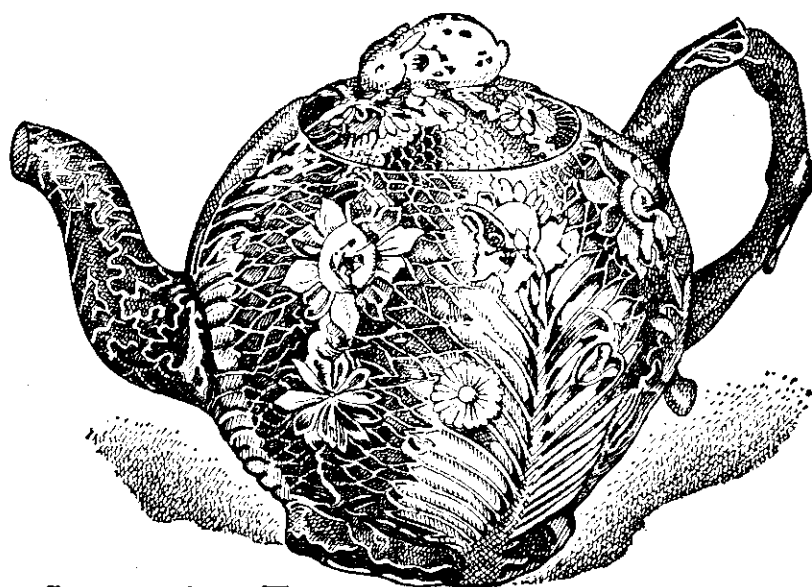
Disraeli's political coat was reversible, and accused him of attempting to get into Parliament as a joint of the tail of the party represented by Mr. O'Connell. Mr. Disraeli, in answering, began in mildly gentlemanly fashion, merely stating that he had never made application to Mr. O'Connell, and that his opinions had never changed. But gradually we find the correspondence warming up. *The Globe* finds itself disinclined to break a butterfly on a wheel; Disraeli dismisses the simile as being as trite as the phoenix. *The Globe* quotes O'Connell himself; Disraeli accuses it of quoting documents which don't exist, says of the Editor that he is indulging in "rheumy rhetoric," and adds that the Whig Party shall never subdue him with the jawbone of an ass. But this time the listeners (as possibly were also the original readers of this correspondence) are completely unconcerned as to who is telling lies, but are relishing the ease with which, seemingly, Mr. Disraeli continues to beat his opponent on points. Disraeli is obviously enjoying himself immensely. I listened with the liveliest satisfaction to this programme and only hope the future instalments will be as good.

### World Theatre

BY now most listeners will have had the chance of hearing several plays in the *World Theatre* series, but I have heard one only—Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*, tightly packed into the hour allotted to it. I can think of few plays more difficult to do justice to on the air than this, and it was magnificently done. But what struck me most forcibly was not the technique of broadcasting or presentation that goes to make such a play a success, but the technique of listening. Lovers of drama who are interested by this series, but who give little time to listening as a rule, may well find that radio listening is an art in itself, and one not easily acquired. Even the regular listener may find that productions on such an ambitious scale as the *World Theatre* series tax his listening capabilities. But if anything can prevent the radio from being a mere soporific background, this is the sort of programme that will.

### On the Grand Scale

THE story of Benjamin Haydon is summed up in the title of the dramatised version of his life, *The Large Canvas*, produced last year by the BBC for the centennial anniversary of his death. When a painter sets out to paint the largest canvases he can cram into his studio, fame of some sort is bound to be his. One authority I consulted reduced his biography to this: "Haydon, Benjamin Robert (1786-1846), an ambitious historical painter and lecturer, on art, who produced a number of paintings of sacred subjects, which were too large in scope for the popular appreciation. Eventually, in a fit of disappointment, he committed suicide." On those bare bones, padded out with a few facts from his autobiography the BBC has built a moving drama. Haydon appears less ludicrous than tragic, less of a crank than an idealist, never once a joke. It is all so well done that the listener finds himself wishing the large canvas had not been reduced to a cameo.



### Interesting Teapots

#### No. 4: Whieldon

Thomas Whieldon, the Staffordshire potter, was first to develop decoration by means of coloured glazes about 1740. He made teapots that resembled cauliflowers and other vegetables, and he introduced earthenware table sets exactly imitating agate and tortoiseshell. (The "woodland" teapot shown is in green and brown, and the knob on top is a yellow rabbit).

# BELL

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