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Victorian fire-extinguishers. But even for us it is not hard to see that these people had of necessity something we lack. They had to provide their own entertainment, instead of being mere passive audiences, as we so often are to-day; and (or so they tell us) they weren't in nearly such a hurry to get anywhere! This last I find a little difficult to believe: they were in just as much of a hurry, the only difference being that they didn't get there as fast. The difference between whipping up the pony and stepping on the accelerator I refuse to regard as anything more than *autre temps, autre mœurs*: which, being interpreted, means you'll probably be late for your appointment in any case!

Stella and Swift

THE love affairs of great men have always been fair game to their biographers, and the more they are shrouded in the mists of time and discretion, the more relentlessly are they pursued. Esther Johnson, to whom Jonathan Swift addressed his letters in the *Journal to Stella*, seems at least to have given them a run for their money. It was inevitable that the talk on Swift in the series *Diarists and Letter-Writers* should deal very largely with the question of Stella, and of their relationship: but I liked particularly Rose Macaulay's method of dealing with it. She states the various conclusions that have been drawn by one person or another from the available facts—that Swift was really married to Stella, for instance, or that they never met without a third person—but she refrains from associating herself with any one of these conflicting views. The big advantage of this is, of course, that it leaves the listener free to form his own views, cynical, sentimental, or what-have-you. Sometimes I find it hard to condone the publication of letters such as these with all their wealth of intimacy, their endearments, and the "faintly embarrassing" baby-talk that Swift uses on occasions. But by way of consolation it is certainly true that the *Journal to Stella* shows a side of Swift that is as rare as it is human and attractive.

Co-ordination

A PRESS report quotes a certain section of public opinion as saying that radio programmes are getting worse and worse. I wonder what sort of programmes we should have if that section of the public were put in charge of broadcasting for a while. As far as my own local listening is concerned, one station at least shows a steady change for the better; this is Station 4YA, which lately has exemplified the art of gradually getting out of the rut. An example of what I mean was the recent evening on which 4YA and 4YO worked together in complete harmony, dovetailing two programmes into an evening's satisfying entertainment, the only improvement on which would have been their presentation from the one station. At 7.15, Mary Martin, lecturer in music at Otago University, spoke on "The Revival of English Music; the English Tradition," reminding us of the fact that there was a time when England led the world musically, when a lack of a practical knowledge of music was

a prominent gap in one's liberal education, and music was not regarded, as now too often happens, as an extra "frill." Miss Martin traces the course of English music from earliest times to the present day, and held out high hopes for the future. To find this talk enlarged and illustrated at 9.0 p.m. from 4YO, in a full hour of music ranging from Morley to Purcell and Handel, was as delightful as it was unexpected. Careful listeners, too, would connect these programmes with others recently heard from Dunedin stations, notably the very fine broadcast by the choir of the Dunedin Music Students' Club, a group of young singers who managed their difficult programme of madrigals in a style worthy of much more experienced performers. Congratulations to the unseen organiser responsible for this plethora of good music and its co-ordination in presentation.

Light and Bright

IT is not very often that I listen after ten o'clock at night with any alertness to features on the radio; if I begin the evening's listening at 7.30, by 9.30 my interest and concentration are at a low ebb, and the entertainment offered later than this must be either soporific or hilarious to avoid the complete switch-off. "Let The Navy Try" came to me via the bedside radio at 10.0 p.m., and was, perhaps, worthy of presentation at an earlier hour. This episode concerned a couple of matelots who re-staged the drama of the wooden horse of Troy, by penetrating into the camp of the wily Jap. bandits disguised as the front and back legs of a prop. stage horse, thereby rescuing a couple of true-blue British spinsters from the penalties of non-payment of the ransom-money. Story, music, commentary, acting, were all histrionically exaggerated, and the Navy suffered an unmerciful ragging at its own hands. Light and bright entertainment of this sort is hard to come by, most attempts at it proving disastrously over-weighted, and sinking dismally to the depths of that ocean which drowns all laboured humour.

Before Queen Anne Died

AFTER a surfeit of the more romantic royalties (Josephine in *Empress of Destiny* and Marie Antoinette in a recent instalment of the *Romance of Famous Jewels*), it was good to come back to Mary Wigley's homelier Queen Anne, who was featured in last Monday's talk on *Sports of Famous Queens*. Miss Wigley gave life and personality to a character whose misfortune it is to be regarded as even deadlier than most historical personages. Queen Anne, we are told, was very fond of hunting, and used to pursue the quarry in a high chaise drawn by a single horse. She was devoted to horse-racing, and it was she who started the practice of giving a gold cup to the winner. (The fact that the only time a horse of hers won she had lapsed into the two-day coma which preceded her death seemed to me even more typical of the misfortune that hounded this sovereign than the fact that she had borne and lost 19 children). Miss Wigley is well on the way to qualifying as the Suetonius of radio, since she is not averse to passing on scandalous gossip defamatory to her subject (Queen Anne was known among undergraduates as Brandy Nan; she wore pearl necklets very tight about the throat; and every day would eat more cake than was good for her). A most amusing morning talk.

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