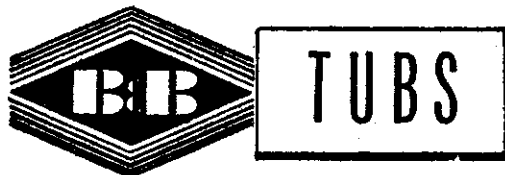


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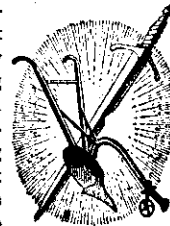
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## RADIO VIEWSREEL What Our Commentators Say

### Swords and Ploughshares

ONE of the many interesting stories of the Home Front in war-time which have reached us since then was *Swords and Ploughshares*, the story of an adventure in steel production, broadcast recently from 3YA. It is, quite simply, the story of a factory, built and organised by a handful of men who relied for their labour on willing but inexperienced local help. It is not a specially dramatic or exciting story. No bombs fell on the factory, nobody did anything specially heroic. But when manpower was so short that there were no men left for the exacting and dangerous job of pouring the steel, two girls volunteered; and that seems to me to be just about as exciting and heroic as anything ever is. There has been no attempt to varnish this whole account with a coating of drama and romance. The facts stand by themselves as a prosaic description of the fortunes of a steel factory, which was created for the purpose of making bomb cases and which continues to-day by making farm implements.



### Songs to Sing O

A PROGRAMME well worth hearing was the selection of songs presented recently by the Christchurch Orpheus Choir. A bracket of four songs by Alec Rowley with which the choir opened probably showed them at their best. The assurance with which they attacked their first number, "Deep Water Folk," gave promise of better things to come, which was not altogether fulfilled. In sharp contrast to the modern composers represented in the earlier part of the programme, Gibbons' favourite old Elizabethan madrigal, "The Silver Swan," was an interesting choice in spite of the fact that this was less successful than the choir's previous efforts. The interruption caused by the 9.0 o'clock weather forecast was an unqualified nuisance.

### Designing Men

IT is a curious feature of our civilisation that in what is usually considered the women's sphere, as in cooking and dressmaking, it is the men who excel. Dorothy Neal White's talk on Mainbocher, in the series *The Gentleman Is a Dressmaker*, gave me much food for thought on the subject. It appears that few of these great designers (it is an insult—one they are very sensitive to— to call them "dressmakers") have adopted their profession through any means other than that of trial and error. The French-American Mainbocher, for instance, tried almost every form of art before he eventually discovered in himself a talent and a taste for dress designing. But why should the highest positions in an art of such feminine import be held by men? The answer might seem to be that men have better natural taste than women, but after a critical survey of the ties, socks,

and pullovers that walked past me in the street the other day, I am inclined to doubt it. Something more nearly approaching the truth may be found in the fact that to make of dress designing an art in the true sense of the word a certain amount of detachment is necessary. And in a woman, where clothes and other women are concerned, there is as little likelihood of finding detachment as there is of finding an orange grove in the Antarctic.

### About Bores—But Not Boring

PROFESSOR T. D. ADAMS, in his weekly readings from 4YA, recently gave listeners some extracts from the essays of Richard Steel and Joseph Addison. When I tuned to this programme, I found the speaker in the middle of a session of the Trumpet Club, in which the conversation of a small group of average bores is depicted with such a suggestion of continual repetition that the listener, like the author, could not help regarding the occasion as a good substitute for a pre-bedtime nap. The programme finished with the evergreen and always appealing description of Sir Roger de Coverley and his famous dictum—"there was much to be said on both sides." The straightforward prose of these extracts has been held up to young writers many a time as an excellent model, and I should like to recommend it to certain writers on music whose tendency to rhapsodise is apt to get the better of their love of lucidity. A splendid test of any writer's skill is how he stands up to being read aloud, and Professor Adams ably demonstrated in these readings the abiding quality of good clear prose. A neat ending to the programme was the performance of "Sir Roger de Coverley" (the tune inspired, we are told, by our hero's great-grandfather); and the fact that this tune is still heard with pleasure indicates that music, like prose, best endures when it is most lucid and simple, with a style so unaffected as to conceal the art which contrived it.

### Quiz

AN unexpectedly amusing programme was *Heather Mixture*, a BBC transcription heard recently from 4YA, in which Scottish artists and visiting guests provided a "mixed bag" of entertainment. One of the best things was the



quiz. There is a vast difference in the quiz programmes heard from Britain on shortwave ("Twenty Questions" being a good example of what I mean), and the average quiz programme heard from any

(continued on next page)