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# THINGS TO COME

## A Run Through The Programmes

### Boris Godounov

MOUSSORGSKI is generally considered to have been, in the determined nationalism of his musical style and outlook, the most typical member of the Russian Five. He was also one of the most gifted. Yet as late as 1905 his music was dismissed by critics as "wilfully eccentric and barbarously ugly," and the fate suffered by the score of his opera *Boris Godounov* (which will be heard from 3YA at 9.22 p.m. this Sunday, April 4) is typical of the resentment his bold, unconventional methods aroused in contemporary musical circles. *Boris Godounov* tells the tragic story of the downfall and death



of a crime-haunted Tsar, and the original 1869 score, revised by the composer in 1872, was successful with audiences. But in 1896 a ruthlessly abridged version was published by Rimsky-Korsakov, and a second revision in 1908. In the latter version the opera became world-famous. The original score was not republished until 1928, when all Moussorgski's innovations and alleged blunders had become a part of current idiom. His care for realism in *Boris Godounov* and other works was one of the major causes of their unusual sequences of chords and modulations, bold short cuts, and avoidance of customary transitions, but the modal scales of Russian folk-music, its melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic peculiarities, also play a most important part.

### Peace

NEXT Wednesday, April 7, from 10.0 a.m. to 10.0 p.m., the National Council of Women of New Zealand will hold a peace rally in Christchurch's Civic Theatre, and at 7.30 p.m. on the previous day (Tuesday, April 6), 3YA will broadcast a short talk by the local president, Mary McLean, called *Women's Peace Rally*. In her talk Miss McLean will explain some of the reasons for the rally being held. Although peacemaking is generally regarded as a man's job, the International Council of Women has always been closely identified with the idea of peace through arbitration, and as far back as 1899 it sent a resolution to the first Hague Peace Conference avowing the "earnest support of their efforts by the women of the world." When the first assembly of the United Nations was sitting in London in 1945 the 17 women delegates and advisers, led by Mrs. Roosevelt, appealed to the women of the world for support, and once again the I.C.W. pledged its whole-hearted endeavour.

### Unexpected Pleasures

READING a book of sermons may seem to many of us a rather dull way of filling in our leisure hours,

especially if the sermons were written in the 18th Century. But for any bibliophile or browser in second-hand bookshops, there are countless unexpected pleasures to be found in many old books, and this is the theme of three talks by Dennis McElDowney which will be broadcast from 2YA, starting at 7.15 p.m. on Thursday, April 8. The title of the series is *Unexpected Pleasures*, and in the first talk, "Variations on the Theme of Joseph Butler," Mr. McElDowney tells us about some of the pleasures he has derived from his 1729 copy (second edition) of Bishop Butler's *Sermons*. It is not so much the contents that delight him as the amusing dedication, the way the book is printed, its old type-face, binding, and so on. The second talk, "Literary Advertisement," describes some of the unusual things that are sometimes found in the lists of publishers' and other advertisements that used to be put at the ends of books. The third, "Beside Reference," is about some amusing anecdotes found in old-fashioned reference books and cyclopedias.

### The "Good Old Days"

IN this era of uneasy peace when national and international troubles incline us to the view that we are most unfortunate to be born into such a period, it is cheering to turn back the pages of history a few decades and see what life was like for the ordinary man and woman then. A good picture of past times is given, not directly, but by inference, in the series of talks by Dorothy Freed, *Women in Politics*, now being heard from 1YA at 10.40 a.m. on Tuesdays. In her next talk on April 6 the speaker will deal with a period of less than 100 years ago, when the idea of property rights for women was revolutionary, when a discussion on women's suffrage would attract Members to the House of Commons because such a ludicrous topic ensured a hilarious debate, when voluntary and unpaid help by philanthropic women who wished to improve the lot of poorhouse inhabitants was refused by the Poor Law Boards. The talk will relate how courageous women and sympathetic men worked to secure the rights most of us take for granted to-day.

### Controversy at 4YA

THE first of a new series of controversial broadcasts will be heard from 4YA at 9.35 p.m. on Friday, April 9. In this session Alex Graham will preside over a panel considering a topic about which there is frequently a good deal of discussion—"Realism or Reticence in Novels, Films and Plays." The speakers will be Mrs. Richard White, a writer of children's books; John Moffett, newspaper editor; A. L. Haddon, principal of the Bible College, Glen Leith, and secretary of the Otago branch of the National Council of Churches; and Dr. Basil Howard, liaison officer at the University of Otago. Subjects to be discussed later in the year include: "Should New Zealand Do More to Prevent its Export of Brains?", "Are New Zealanders Complacent?", "Is the New Zealand University Graduate Uneducated?" and "That Bureaucracy is a Menace to the Future Progress of New Zealand."

## ALSO WORTH NOTICE

### MONDAY

1YA, 8.5 p.m.: BBC Brains Trust.  
2YA, 7.15 p.m.: Talk, "The People of Fiji."

### TUESDAY

2YN, 8.31 p.m.: Ballet Music  
3YA, 8.0 p.m.: Civic Reception to Professor Baillie.

### WEDNESDAY

2YA, 8.0 p.m.: Play, "The Man Who Feared the Gallows."  
3YA, 8.12 p.m.: South African Royal Tour.

### THURSDAY

2YH, 8.0 p.m.: Hastings Male Chorus.  
3YA, 8.0 p.m.: Story, "Fog Over the Baltic."

### FRIDAY

1YA, 7.56 p.m.: "Secret Correspondence."  
2YN, 9.3 p.m.: Grand Opera.

### SATURDAY

4YA, 8.0 p.m.: National Orchestra and Isobel Baillie.  
4YZ, 8.30 p.m.: "The Quaker Girl."

### SUNDAY

1YX, 8.30 p.m.: Choral Programme.  
4YO, 9.1 p.m.: Music by Haydn.

### Verdi's Falstaff

WHEN he was nearly 80 Verdi was asked to write the music for *Falstaff*, but only after long consideration did he agree to compose what was to be his last great work. Two things finally persuaded him—he had always wanted to write a comic opera, and Arrigo Boito, the only first-rank literary man with whom he ever collaborated, presented him with what is possibly the best libretto of its kind in existence. To-day *Falstaff* is usually regarded as one of the major musical miracles. "No score has ever surpassed or even equalled it," the critic Francis Toye says, "for sheer brilliance, for plasticity, for consummate blending of words and music. The music is as clear as a fine summer morning, but it moves with such rapidity that its beauties are gone almost before we have time to enjoy them. Perhaps that is why it has rarely enjoyed popular success." A full recording of *Falstaff* will be heard from 2YA on Sunday, April 11, starting at 8.5 p.m.

### Sleuths in Shorts

THE BBC Children's Hour producers have made a close study of thrillers. They realise that youngsters always have demanded thrills and always will, and they see to it that they are given entertainment that is robust yet harmless. Norman and Henry Bones, the boy detectives, for instance, have been favourites with listeners to the BBC Children's Hour ever since they made their first appearance in 1944. Some of their adventures have now been issued by the BBC Transcription Service and *The Giant's Head* is a good example. It is full of trooks as crooked as Lauder's walking-stick, of mysterious comings and goings on a lonely moor, and has enough suspense to keep children absorbed for three-quarters-of-an-hour. Norman Bones is the creation of a schoolmaster, Anthony C. Wilson. *The Giant's Head* will be heard from 3YL at 5.45 p.m. on Saturday, April 10.