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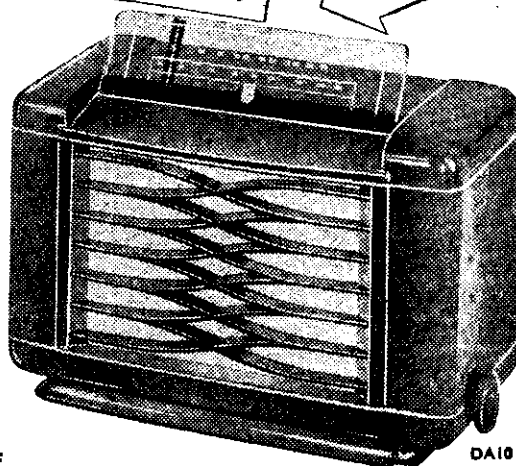
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RADIO VIEWSREEL What Our Commentators Say

Don't Go Near the Water

SOME caginess was exhibited by each of the four speakers in the recent Monday night discussion from 2YA: "Should the State Patronise Literature?" There seemed general agreement that the State could not find a worthier object for its financial consideration, and that the State was to be commended for a seemly action. But none of the four literati (J. A. Lee, A. R. D. Fairburn, Dr. Musgrove, Maurice Duggan) was disposed to take first plunge into the cornucopian waters, at any rate not without a lot of feeling round to see if there were any leading strings attached, or, to cadge a metaphor from Mr. Fairburn, without knowing whether you could swim and how deep the water was. First to lower a cautious tone was Mr. Lee, with the sensible suggestion, germane to him throughout the discussion, that the State should subsidise authors on the basis of the number of times their works were issued to library subscribers. Mr. Fairburn, next in line, remained aloof, suspicious of the flood's enticing gleam. (Much better to trust oneself to the private patron's private bath, if available, you at least knew where you were.) Mr. Duggan, quoting Iceland plunged in a whole foot, but later was infected by Mr. Fairburn's caution. Dr. Musgrove thought the whole project a good idea, but was more concerned with the working out of a TVA to control the stream than with taking the plunge himself. At the end of the half-hour, when the sportsmaster announced that the swimming period was over, the boys remarked in well-bred surprise that they had but touched the fringes of the problem. Certainly (wisely perhaps) none of them was wet all over.



Talks on the Moriori

FRANK SIMPSON is to be congratulated on his excellent series of Monday night talks from 2YA *The Story of the Moriori*. The many listeners who have hitherto known of the Chathams only as the place the depressions come from will now be unable to hear a weather report without paying the tribute of a passing sigh to the former inhabitants of these islands. The Morioris seem to have lived in the kind of golden age lauded by the sterner New England philosophers, since neither climate nor the availability of food was conducive to lotus-eating. Driven from New Zealand some 600 years ago, they settled down to a frugal but peaceful existence. War among the tribes was early outlawed, and individual disputes were settled relatively amicably with a type of quarter-staff. Into this Thoreau-esque community plunge first the sealers and whalers, later the invading Maoris, and by the eighteen-sixties, when the slow machinery of democratic government in New Zealand sets in progress legislation to save the Moriori, help was too little, and came too late. The disturbing effect upon me of this story of an inoffensive people's enslavement and extermination owes something

of course to Mr. Simpson's skill in the telling, but even dispassionately considered, these events are historically too close for comfort, and a dreadful warning of the folly of prematurely turning *meres* into line-sinkers.

Nice Little Tight Little Play

SALOON BAR was longer than most of the NZBS plays, but retained interest throughout its length, being one of those "nice little, tight little" plays where the plot's the thing. It was a plot, indeed, which thickened throughout, but the outcome was never in doubt. Virtue triumphed, evil was overcome, wrong set right at the last hour, in the fashion approved by the would-be reformers of radio thrillers, serials, and plays. The whole action of this play takes place in a saloon bar, the habitudes of which foreground to down a pint or two, and discuss a local murder. The innocent accused is a friend of all present, and who should come in while they are talking but his girl-friend. During the evening, by a series of coincidences unlikely to happen just so conveniently in any medium other than the radio play, the facts of the boy-friend's innocence are proven and the real murderer is likewise unmasked—much to the satisfaction of the bar-frequenters, who have been having a whale of a good time playing amateur detective. The continued impetus of the plot carries along in fine style, but in between the following of clues and the revelations of virtue and villainy there is time for some character-drawing which the members of the NZBS cast managed well. It was a much better production than most of the thriller plays we get from various stations and it is obvious that when the NZBS can turn out so good a piece as this, there should be no need to import the less-attractive article of similar type. (The trouble is, I suppose, that the NZBS studios just couldn't produce the quantity required to meet the demand.)

Gallows Wedding

KITTY BROWN of Bristol, the Eden Philpotts play presented from 2YC on a recent Sunday, could hardly be described as a Fast Piece. She has, however, many good points, but her virtues are apt to be forgotten in the dreadful five minutes, each sixty seconds long, which intervene between *dénouement* and final curtain. The plot concerns an almost ex-highwayman, Joe Blackadder, a cheerful extrovert about whom there is nothing Starkadderish, and the efforts of his old acquaintance, Kate Brown of Bristol, to save him from the noose by a gallows wedding. Third prop of the plot is the Bishop of Radchester, a saintly but gullible gentleman obviously due to be played for a sucker. Unfortunately Kate's little secret becomes an open one from the first moment she opens her mouth, for no one who has as much as heard of the Widow Twankey can fail to pierce the disguise of that



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