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## RADIO VIEWSREEL (Cont'd)

(continued from previous page)

programme he talked of feeling haunted as a child by the names and presence of the mountains standing eternally outside his door, adding their weight to the dark, leaning terrors of the night. He remembered the homely violence of the North Countryman, his grandfather, who frequently remarked on the softness of the South and taught him to point a loaded gun at his grandmother. "M-U-R-D-E-R, murder," said Pritchett, the man, after the fashion of Squeers, "Go and do some." Although nobody knew him when he returned, he felt he had completed an incomplete experience, and he compared the incomplete experiences of childhood with the incomplete Romantic attitude to life and literature, against which moderns are impelled to react. It is arguable, of course, that his reaction in particular against the M-U-R-D-E-R, murder, of his childhood, became his reaction in general against the Romantic attitude when he grew up. But we should be grateful for whatever gave him his sensitivity, because it opens doors for ordinary people through which they would not otherwise see.

### Farrell in Dunedin

IT is quite out of keeping, now, to offer any criticism of Richard Farrell with reservations as to his age. A prodigy is often indulged by lenient audiences on account of his tender age, and being nurtured too gently, grows up to be a disappointment when judged in comparison with his fellow-virtuosi. Nothing of the sort can be said of Richard Farrell. He demands, by the maturity of his playing judgment by the most exacting standards, and it is accurate to say that by any standard he is a most compelling performer. The electric effect of his



radio performance, its precision and vitality, were obvious signs that he will in time occupy one of the highest places in the ranks of concert celebrities. I certainly wished myself that he had chosen a "straight" Bach selection instead of the colossal Busoni arrangement of the Chaconne; and I could easily have done without the Chopin Sonata (one by Mozart or Beethoven would have been less of an incongruity after the Bach). But I hailed the inclusion of the Hindemith, and find it heartening that this pianist likes playing the moderns. Whether we like them or not doesn't matter; until pianists include their works regularly in concert repertoires, audiences here can have little familiarity with them, and are therefore not capable of totally unbiased judgment.

### The Shows of Yesteryear

THERE are times when melancholy overcomes me at the thought of the evanescence of radio programmes. The listener shares with the film-goer an inability to pursue the beloved object down the dusty corridors of the stack room, but whereas the filmgoer is occasionally accorded the grace of the return season, there is too seldom any return season for the programme addict. True, *History's Unsolved Mysteries* and *Popular Fallacies*, after proving a commercial success, have had a provincial airing from 2YD; old ITMA

programmes have stolen incognito upon the delighted ear in Thursday night's *Moods* session, and *Fool's Paradise* did have a triumphant return season. But the selection of programmes for disinterment seems so arbitrary that I find no comfort in this short list of revenants, nor any assurance that my favourites will strike upon anything more palpable than the inward ear.

### Thin Skins

AT first I thought that the discussion from 4YA, "Let's Have It Out—Are We Thin-Skinned?" was going to prove one of those sessions, so frustrating to the listener, where too much beating about the bush prevents the speakers from ever getting anywhere. Since the average New Zealander's hyper-sensitivity to criticism was both admitted and deprecated by all speakers, none of them (if any should chance to read this) will mind my own criticism of the session—namely, that its main faults were its initial slowness, and the rather halting and sometimes nervous-sounding delivery of some of the participants. However, after a short time, the discussion warmed up, the speakers really got to grips with the subject, and the session became both critical and provocative. The danger of being too tactful, as a speaker pointed out, is that the person who refrains from saying what he really thinks often ends by thinking like the herd as well as outwardly behaving and talking like the herd. And as for the sensitivity of the radio artist who gets a poor hearing from the commentator—it is only equalled, I suppose, by the sensitivity of the commentator when his own faulty criticisms are in turn attacked!



### Sullivan and Mozart

I HAVE twice now heard the first instalment of the BBC programme which deals with the famous Gilbert and Sullivan partnership, the second time from my local station, 4YA, where the series has just begun. Both times, I thought the best thing about the programme was Sir Malcolm Sargent's introduction, nor did this piece of autobiography and appreciation stale or weaken with repetition. Sir Malcolm can be held up to all radio speakers as one who, no matter how carefully prepared his material, always presents it in a free, easy, conversational manner, and sounds as though he were extemporising his fluent periods on the spur of the moment. It is a style of delivery we should nurture among our radio speakers, many of whom sound as though they had laboured for many patient months over scripts which they present with utter lack of spontaneity. I was struck with Sir Malcolm Sargent's suggestion that to him Sullivan's music is very Mozartian, and that conductors who want to get the best out of it should approach it in much the same spirit as they would a Mozart opera—an idea which may strike orthodox classicists as blasphemy, but which, examined logically, will be seen to be the result of shrewd observation.