

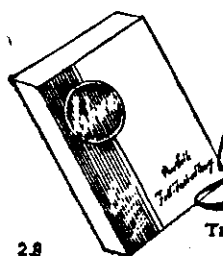
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RADIO VIEWSREEL

What Our Commentators Say

Music in Miniature

THAT "the good big 'un will beat the good little 'un every time" is not always true in radio. I feel that it requires a greater effort of concentration to listen to a long movement of an unfamiliar symphony on the air than it does in a concert hall. On the other hand the musical miniature seems a little overweighted in a concert hall by the evident machinery necessary to produce it. We have been having over recent weeks some exquisitely polished jewels of music in the BBC series *Music in Miniature*. These tiny pieces, chosen with taste and delightfully performed, are given in sets without preliminary announcement of titles. It is an amusing, and sometimes a chastening, lesson for the musically inclined to identify or place each little piece. The listener who "likes decent music," without knowing much about it, will find these broadcasts an equal joy.

The Queenslanders

THE Queensland State String Quartet gave us some exciting listening lately. The precision of their playing was a joy to hear, and a much needed lesson in what chamber music performance really is. Too many New Zealand musicians feel that it is enough to get together a week or so before a performance to "practise" the work to be played. Chamber music is the "music of friends" and long playing together is necessary to give that feeling of unity which at once distinguishes the musician from the merely competent. The masculine power of the Queenslanders' playing was their most exhilarating feature, at once their strength and their weakness, giving them tremendous drive in modern works such as the Sibelius *Voces Intimae*, but leading them to rather heavy-handed treatment of Mozart. Their visit was far more than just a pleasure, and the organisations responsible for sponsoring it are to be congratulated.

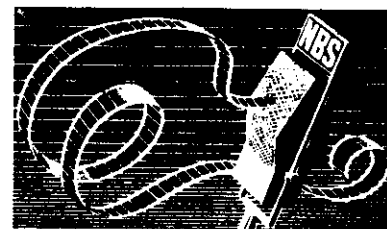
Brilliant Play

I THOUGHT *Odd Man Out* (2YA, July 16) made a brilliant radio play. Inevitable comparisons with the film version were not entirely to the play's disadvantage, for I thought the central idea of the play, the "charity" theme, emerged much more clearly in the radio version. There was so much to attract the eye in the film, the excitement of the action-shots, the camera's irony (shown, for example, in the junk-yard juxtaposition of Johnny McQueen and the tottering plaster angel). Without these distractions the radio audience was able to concentrate on the Word. In the first part of the play the word was Organisation. Johnny must ignore Kathleen and the love she represented in the interests of the Organisation. In the interests of the Organisation Denis must sacrifice himself to save Johnny (not because of his love for Johnny). The Organisation demands court-martial for the two members, who, successful in their mission, yet failed to bring back their leader, though Charity would have made allowance for the panic of the moment. In the second half of the play

the dominant word, implied and finally spoken, is Charity. There is little or none in those who give the fugitive temporary asylum, enough hospitality to ensure that he does not die on their doorstep. The play's great moment comes when, in his dying delirium, the wounded man speaks the passage "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels . . ." with its implication that Faith (the motive power behind the Organisation) was not enough. The essential unity of the story, the fine balance between faith and charity, were clearly and beautifully conveyed in the radio version.

About Films

FOOTNOTES TO FILM is an extremely welcome addition to the 4YA programmes. The listener who "never goes to the pictures" must surely be in a very small minority nowadays, but, if he exists, I advise him to listen to this feature. What I may call the intelligent filmgoer, of course, will be listening anyhow; criticisms and reviews of forthcoming films are not so much a feature of his everyday life that he can afford to miss hearing what other intelligent filmgoers have to say. It is a happy innovation if it may be assumed that films reviewed here will be those we have not as yet seen in Dunedin. There is something very annoying about missing a good film for lack of a preliminary review, and something even more annoying about having to sit through a poor film for lack of preliminary criticism of its weak points. There is, of course, a third type of listener, the chronic filmgoer, who out of boredom with his home surroundings and pursuits chooses to attend two or three films a week, not bothering to select any particular film but just "going to the flicks"—any old flicks—and who usually can't remember



what the name of the film was, let alone who produced or directed it. But I am afraid that the Average Filmgoer is one and the same person as the Average Listener; that he doesn't use his radio any more intelligently than his cinema; and that he won't be likely to hear *Footnotes to Film* unless he just happens to be actively listening when it just happens to be tuned in.

History of the Theatre

"THE History of the Theatre in Ancient Greece" may sound a rather forbidding title for the first of the 4YA Winter Course talks on the history of the theatre in general; but Professor T. D. Adams made the subject compellingly interesting. It was no dusty talk on erudite aspects of ancient dramatic forms, but a living presentation of the drama itself, with the factual arguments about plays and playwrights interspersed with plentiful extracts from the