

RADIO VIEWSREEL

What Our Commentators Say

Cashing In

NOW that the Old Vic Company are with us, our alert impresarios of the movies and radio are doing their best to cash in on all their stock starring the Oliviers. On the radio we have, for example, had some of the speeches from Olivier's movie *Henry V*, with the incidental music. Within its well-defined limits this was a perfect offering. Olivier has beautiful taste, knows what he wants, and knows how to get it. The accent he gave "Once more into the breach . . ." was highly artificial, and I think, Welsh. From a lesser man it would have been stagey, from Olivier it breathed sincerity and conviction. The battle-cry "God for Harry, England, and St. George!" was a wild compelling urge to the charge, springing from the lips of a leader whose self-belief was measureless and inspiring, and whose passion verged on hysteria. What a contrast was the brooding chorus on the two quiet camps the night before Agincourt. Olivier, speaking very close to the microphone, shed understanding and all embracing pity. He reached out and enveloped the listener. In the whole programme there was nothing that was not immaculate, nothing of a lower standard than perfect. Olivier's interpretation was final.

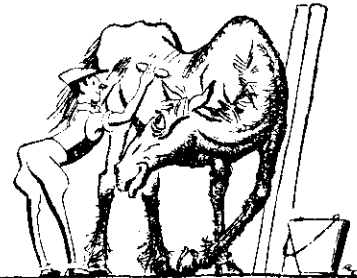
Ladies First

WE haven't Hoopoe Ratings in New Zealand, thank Heaven, but it is safe enough to say that the radio audience at 10.0 a.m. is only half what it is at 8.0 p.m. However, half an earful is better than no lug, and it is pleasant to find 3YA broadcasting a weekly world affairs talk during the morning women's session. Last week Gordon Troup did a lively little piece on Benes, whom he had met at Geneva in 1925. There Troup interpreted an address for him, from French into English. Benes thanked him and said he knew enough English to tell a good interpretation when he heard one. "I've been interpreting all my life between East and West," he said. That was a rather more difficult job of interpretation, and when Benes died there was less common ground on which an interpreter could stand than there was in 1925, and apparently very little willingness on either side to find common ground. Of Benes's death Troup said: "He was crushed between the fist state of the Soviet Union and the open palm states of the West." An apt sentence, violent and final.

At the Tots

ADDINGTON is known to trotting writers as Headquarters, and it was therefore fitting that a programme on trotting should come from 3YA. There was no indication in the printed programme summary that "The First Day to the Great Day" was about trotting, and probably many people missed it, but having found it by chance and another, unlisted title, "Lightning in Harness," I stayed to listen. It was a good programme. The horse in question, Blue Bonny, had her foibles. She was a shadow jumper, and it took a lot of patient work to teach her to stay down at her gait, but on the Great Day of her first race she rose to the occasion.

according to the Addington commentator, who must have felt odd reading a script for a change, and won nicely in 2.41 3-5 for the mile and a-quarter. The atmosphere seemed as genuine as it could be made within the limits of broadcasting, and it was interesting to note that the script-writer evidently



found smells important. How true this is. It is impossible to recall a trotting stable without smells. Horse sweat, ammonia, wet concrete, oiled leather, spirit soap, mixed with drifts of pungent, roll-your-own cigarette tobacco. It is a minor miracle to keep a smoke going while whistling through the teeth and scraping off a wet horse with a bit of hoop iron, but although many noises were recorded for our benefit, that peculiar combination was not, nor was the crisp chat of the drivers as they hurtled, ear to ear, round the bends in the track. We couldn't have everything, I suppose, and no doubt this omission saved a lot of valuable broadcasting gear from scorching.

Early Beethoven

THE trio for clarinet, 'cello and piano of Beethoven is an early work, and does not present the composer at his best. The problem of combining three instruments of such different timbres is so difficult that neither Brahms, Berger nor d'Indy, all of whom made attempts at such trios, can be said to have succeeded. But it was interesting to hear the Beethoven trio played recently from Auckland by George Hopkins, Molly Wright and Kathleen Harris, who gave a very efficient and bright performance of it. The ensemble was notably good, especially in the variations in the last movement, on a theme which unfortunately reminds one of the old song "For the moon shines to-night on Mrs. Porter." The 'cello was rather unimaginative in the opening of the slow movement, whose fast piano passages present a problem in balance which the players succeeded in solving. But the clarinet playing was fine throughout.

Give Me Your Answer, Do

THE radio event of the week for Wellington listeners was definitely the Monday night discussion between the two leading lions of New Zealand literature on "The New Zealand Writer and His Craft." Sparks, but no fur, flew, and the "I-don't-agree-with-that-at-all" were frequent and impulsive. The two participants could not have been better chosen, since both approached the writer's craft from different angles, Dan Davin, the Exported Brain par excellence, and Frank Sargeson, the contented repatriate—Mr. Davin, happily

(continued on next page)

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