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**THE WORLD'S GREATEST TOY**

## RADIO VIEWSREEL (Cont'd.)

it is apparently needed. Judging at least by the appearance of the average New Zealand home, the most popular architect in this country has usually been Mr. Rafferty!

### These Old Shades

WE seem to have had quite a run of fantasy-plays in which disembodied spirits, gods, demi-gods, and abstractions have appeared at the microphone. The radio, indeed, would seem an excellent medium for the presentation of such characters, many of whom might seem less probable appearing on a stage in the too-too-solid flesh. *Caligula* came back to life (or rather to earth) in *Caligula Objects*, a play by Wallace Geoffrey, which was heard recently from 4YA. I wasn't entirely impressed with the NZBS production unit's handling of this play. There seemed to be such a confusion of tongues that it was difficult to judge, from the players' accents, whether the scene of the play should have been Hollywood, London, or just New Zealand; and many of the players over-acted in an endeavour to emphasise the humour. This was a mistake; the play would have been better with under rather than over-emphasis—as witness the careful performance of *Caligula*, who by only slight changes of inflection succeeded better as a pompous shade than the other actors as live humans.



### No Ghost Required

THE first episode of a new serial from 4ZB usually finds me listening, in the hope that some day I will hear something so enthralling that I won't be able to wait till next week for the following instalment. So far I haven't come across anything as gripping as all that, and *Unto All Men* was no exception to the general rule; being well-produced, competently acted, and quite interesting enough if there were no alternative programme of, say, good music from elsewhere to claim my attention. But it was decidedly not the sort of thing I should want to follow up with unfailing regularity, as I might do with a Ngaio Marsh thriller or a series of Brains Trust sessions. *The Coming of Avery Mann* was the first episode, and as readers may guess from the corruption of "Everyman," the central character is once again one of those abstractions which appear so frequently nowadays on the radio. Avery Mann has been seen before, of course, in different guises (*The Passing of the Third Floor Back*, *Sorrows of Satan*) but his exact identity is wisely left obscured in a mist of vague phrases. He drifts in and out of the story, solving everyone's difficulties with the skill of a trained psychiatrist, and revealing his supernatural origin briefly before departing; to be ready, we presume, for next week's episode. In the first story (each is complete in itself) we heard a family's hostilities being disentangled with cheerful ability—but surely any enlightened human brain could have coped as easily with these difficulties. That physical infirmity warps the mind, that

a mother loves the weakling of the family, that youth will rebel against age—in the words of Horatio, "There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave, to tell us this."

### Another Violin

WE have had from 2YA recently a plethora of violin sonatas: the last was the Brahms' Op. 100, to my mind one of the finest of them all. It has only three movements, but each one is a masterpiece of music. The sonata was well played by Desmond Lavin (violin) and Decima Dickson (piano). It might be possible to say that Mr. Lavin's style was not quite so refined as one or two other fiddlers heard lately, but he amply made up for it by the passion of his attack and the glorious richness of his tone on the lower strings. Both violinist and pianist showed a fresh and vital approach to the sonata which made invidious any criticism of slight lapses in ensemble. I would always prefer vivid life with minor blemishes to faultless but cold perfection.

### A Bandsman's Life

PITY the poor bandsman: not only does he often play an instrument needing a fair amount of strength to lift and a colossal amount of wind to blow, but he has to lug the darned thing round while he marches. When in addition to this he finds himself playing (as he usually does) music which, apart from marches, is either definitely second-rate or is first-rate orchestral music so arranged as to reveal that the band is not an orchestra, then his cup must overflow. But he doesn't seem to mind; he simply plays what is before him with a virtuosity which is usually amazing. A recent 1YA band programme revealed this very clearly—astonishing playing by British military bands, with a crispness and power it was a delight to hear. But what was worth hearing was transcribed, and what was written for band was hardly worth hearing. I am very fond of bands; I wish they more frequently played music worthy of their abilities.



### BBC Programmes from ZB's

SEVERAL BBC productions will be heard shortly from the commercial stations on Sunday evenings. They are: *The Persecution of Bob Pretty*, 2ZA on December 12, at 7.0 p.m.; *The Twelve Pound Look*, from 2ZA on December 5 at 7.0 p.m., 4ZB on December 26, and 1ZB on January 2, at 7.30 p.m.; readings from *Omar Khayyam*, from 2ZA on December 5 at 9.30 p.m., and from 4ZB on December 26, at 10.15 p.m.; *The Banns of Marriage*, from 1ZB on December 19, at 7.30 p.m.; *The Cook of the Gannet*, from 2ZB on December 5, and 2ZA on December 19, at 7.0 p.m.; *Bill's Paperchase*, from 4ZB on December 19, at 8.0 p.m., and 1ZB on December 26, at 7.30 p.m.; and *The Fight Game*, from 1ZB, on December 26, 2ZB on January 2, 3ZB on January 16, 4ZB on January 23, and 2ZA on February 6, at 9.15 p.m.

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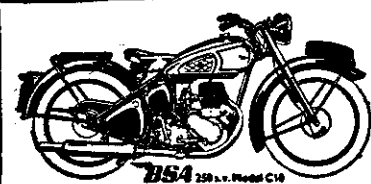
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