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THINGS TO COME

A Run Through The Programmes

Introducing Biffer

BIFFER, of the BBC Children's Hour, now makes his bow to New Zealand listeners through the NZBS, and to anyone who has not yet met him, it should be said that Biffer is well worth knowing. He is a black cocker spaniel, the creation (so far as radio is concerned) of E. Lewis Clarke, and his adventures, as told to young listeners, have made him one of the most popular BBC Children's Hour characters. But there was a real Biffer and many of the stories are founded on fact. When he was a puppy he was given to Mrs. Lewis Clarke's two children, who appear in the stories as "Little Master" and "Little Missus"; he took a full share in the family life and died at the age of 14, just 10 days before the first Biffer story was broadcast. The first episode of *Biffer Again* will be heard from 3YZ at 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 7.



Aubrey Beardsley

FIFTY years ago this year Aubrey Beardsley, artist and illustrator, died at the age of 26 and the anniversary will be observed by a talk on Beardsley's personality and work to be given by John Reid from 1YA next week. Beardsley was in the midst of the "decadent" movement of the 'nineties and was associated with such aesthetes as Oscar Wilde, Ernest Dawson and Lord Alfred Douglas. His subject matter, his debt to Japanese prints, 18th Century France and Greek vases, his dissipated life, and his satire on 19th Century English life make him, Reid considers, a representative figure in the *fin de siècle* group, while his illustrations for *The Yellow Book*, for *Salome*, *Morte d'Arthur* and other works established him as a master of line and design. The talk will be heard in 1YA's *Mainly About Books* session at 7.15 p.m. on Wednesday, December 8.

Missing

INTO a sleepy, small-town branch of the firm of J. J. Duke and Company comes a new manager—Miss Bramble. Miss Bramble, whose second name is efficiency, is a thorn in the side of all sluggards, and she soon has her new office in a whirl of unaccustomed activity. She writes every week to head office in London, suggesting improvements, trying to increase trade, and Mr. Duke's replies are courteous and sympathetic—until one day, without any apparent reason, she is fired. What is the explanation? What murky goings-on has the efficient Miss B. unwittingly come upon in her enthusiasm? She decides to go to London and find out, with some amusing and unexpected results, not the least of them being the discovery that Mr. Duke, the head of the firm, has been missing for an indefinite period. And what has happened to him? Listeners will hear this light-hearted mystery unravelled if they tune

in to 2YA at 8.0 p.m. on Wednesday, December 8, when the latest NZBS play, *Missing*, will be broadcast.

Rachmaninoff Concerto

MORE than one tie with the 19th Century was broken by the death in 1943 of Serge Rachmaninoff, the Russian composer. Not only was he a survivor of the old Russia, with personal memories of Tchaikovsky and Arensky; he was a romantic untouched by any modernism later than Liszt's. And in a third sense he was a link with the past, for he belonged to the disappearing tradition of the composer-virtuoso. A recording will be heard from 2YZ at 9.30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 8, of his *Concerto No. 2 in C Minor, Op. 19*, played by Benno Moiseiwitsch (pianist) and the London Philharmonic Orchestra



"HANSEL AND GRETEL" will be heard from 2YA at 9.32 p.m. on Sunday, December 13

conducted by Walter Goehr. Of Rachmaninoff *The Times* said in an obituary tribute; "He knew every kind of sound that could come out of a piano and for sheer euphony and enchantment of sound . . . he had no equal in his generation. It is this sound-saturation, this richness of musical imagery, that commands admiration for his concertos."

The American Theatre

IS the contemporary American theatre more vital than the British theatre? Who are the leading American playwrights, and what part did the Little Theatre movement play in fostering the development of an indigenous drama through its encouragement of men like Eugene O'Neill, Clifford Odets, and Thornton Wilder—to name only a few of the dramatists who have become widely known in the past few decades? Alternatively, what influence, if any, have Hollywood's celluloid productions had on the course of American drama? Listeners to 4YA may be able to find out the answers to questions like these if they tune in at 7.15 p.m. on Wednesday, December 8, to the first of three talks by H. V. Baigent on *The American Theatre*.



Gilbert and Sullivan

WHEN the six-episode serial *Gilbert and Sullivan: the Story of a Great Partnership*, was broadcast by the BBC

ALSO WORTH NOTICE

MONDAY

1YA, 7.15 p.m.: "Current Farming Problems."

3YC, 8.45 p.m.: *For the Organist*.

TUESDAY

2YZ, 7.15 p.m.: *Talk, "Tales of the Maori."*

4YZ, 9.38 p.m.: *British Concert Hall*.

WEDNESDAY

2YC, 9.30 p.m.: *Russian Theatre Music*.

3YA, 10.0 a.m.: *Scenes from "Macbeth."*

THURSDAY

1YC, 8.0 p.m.: "Kreutzer" Sonata.

3YZ, 9.30 p.m.: *Play, "Mr. Twemlow's Tale."*

FRIDAY

2YA, 8.0 p.m.: "Wuthering Heights."

2XN, 9.4 p.m.: *Grand Opera*.

SATURDAY

1YA, 8.27 p.m.: *Christmas Carols*.

4YZ, 8.30 p.m.: *Musical Comedy*.

SUNDAY

1YD, 5.0 p.m.: *Radio Bandstand*.

4XD, 11.0 a.m.: *Music by Medtner*.

in 1947 it brought a flood of appreciative letters from listeners and enthusiastic notices by the radio critics, and there was similarly warm response from New Zealand listeners who heard the programme from NZBS stations this winter. Because of the popularity of the production, Station 1YD has decided it is justified in repeating the broadcasts northern listeners heard from 1YA in June. The first episode, which, with its introductory talk by Sir Malcolm Sargent, lasts an hour and a quarter, will be heard at 8.0 p.m. on Sunday, December 12.

Tauber's Last Recordings

SOME of the last recordings made of the voice of Richard Tauber, whose death in January of this year was such a loss to romantic music, will be heard in the *Richard Tauber Programme* from 3YZ at 8.0 p.m. on Thursday, December 9. The guest artist in this half-hour of songs and instrumental items is Mimi Benzell, one of the stars of the Metropolitan Opera, New York. When this session was originally broadcast in the BBC Light Programme, she was appearing in *The Nightingale* in London and scoring a great personal success. This session will include some operatic arias sung by both Mimi Benzell and Richard Tauber, accompanied by the Melachrino Orchestra, conducted by George Melachrino.

Philip Neill Prizewinners

ONE of the conditions of the award of the Philip Neill Prize in music (New Zealand's annual award for original composition) is that the winning work will if possible be broadcast. This year the award was shared by two compositions, both scored for two pianos. They are *Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel*, by Donald Byers, and *Passacaglia and Fugue*, by John Ritchie, and listeners to 3YA will be able to hear them played at 8.10 p.m. on Friday, December 10. The pianists will be Professor V. E. Galway and Professor Vernon Griffiths.