

(continued from previous page)

first to say that English poetry is a valued part of our heritage, but you must keep a sense of proportion about these things. You must keep poetry in its place, which is as a part of our heritage, a part of the past, not uncomfortably mixed up with the present. You mustn't let it interfere with life. . . Now take the potato. Think of the acreage planted each year, think of the yield in tons per acre, think of its keeping qualities, think of it on the table all the year round, think of its vitamin content, its starch percentage, the capacity it has to satisfy, the solid return it gives the conscientious grower. . ."

But we have our noses in the potatoes. No summer songs for us and our aunts, or any tumbling in the hay either. We're too shrewd for that immortal nonsense. We've been educated under a free, compulsory and secular system which keeps the daffodil in its place. . .

"[E]DUCATION is supposed to fit you to live with other people," said one of the confident young radio voices. Of course it is, and when the other million and three-quarter people are also interested in potatoes we find we fit in very comfortably; so comfortably we don't even know that what we're missing is life.

—G. leF. Y.

THE voices went on, some in the radio, and some in my head. What nice children they were; adaptable, kindly, dependable, serene, only an occasional quail of guilt if they caught themselves at pleasure. They had a mild sense of humour, which is comfortable, but no wit, which often isn't. They could fit a gate, or replace a fuse wire, or knock together a dog kennel, or cook a fair meal on a camp stove, they could set out to hitch-hike 200 miles and never think it a chancy business, they could make a better job than their parents of filling in an income tax form; the earth was theirs, and the potatoes in it.

This, I thought, going off at a tangent, is admirable. Here is a radio Discussion touching a tender spot and making at least one listener think. And it is a tender spot. Who am I to condescend to these earnest young potato diggers? I'm involved too. I'm one of them. We've dug a pit to store our potatoes, and fallen in with them. Up above, in the sunshine, the brightly burning madmen sing capering, improvident songs:

When daffodils begin to peer,  
With heigh! the doxy, over the dale,  
Why, then comes in the sweet o' the year;  
For the red blood reigns in the winter's pale.

## Fact or Fable?

HOW much truth is there in the pantomime story of Dick Whittington, and to what extent has the life of the real Richard been overlaid by legend? That is something the Radio Players will examine at 2YA on Saturday, December 25, at 7.30 p.m., when they present *Dick Whittington: Fact or Fable?* On the one hand, Dick was supposed to be a pauper boy, born of unknown parents, who made his way to London and was cared for by a kindly merchant. On the other, Richard was believed to be the third son of Sir William Whittington, of Fauntley, Gloucestershire, born some time before 1360. At any rate whether it was Dick or Richard who was elected Mayor of London in 1398 and who became greatly esteemed for his liberality to his king and his city, tales of cats helping their owners to fame have been known in several different countries. Though the pantomime version contains a good deal more fiction than fact, it will probably long continue to be popular with people of six or 60.

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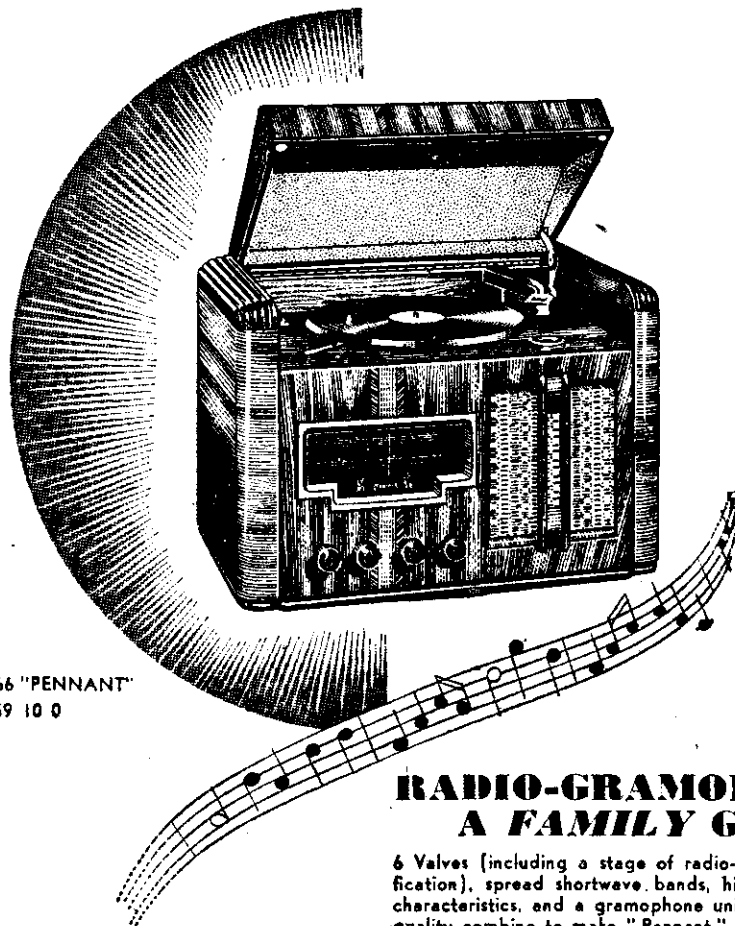
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