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## RADIO VIEWSREEL

### What Our Commentators Say

#### Little Women

**I** NOTICE that all the heroes of 2YC's *Torch of Freedom* have one thing in common, a good loyal little woman in the background who accepts with equanimity such instructions as "Pack me a bag, lass, I'm driving back to London to-night" (this is 1805) and is the very last person to grow apprehensive when night after night armed thugs, hired by the forces of reaction, leave her husband's senseless body on the doorstep. No, the gallant little woman accepts it all as the inevitable price of having married an idealist. Heroes harassed by nagging wives and demanding children fortunately are not encouraged in the series, and one would like to think that those whom their contemporaries persecuted (even if history vindicated them) were at all events exempt from the annoyances of a divided hearth and of the acerbity of the curtain lecture. *Torch of Freedom* is good drama but distorted history. Its dialogue is script-writer's *esprit d'escalier* rather than plain man's prose, but for all its faults of over-emphasis the programme meets a need in providing listeners with some facts (artificially flavoured but nevertheless facts) about those who carried the torch of freedom.

#### No Hangover

**A**T *Your Service*, a play by C. Gordon Glover, which was heard from 2YA on a recent Wednesday, was something of a let-down to those listeners who, seeing a Glover play listed in the programmes, tightened their intellectual foundation garments and sat up like Jacky for their periodic culture injection. It was quite a nice little play, but quite an ordinary little play. Gone are the days when Mr. C. Gordon Glover regaled us with free verse of his own creation, filled us with half-sensed half-glimpsed images of the demi-monde of our own unconscious fantasies. *At Your Service* had only the NZBS cast, and a certain sprightliness of invention in common with earlier Glover plays. These, of course, were enough to make it slip down easily, but I for one regretted the absence of that feeling of heady over-stimulation that was once a hangover from any Glover play.

#### Good Show

**N**O *Citizens' Forum* sheepdog has ever, I feel, been vouchsafed a brighter set of charges than J. P. Macaskill in the recent 2ZB discussion "Is Slang Permissible?" There were Mrs. K. McLeod, of the Victoria College English Department, Anton Vogt, and Michael Forlong, all brimful of ideas on the subject and bursting to express them, in the vernacular if necessary. There was a refreshing amount of difference of opinion, mostly from Mrs. McLeod, whose uncompromising, "I don't agree with you at all," was removed from the parliamentary only by the absence of colloquialism in its expression. I hate to think how we'd have got on without Mrs. McLeod—as it was we got both sides of almost everything. J. P. Macaskill was perhaps a trifle over-zealous in the performance of his canine role,

and showed a tendency to head off any sheep that strayed from the straight and narrow no matter how enticing the path up which it might have led the others. But since his shepherding always provided the occasion for an arresting display of slinguistic virtuosity I could not altogether condemn its excessive efficiency.

#### Plain and Fancy

**T**HE *Aid to Britain* programmes are to be commended for the idea that engendered them; but I felt that they lacked something in the "putting across"—perhaps what was lacking was that subtle quality known as understatement. It seemed to me that in the two programmes on dairying and flax, an effort



was being made all the time to exalt the subject-matter to a height of drama which was beyond its intrinsic possibilities. What, after all, can be done with such subjects, save to explain in clear facts their nature and scope? I for one welcomed those portions of the programme which dealt in a matter-of-fact way with statistical data, and workers' explanations of processes and so on. What I found out-of-place was the introduction of crashing musical interludes, the excited voices, the "march-of-time" technique which is at its best and most appropriate when dealing, not with prosaic things like New Zealand's industries, but with dramatic calamities like volcanoes in eruption, major earthquakes, and political coups.

#### Alex Lindsay String Orchestra

**A** MOST promising first broadcast was made by this orchestra from 2YA recently in a well-chosen programme of little-known works from Purcell, Handel, Bach and William Walton. The general impression given by the orchestra was extremely good; the string tone was solid, the intonation excellent, and the ensemble satisfactory. It was evident that the orchestra had sufficient players to give that body of tone without which individual weaknesses in the strings become glaringly apparent. There is a vast difference between a group with four first violins, and one with six in the way the two extra players consolidate the tone. As with most orchestral groups in New Zealand the violas were not quite strong enough for the rest of the strings, particularly the fine bass

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