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Dear Sir,—I have received your exercises every Monday, and I can gratefully say that they are doing me wonders. Beside physical developments it has helped me mentally. I feel fitter and don't tire easily at all, and I can truthfully say that I have never felt fitter in my life.—I remain, Yours faithfully

(Signed) Noel Burrell.

Fencourt, Cambridge,
3rd Dec., 1947

Alfred Jenkins,
22 Manners St., Wellington.
Dear Sir,—I must say that I wished I had done this course long before now, as it makes one feel as though life is really worth living. I can say that I have never felt fitter before and consider that every young chap should take this course, as it most certainly builds one up.—Yours faithfully (Signed) John Hogan.

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RADIO REVIEW

The World in Our Homes

WE were first made aware of the potentialities of wireless when Kingsford Smith flew the Tasman. Recollection is at once vague and vivid. Vague because of time and vivid because of event. Details of reception and announcements are dim, but the sense of excitement, of discovery, are remembered. We followed the course of the Southern Cross with the aid of earphones and cat's whisker. We were all on board the aircraft, sharing the hazards of storm and darkness. The adventure was ours as well as theirs. History was being made that night and we were part of it. It was no longer a story happening to others, but an important event brought so close that its reality was on our own hearth. We were participators rather than onlookers.

The haphazard results of the cat's whisker and the earphone have been replaced by high-powered efficiency. The home without a radio is now the exception, and with the daily, hourly, familiar impact, how different has become our attitude towards it!

Since Kingsford Smith's flight, we have taken part in many such adventures. Dictators have strutted and stopped, armies have trampled and destroyed, kings have died; we listened in to the blitz over London and to the bombing of Berlin; heroism and atrocity have exalted or depressed; there was the epic of Dunkirk and the fall of France; there were signs and portents and voices, all coming out of the air and into our homes in a way that they had never done before.

And the initial feeling of excitement and discovery has gradually given way to a uniform, almost too casual, acceptance. We listen in now, absorbing or discarding according to our different tastes, all that the wireless brings to us. Our pleasures and prejudices in enlightenment or entertainment are limited only by the range of our sets or by our own capacities and interests. We rail at this, delight in that, but we seldom think of the immensely widened horizons that are made possible for us. Familiarity may not have bred contempt, but all the same we do tend to take the good things for granted.

These thoughts arose out of a 15-minute programme the other night when we heard the voices of Clara Butt and Caruso, the violin of Kreisler, one after the other.

In time of peace we can listen to the greatest artists the world has to offer, or we can identify ourselves with a cricket match as it is being played thousands of miles away. In time of war our suburban street is brought to the battleground. And we have come to accept all this as a matter of course. Radio is now as much part of everyday living as is the telephone, the motor-car, electric-

ity, or the newspaper, but its power to enhance our susceptibilities, to broaden our appreciation, is much more enormous—if we like to use it.

We have lost, in the main, the capacity for wonder. We accept far more stolidly than did our parents the manifestations of change. So much has altered for us in such a comparatively short space of time that we have become blasé with a plethora of new ideas, new ideologies and the bewildering progression of scientific invention. To my comparatively simple mind, however, there is still something akin to black magic in the thought that by the mere switching of a knob, the whole compass of the earth and the arts can be brought within the narrow boundaries of my four walls.

—Sycorax

Trivia

THE high standard of most features in IYA's *Feminine Viewpoint* shows up the thinness of many of the *For My Lady* scripts, relics from the Old Order which still appear several times weekly. The *Artists New to Listeners* series, for instance, is scraping the very bottom of the barrel. The reason for the unfamiliarity of the artists becomes clear enough when one hears them perform, and the commentaries, like those for the interminable *Queens of Song* cycle, have a kind of infant-room coyness which is especially noticeable when, as is the case with most of the subjects, the life outlined has been conspicuously uneventful. Consequently, the trivial anecdotes and the lists of "spectacular" débuts and successes, forgotten as soon as heard, have as little interest and value as has the average digest article. A major source of irritation is the prevalence of this sort of thing: "Madame Whosis scored her greatest triumph in 1902 as Isolde in Wagner's opera. She will now sing 'By the Waters of Minnetonka.'" The time has come, in my view, to inter these series decently, and to seek new approaches in which "human interest" is less extravagantly pursued.

Of Books

MANY listeners who heard a brief series of talks by John Barr, the City Librarian, on the "Treasure Room" of the Auckland Public Library must have been surprised to learn of the wealth of books the city possesses. Mr. Barr's survey of the choicest items in the Grey and Shaw collections should diminish the tendency of Aucklanders to cast envious eyes on collections in the South. His enthusiastic description



of such works as the three Caxtons, the Wenssler *De Civitate Dei*, and the magnificent manuscript *Biblia Sacra Latina Vulgata* was made additionally interesting by his crisp introductions on manuscript styles and early printing methods. It was an oversimplification, perhaps, to claim that the development