

of printing was a direct consequence of the demand for books created by the Renaissance. However, I consider it a special mark of good sense and proportion that Mr. Barr, at the conclusion of these talks in which he had stressed craftsmanship and rarity, should affirm the primacy of the spiritual value of books and state his librarian's credo that "in their content lay their true worth."

—J.C.R.

Clay Patches

ALL Miss Alice Woodhouse's *Famous Women* talks to date have had that dying fall which, calculated or not, has the effect of making the obscure feel gratefully that there is something to be said for being common clay all over rather than merely from the ankles down. Madame Chiang Kai Shek, who was the first in the series, was treated with sympathy and understanding, but History stepped in at the last minute to wither somewhat the laurels on her deserving brow. Age and custom and a change of Government have staled the finite variety of gadfly Nancy Astor, who, though quite a gal, is not quite the gal she used to be. And not even that most admired of the moderns, Dr. Edith Summerskill, escaped without a certain amount of deglamourising under Miss Woodhouse's seeing eye. Having presented her subject in her three-dimensional capacity as wife-and-mother, doctor, and politician, the author began little by little the deflationary process. In this, I regret to state, she had every assistance from *The Listener*, quoting lavishly from the report of the interview with Dr. Summerskill at the time of her visit to New Zealand.

Adagio

SUCH promising reports had come from Christchurch on the discussion-series *Does the New Zealand Baby Get the Best Possible Care?* that I was delighted to see from the programmes that they were starting a Wellington season. The "Before Birth" discussion, which I have now heard from 2YA, is in the nature of an adagio to what I gather is the rapid-fire scherzo of the second movement. But the adagio is not without its charm. There was an agreeably ladylike atmosphere about it, a pleasing absence of the desire to thrust oneself forward (come to think of it, diffidence is possibly the quality most marked in all our radio talkers), and a perfect willingness to let the other woman have the last word. Comparisons were evidently considered odious, since there was little attempt to compare New Zealand standards of ante-natal care with those obtaining in other countries, but enough was said to give listeners the impression that more things are being done on behalf of the expected than are dreamt of in the philosophy of the non-expectant.

—M.B.

What's in a Name?

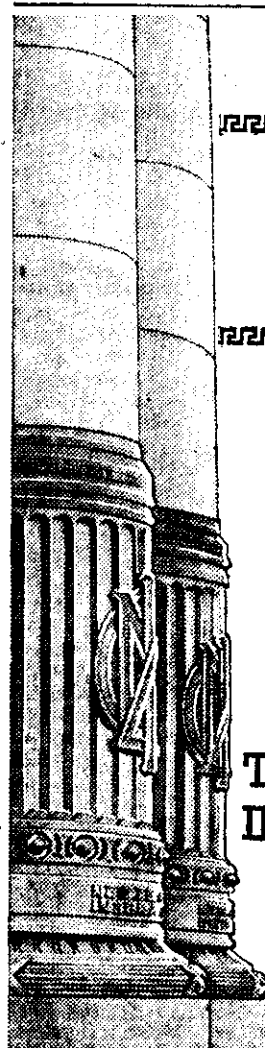
IT is a well-established maxim of the 20th Century housewife that the contents of the can must not be judged by the label. The discriminating radio listener sniffs just as suspiciously at the titles offered him weekly in *The Listener*. I am kind enough to believe

that these harassed men who rack their brains to find a novel title for the latest collection of gramophone records do not deliberately wish to deceive the listener, but they frequently have them guessing. I remember a while ago my curiosity being piqued week by week by the title of a series from 4YA called *Music: the Orchestra and a Development*. Week by week I listened and heard some excellent orchestral music, but never managed to discover what this mysterious development was. By the end of the series it was beginning to appear symbolically in my dreams. It is a thorny question. The title must not be too long, obviously; in three or four words it has to attract our attention and give us adequate information. In music, fortunately, conventions have early become established. The Common Denominator approach, for example, *Your Music and Mine*; or the Appeal to the Stomach, *Mid-day Melody Menu*, *Tea Time Tunes*, or the Simple Alliterative, *Rambling in Rhythm*, *Hawaiian Harmony*—give me these, and I know where I am. Yet even the experienced listener may be deceived. The innocent title, *Music for You*, was employed simultaneously by 3YA and 4YC last Saturday. From the first station came light popular music, while from 4YC one gratified listener anyway was greeted by a well-balanced programme of orchestral and vocal music of an intimate classical type.

Home Thoughts from Abroad

HOW pleasant an idea someone had last week of reading from 4YA four letters from distinguished New Zealand students overseas. There is the seed here of a further development in radio as communication, as well as entertainment. We have been guilty often enough in the past of ejecting our graduates barely fledged from the nest, and letting them find their own wings to fly. Perhaps if we show more interest in their doings while away, they will be the readier to return to the nest. It was interesting to notice how large this question of return loomed in the minds of these able young men and women, and heartening to find how many of them would come back if New Zealand could find appropriate work for them. There, of course, is the snag. The war proved the usefulness of radio in maintaining touch with soldiers overseas; its extension this way in peacetime is logical. But it is not so easy. The radio letter offers a real problem in presentation. Above all, it must achieve intimacy and for this it is just as dependent on the local reader as on the writer of the letter. Most of the voices 4YA used were appropriate, although one of the male voices sounded too mature for the part. The most successful both in matter and in presentation was, I thought, the first letter of R. O. Davies, New Zealand Rhodes Scholar, who had some interesting and critical things to say about the undemocratic ways of Oxford Colleges. What a heaven, though, for our Honours students it would be to find themselves in a university where the enormous New Zealand ratio of students to staff had altered to about three to one in favour of the staff! A Utopian thought.

—K.J.S.



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