

Women versus Ladies

I HAVE been, apparently, behind the times and unaware of a minor revolution which has taken place regarding special programmes for women. My recollections have for too long been fogged over by sessions like those entitled *For My Lady*, and although I still have reservations about any programme which lumps women, as such, into a class apart, I must admit that when listening to the YA Women's Sessions over the last few days I have been agreeably, almost joyously, surprised. I am now turning hopefully to the ZB stations.

Female listeners are not, thank heaven, "ladies" any more. Instead they are women who have been granted their own modicum of intelligence, appreciation and plain horse sense. I have not been able to listen to all stations, but take it for granted that Miriam Pritchett and Constance Sheen are representative of the enlightened trend which does not allow speakers to talk down to their audience from a great height, using all the saccharine inanities of an elderly visitor offering a child a lollipop.

"Your Child and Mine" approaches the problems of Bringing up Children with Beatrice Ashton and Zenocrate Mountjoy as protagonists. Difficulties of delivery and subject matter are overcome in an apparently lighthearted manner which effectively disguises the reading, discussion and observation which must have gone into the presentation in the first place. Using their own children as guinea pigs they bring the complications of child psychology and education down to an understandable and workable basis by the use of an over-the-garden-fence technique which should help any conscientious mother who starts off the day with a spoonful of rose-hip syrup in one hand and a Susan Isaacs textbook in the other. They manage very nicely to bring the theoretical down to a practical level. One small detail of criticism might be that the method comes at times dangerously near the "pally." Every now and then there is a Gargery-ish ooh wot larks tone which threatens to become cloying but which happily has so far veered away just in time.

Nelle Scanlan has a cheery radio bounce which dares you to switch off even if what she is saying you have heard before, while Annie Holm's recollection of early days in the New Zealand teaching profession is delivered in an unsentimental, factual manner which tells you a lot and keeps you listening.

Switching over to 4YA we get the end of a series on "The Film," while Charles Brasch starts off on "An Approach to Modern Painting." Mr. Brasch's delivery is simple, direct and knowledgeable, and

should prove illuminating to those who have hitherto dismissed contemporary art as useless because they do not understand it.

All these talks are in their different ways excellent. It seems a pity that they are concentrated each day into the one hour. An extension which would enable listeners to tune in throughout the day with a fair degree of certainty that they will find something worth while would be even better. Or is this being merely greedy?

And again I think that the programme should be a general one, for men and women alike, not just for the little woman when she puts her feet up during her too infrequent leisure moments.

—Sycorax

Human Interest

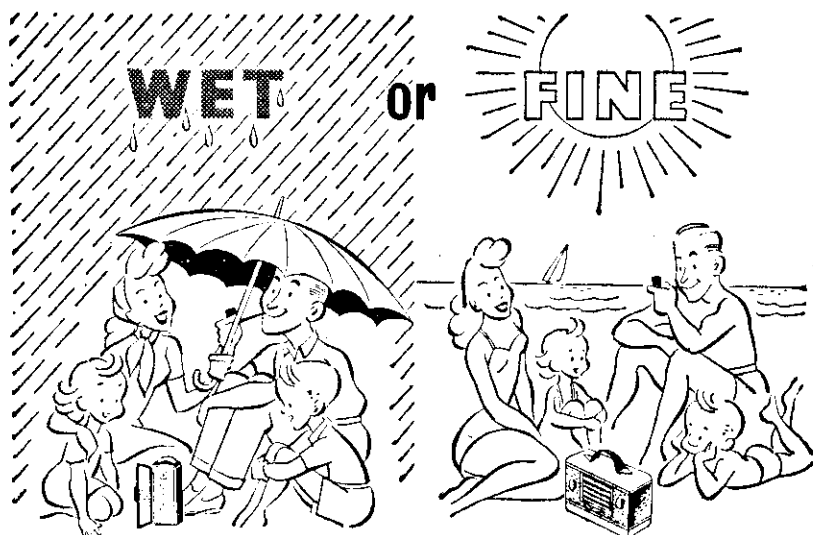
A SOUND case for the longer documentary broadcast could be made out on the basis of the BBC feature dealing with W. G. Grace, heard again recently from 1YA. This programme, although lasting for 45 minutes, is not a minute too long. The attention is held by the variety of voices, the admirable blend of narrative and dramatisation, and the unpatronising script. The author and compère is John Arlott, whose Hampshire accent became familiar to New Zealand listeners during the BBC broadcasts of the Test matches; his enthusiasm for the game, his love for "the Old Man" and his gift for writing make this a memorable programme. The prodigious figure of Grace, with his great beard, his deep laugh, his tireless energy, his showmanship and his supremacy as a cricketer is so built up as to transmit the feeling of a whole era. The dramatisation of big moments in his games and the tributes of celebrated cricketers who had known him make a broadcast which must appeal even to those who find cricket dull. John Arlott has solved the problem of how to make a cricketing programme of universal interest by employing the human qualities of his fruity and fabulous subject.

—J.C.R.

Children's Voices

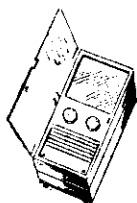
TWO delightful broadcasts of children's music were heard lately from 2YA and 4YA when the Primary Schools' Musical Festivals were heard, curiously enough, on the same evening. The happy atmosphere of hundreds of eager children singing together could be felt even

over the radio. It is very interesting to hear the kind of music the children are asked to sing—for the most part the really great tunes of folk songs, strong in their simplicity. These melodies retain their freshness untouched by time, and they are as overwhelming when we hear them sung by

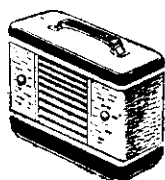


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