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of the importance of science, that it was possible to have an overdose of physics. The topic was "Do we keep our children too long at school?" and it was well suited to the dual panel method of Youth versus Maturity. In this case Youth had a much better fling at it than did Maturity, contributing all the wit (see above) and a good proportion of the wisdom. Undeterred by fears of being misunderstood at home or misrepresented abroad the youths came out into the open with statements such as "Boys need more education than girls" (ambiguous) and "It isn't parents who keep children at school — it's the children who decide." I felt in this particular discussion that it would have made for livelier listening if Youth and Maturity had been permitted to come to grips with one another. Great point is made of the fact that the second panel does not hear the arguments of the first, but a discussion so organised is likely to appear broken-backed, unless the chairman sees to it that points raised by the adult panel are slipped in for juvenile consideration.



was markedly superior. Both took as their starting-points isolated items from the week's news, but, whereas Airey stuck rather laboriously to the Japanese situation and allowed himself only occasional asides, Nicolson had soon abandoned his Franco-Polish squabble and was off and away on an account of the history and value of diplomacy which took us back to the Stone Age. It was certainly exhilarating and most persuasive. "You all know," he exclaimed, "you all know the truth of this," and heads before a hundred radios nodded in unison. The voice was so deep-toned and assured, the argument so rational and convincing, telling us too just the story we all want to believe in. Yet, wrongheadedly, I find sticking deeper in my memory the colourless, rather worried tones of Professor Airey, warning us that the Japanese are past masters at the art of playing off one power against the other and that, with America in search

of a possible ally in the Pacific, Japan again finds herself in a strong bargaining position. Japan is peculiarly our problem, I suppose; and for that subject the local commentator finds a readier ear than his more accomplished colleague overseas.

Bang Goes Another Illusion!

RADIO may sometimes be guilty of implanting a few misconceptions in the innocent ears of listeners but it makes up for it frequently by destroying the ones listeners make for themselves. Take for instance Dilys Powell, whose talk "The Work of a Film Critic" figured in 2YC's *From Screen to Radio* session a week or two ago. Now Dilys Powell is the type of film critic whom film societies take very seriously indeed, whose lightest word (and there are few of them) fellow-devotees of The Film bear like an Olympic torch from Bloomsbury to the Bluff, the type of film critic who, one imagined, would need more than a pair of steps to get down to the level of the one-and-six-pennies. Yet here was Dilys Powell on the air giving a simple and charming little talk in a simple and disarmingly immature little voice about how much she enjoyed going to the pictures even if it meant seeing five or six films a week and most of them bad ones. And producing, what's more, a very valid list of criteria easily adaptable to the needs of the ordinary filmgoer. It out-Agates Agate.

—M.B.

Reason and Persuasion

THE BBC World Affairs talk this week-end by Harold Nicolson, and our own news commentary *Lookout*, by Professor W. T. G. Airey, offered quite a contrast in styles. Naturally, Harold Nicolson put up the better show; in voice, presentation and radio style he

The Sphinx of Stratford

SOMEWHERE far away in that airy Limbo, reserved for Radio Talks that have gone astray yet do not quite deserve damnation, will ultimately rest John Gundry's talk on "Shakespeare the Scholar." Radio Limbo is a well-populated place and there is a large New Zealand colony. Now the main quarrel with Mr. Gundry is the old one that he read his talk instead of speaking it. Apart from that, his material on the schoolboy Shakespeare was quite interesting and his treatment thoughtful and sincere. His is only the latest effort in the game of filling up the gaps in our knowledge of Shakespeare by conjecture from his works and his times; and ill-success is not likely to daunt the ingenious inquirer. Shakespeare is a tempting enigma and since the professional record-grubber has found so little, the amateur mind-reader has an open field. Whether John Gundry's Shakespeare resembles the real Will, who can say? But we probably learnt from the talk more about Mr. Gundry than we did about Shakespeare. Would it be true, I wonder, that Mr. Gundry has a preference for country life over town, is not a modernist in education, prefers the beauty of peace and quiet to more violent pleasures, believes a man's philosophy of life should be basically religious and reveres religion and patriotism? In Shakespeare's mind a man easily finds the reflection of himself.

—K.J.S.

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