



THINGS TO COME

A Run Through The Programmes



THE most rabid atheist, if he has an ear for music, must be glad that Christianity celebrates Christmas. It is the time for much music making and it is so close now that the NBS is already beginning to take substantial notice of the event in its programmes. Broadcasts of carols are already organised, and all stations will be interested in locally performed oratorios. The first of these performances will be heard from Dunedin. On the night of Wednesday, December 4, Station 4YA will broadcast Handel's "Messiah," sung by combined choirs with an orchestra, and with Madame Winnie Fraser, Joyce Ashton, Grahame McKinlay, and Russell Laurenson as the soloists. Alfred Walmsley will be conductor and Professor Galway the organist. This should be a really notable opening to a season of sacred music.

A Lovesome Place

The life of the average gardener is one long struggle against slugs, sparrows and the next-door neighbour's hens. If there is a trace of bitterness in the observation it is because we are an average gardener ourselves, and have spent many a night hour slug-stalking. Of advice to the average gardener there is no end. Thousands of experts, it sometimes seems, are working feverishly to keep the amateur on the straight and

narrow path of horticultural rectitude. Station 2ZB is helping along the cause with a Gardening Session, which will have its first airing on Saturday, December 7. The time is 8.30 a.m., but since the true gardener is, or should be, up with the sparrows (for the express purpose of chasing them from his garden) the earliness of the hour should inconvenience no one. The session is no high-brow affair, being intended for the backyard gardener who finds it a job to distinguish between a turnip and a Jerusalem artichoke.

Not So Bad

In spite of his appearance, the poet is not a very alarming person, even when he walks, as one does, through London streets in a toga, carrying an axe (which Mr. Clark has inadvertently omitted from his picture of a famous New Zealand royalist). Although his genius may sprout through long hair, and flow behind him and about him in his flying apparel, the poet is not such a bad chap. He has a common denomi-



nator somewhere, and it's worth the trouble of looking to find it. Some broadcasters are going to do just that for the poet's poetry when 2YA puts a new item on the air at 8.3 p.m. on Friday, December 6. "Is Verse So Alarming?" it is called, and listeners will find that verse is not. An ordinary sort of person admits he likes poetry. His companions in the conversation piece are at first amazed, and almost shocked; but it turns out in the end that they can all muster an interest in it. In finding out why, the listener may surprise himself by getting interested too.

Old English

The oldest English song, so our erudite office boy tells us, was written by William Langland, who left a quaint rhyme which remains the truest commentary on social inequality ever made:

*When Adam delved and Eve span,
Who was then the gentleman?*

Another very old song is the one which has been slightly amended by a modern parodist to begin:

*Winter is icumen in
Loudly sing 'tishoo . . .*

Almost all the old English songs which have survived for us—some with almost the original music, some with music set to them by more modern composers—have a peculiar charm about them, a fragrance of old world gardens that is refreshing in these days of synthetic perfumes.

Clive Carey, visitor from the Royal School of Music, gave listeners a pleasant surprise when he sang some unexpectedly from 2YA on November 17. He will sing some more from 1YA on Monday, December 2, at 9.25 p.m. By then his tour of the North Island will have brought him to Auckland.

Poor P. G.

A P. G. Wodehouse play or story does not need to be topical. It needs no publicity, no other announcement than that it will happen. Its audience is assured as soon as his eye-catching name



appears in print. But in case any listeners miss seeing that 1YA is going to broadcast a P.G. comedy at 9.28 p.m. on Sunday, December 1, we have made assurance doubly sure by asking Russell Clark to devise a drawing about it. And it was here that the title of the play and a certain item of cable news came in handy to make good publicity better. For this play had a title which makes it unusually topical. It is called "If I Were You," and listeners who hear it will no doubt be unable to avoid thinking of poor P.G. saying just these words to himself as he looks through the wire round some internment camp in Germany.

Anniversary

Liszt's compositions were for many years overshadowed by his virtuosity as a pianist, and so it was with Anton Rubinstein. Rubinstein, who was a prodigious pianist, and further added to his lustre by founding the conservatory of music at St. Petersburg, is even said to have been piqued at the scant attention paid to his compositions. However, it is on these that his lasting fame will rest, and there can be few streets in which his "Melody in F" has not been whistled. Thursday, November 28, is the 11th anniversary of the birth of Rubinstein at Podolsk, Russia, and at 3.30 p.m. on that day Station 3ZB will broadcast an anniversary session of his works.

Jargon-Killing

For his dislike of the clumsy expressions that pass as official and business English, Winston Churchill has been dubbed "Jack the Jargon Killer," and apparently Professor J. Y. T. Greig, of South Africa, who will be talking from 2YA at 3 p.m. on Sunday, December 1, is also a declared enemy of clumsy English. Professor Greig, who comes

from Johannesburg, is talking about "Airy Talking and Talking on the Air," and he intends to work off several long standing grudges. He is particularly antipathetic to the disease which A. P. Herbert has called "Jungle English," and which can be described as refusal to say in one simple Anglo-Saxon word what can be said in three or more polysyllabic words of Latin derivation. An American has found a good way to describe users of jungle English: he calls them "word wallopers" and "yawn spawners." Professor Greig's remarks may be just as colourful

Old Man River

Mountains, lakes and the broad undulating ocean have all evoked romantic thoughts in the breasts of poets and musicians, but of all natural geographic features, rivers seem to have been most inspiring. A poet, for instance, has only to look at a river to experience an irresistible urge to burst into iambs (or iambi). Next thing they are set to music, and the result is a flood of songs about the Volga, the Danube, the Mississippi, the Thames, the Shannon, even the River Wanganui. Capitalising on this flood of rivers, Station 4ZB is presenting, starting on Sunday, December 8, a series of four programmes entitled "Romantic Rivers." We have an uncanny premonition that the Blue Danube will flow again.

STATIC

CHRISTMAS shopping note: Town is a place where you spend money you haven't earned to buy things you don't need to impress people you don't like.

YET another machine has been invented that does the work of ten men. Unfortunately we are not one of the ten.

IN the spring, says a poultry expert, the diet of laying hens should be varied as much as possible. Yet we go on putting the same old seeds in our gardens year after year.

SAFETY first note: Too many motorists approach the coroner at 50 miles per hour. And one for pedestrians: Don't walk on the suicide of the road.

THE first law of repartee — better never than late.

DOCTOR: And that habit of talking to yourself—there's nothing to worry about in that.

Patient: Perhaps not; but I'm such a darned bore.

SHORTWAVES

BIBLES are to be taxed. Prayer-books are to be taxed. Handel and Shakespeare are to be taxed more. But betting is not taxed at all.—A. P. Herbert, M.P.

NOTHING nails a man more securely in his coffin than too much praise.
—Margot, Lady Asquith.

MOST of them come from the lower side of New York, where people sweat and stink. They are so ugly and miserable that in their hearts there is nothing but hate.—German broadcaster on American journalists.

NOWADAYS everybody seems to say "definitely" when they mean "yes."
—Mr. Justice Humphreys.

I HAVE never taken the view that Mr. Coward writes better than Oscar Wilde or even Sheridan, but I have always regarded him as a serious patriot. That was shown when he cultivated the company of some of our most brilliant stars from the Foreign Office, and took his daily walk in Whitehall.—Atticus in "The Sunday Times."