

## THEY CALLED HIM A CRANK

Sefton Daly, Accompanist  
To Noel Coward

**S** EFTON DALY, the young New Zealand pianist and composer who will be touring New Zealand as accompanist to Noel Coward, apparently has a good deal in common with Reginald Forsythe, the brilliant half-negro pianist.

Both of them play the piano and compose; both of them were branded musical cranks, and both very nearly starved before their talent was recognised. Forsythe wrote "Serenade to a Wealthy Widow"; Daly wrote "Serenade to a Snake."

It was in Christchurch, where he was born 27 years ago, that Sefton Daly was first branded a musical crank because

he would not play the piano the orthodox way. "I've got my own way of playing and my own way of composing," he says, "and I had to suffer by finding it hard to get jobs."

In Christchurch his first job was interior decorating for a big city store, and according to Daly, his firm didn't appreciate his "cranky" playing, and fired him regularly. Eventually, however, he turned from interior decorating to playing the piano in the restaurant attached to that very firm.

He began composing early, broadcast several of his compositions from 3YA, and also, with Ngaio Marsh and Dr. Henry Jellett, composed a musical comedy.

Then two years ago, he decided he was getting into a rut. He left New Zealand, landed in Sydney with little or no finance, and spent five weeks looking for a job. Eventually he landed one playing in a cafe, and soon afterwards came engagements to play for the ABC.

Australian listeners took to his unusual style of playing, and appreciated his strange original compositions, some

## DEATH OF BLANCHE MARCHESI

**E**ARLY in April two years ago an elderly woman with an imperious air sat on the platform of Wigmore Hall in London and delighted her audience with what she called an 'hour of music. She was that legendary figure, Madame Blanche Marchesi, whose death at the age of 77 was announced last week.

Blanche Marchesi was born in Paris in 1863, two years after Melba, who

of which have been played by Jim Davidson's Band.

This is not the first experience he has had of accompanying visiting celebrities. He spent ten weeks with Marie Bourke when she toured Australia recently.

"It's a grand job working for Noel Coward," says Daly. "He has an ear for the unusual in harmony, and gets just those little subtle touches which make all the difference."

We published Daly's photograph last week.

was "discovered" by Blanche's famous mother, Mathilde Marchesi. The mother's studio in Paris was the mecca of singers of three generations almost up to the time of her death at 90.

Blanche Marchesi was able to boast of having sung before all the crowned heads of Europe. She sang for the Kaiser in his private theatre at Potsdam, and she was frequently commanded to sing to Queen Victoria. For many years she taught in England, but did not find the British singer ready to sacrifice everything for her art. "She stops for tea," she would remark, "or gets married, or decides that her parents are lonely and need her. When I was young. . . ."

But then the world has altered since opera was the moon of Society's delight and they used to sit on stiff-backed chairs in high-necked drawing-rooms while strange people with famous names sang to them in many languages. Those were the days when a B Flat was a B Flat and not a falsetto from the larynx of an emasculated crooner.

—B.W.

## "Green Meadows"

**T**HE scene is a country schoolroom. A small boy is called out by the teacher, who demands to know what he is eating.

"Nothin', Miss."

"But what is that you have in your mouth?"

"A prune, Miss; but I'm not eating it. I'm only soaking it until recess time."

This is one of the bright spots in the opening chapters of "Green Meadows," the new Macquarie radio production which will shortly be heard from all the ZB stations. "Green Meadows" is claimed to be the first Australian rural feature which is not a caricature containing fantastic types.

The story of "Green Meadows" is the story of life in a country town. Into the story move all the personalities which make up the sum of life in such a town. There is some delightful juvenile humour, centring round a group of lively young-

sters who have a "Blood Brotherhood," a secret society which meets in a barn, and the initiation rites of which call, among other things, for the use of a "sacred bowl" of beetroot juice blood.

In the town there is a Vigilance Committee, dominated by a self-appointed chairman who makes herself responsible for the mental, physical, and moral well-being of the town. Many intriguing situations develop around this well-disliked woman, and a new and attractive school-teacher from the city.

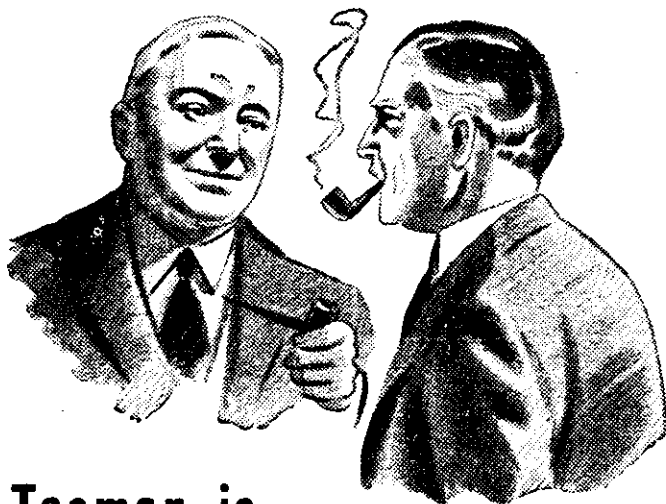
The school teacher's reactions to country life and the country's reactions to the school teacher form the main thread in the pattern of the story.

"Green Meadows" starts at 4ZB on January 6, 3ZB January 13, 2ZB January 20, and 1ZB January 27. It replaces the feature "Andy the Yes Man."



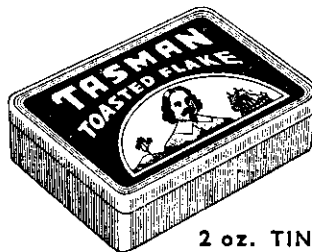
**DARK DOINGS IN A COUNTRY TOWN.** Three of the youngsters who provide much of the humour in the new feature "Green Meadows," soon to be heard from the ZB's. Lucy is played by Joyce Williams, "Wagger" Riley by Desmond Forrester, and Jimmy Gullen by Rodney Jacobs.

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