



# THINGS TO COME

## A Run Through The Programmes



**W**E have read a number of Russian novels. Our minds are full of little pictures of sledges whizzing over the snow and wolves lurking in the darkness of the firs, or of rippling wheat fields and the Don flowing quietly. But whether we owe literary allegiance to the south or to the north, the Russian summer or the Russian winter, we have all heard of the Cossacks. Most of us will have heard Nelson Eddy singing, "Ride, Cossack, Ride," and we're bound to have a few ideas about handsome horsemen climbing up or galloping over the Steppes. Anyway, we all should know that a Cossack is justly renowned both as fighter and as lover, but that he does not tend to keep his two amusements in watertight compartments. That is why we have our doubts about "Black Eyes—Russian Gipsy Song," one item from a bracket of gipsy songs to be heard from 3YA on Thursday evening, January 15.

### Backstage

Somebody or other once said that any job is more attractive than one's own, and that may be one explanation of the strange curiosity which the listening public evinces in what goes on behind the scenes at a broadcasting station. To help satisfy this curiosity, 42B has a session *Behind the Mike* (every Wednesday evening at nine o'clock), which ex-

plains what makes the radio wheels go round. Originally the idea of 42B's station director, Merton Bullivant, it has been built up and prepared by Don Donaldson. It explains how a radio programme is created, auditioned and sold; how sound effects are made; how an announcer is tested for a job and what he does when he has got it; how commercial continuities are written and polished up for broadcasting; in short, the backstage story of a radio station. *Behind the Mike* has proved so popular that the idea has been incorporated in the programmes of other stations.

### Duets and Aspidistras

We have never been able to understand why aspidistras should have fallen into disrepute, for there are few things more aesthetically satisfying than the sight of a well-groomed, abundantly



leafed aspidistra. People who dislike aspidistras try to justify their attitude by maintaining that aspidistras are useless, but then they prove their inconsistency by decorating their occasional tables with never-used candlesticks or china figurines. But we can think of lots of uses for the aspidistra. Quite apart from its functional value as ashtray and receptacle for coffee dregs, we would recommend its use in place of the conventional palm for decorating the concert platform. Then we would see little more of the sort of thing depicted by our artist, for all that is needed to prevent it is a row of abundantly-leafed aspidistras across the front of the platform, and a stool for the tenor concealed behind. So while we are listening to the programme of World Famous Duets, to be presented from 3YA next Tuesday evening, let us pay a passing tribute to the much-maligned aspidistra.

### Out of the Haystack

Mrs. Stamp Taylor opens up an extensive territory in her latest series of talks, *Needlework Through the Ages*, the second of which 2YA will broadcast on Wednesday forenoon of next week (January 14). We don't know who invented the needle, but it must have happened a long time ago. How otherwise could Adam and Eve have made themselves aprons of fig-leaves? And take that determined woman Jael, who so ex-

pertly shuffled off Sisera with a needle, or was it a bare bodkin, or a hatpin? In any case, between these classic examples and the needle which Great-aunt Agatha so unfortunately sat upon at Epiphany, Mrs. Stamp Taylor should find an abundance of talks-material. Indeed, she is faced with almost an *embarras de richesses*, as the Free French put it. To deal adequately with all the possible subjects in an average radio series will be like getting a camel through the eye of a needle, and everyone knows just how difficult that is, what with the two humps and all.

### Garden Vital Points

Now that the Serpent of War has raised its Vile Head even in this Demi-Paradise of the Pacific, it is not mere coincidence that has caused the A.C.E. to prepare a talk entitled "Make Use of the Garden" (4YA, Wednesday, January 14, 3.15 p.m.), for those of us who, like Napoleon, know that the girth of a nation determines its endurance have long been aware that the garden is a vital point in hemisphere defence. But of late, gardens have been turned over to other purposes than growing food. They have been shovelled into sandbags and split into slit trenches and otherwise mucked about in such a way as seriously to affect the rotation of crops. In fact, if the Nippon cruisers do come this way, there'll be precious few peas for them to shell. Unless, of course, the A.C.E. intended to tell us how to overcome the many unnatural obstacles to successful gardening which we have ourselves created recently.

### Bark Royal

"Sea-dogs of Elizabeth, John Hawkins and Francis Drake," is the salty title of the *Cavalcade of Empire* session to be broadcast by 2YA on Sunday next. Salt



is also recommended along with the illustration which our literally-minded artist has provided above. But if Good Queen Bessie's sea-dogs were not so completely canine, it should be remembered that they spent a good deal of their sea-time chivvying the sea-cows (or fair cows), as the Spaniards were affectionately known, hunting the beaver (see King of Spain's beard), tactfully avoiding the cat-o-nine-tails, and in general getting into as many scrapes as the faithful

hound normally does. They may have had at times a raucous bark, unlike the hounds of Duke Theseus, which were "matched in mouth like bells, each under each," but again unlike the ducal pack they were not slow in pursuit. And in this latter, and most important quality, the strain still runs true, even though the art of barking is less cultivated in today's Silent Service.

### Premature

War brings in its train many inconveniences. There are minor ones like having to spoil our kitchen colour schemes by hanging up placards printed in red and white, and major ones like being unable to reap full benefit from our Sunday afternoon nap because we have a sneaking feeling we should be digging trenches somewhere. But so far we have managed to preserve intact the major pleasures of life. We can still buy as many clothes as we want to, and so far, there has been no move on the part of the Government to restrict our feeding. We have a long way to go before we start preying even on the household pets. We feel, therefore, that it is premature of 3YA to present on Saturday, January 17, at 8.27 p.m., Ted Steele and his Novatones playing "Dinner Music for a Pack of Hungry Cannibals."

## STATIC



**O**NLY one thing is more terrifying than a woman's memory, and that is a man's forgetfulness.

**W**E often repeat our mistakes to prove to ourselves that we haven't made any.

**Dinner music item:** "Spring in Japan" (Ohno). Oh, No!

**And another:** "Japanese Intermezzo" (Chapius). What an untimely Chapius.

**A MAN** whose wife frequents beauty parlours is bound to believe in the supernatural.

**FAMOUS** film stars frequently move in the best triangles.

**DEFINITION:** Quisling—a Norse of a different colour.

## SHORTWAVES

**T**HERE is only one thing in the world worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about.—Oscar Wilde.

**I**T is preoccupation with possession, more than anything else, that prevents men from living freely and nobly.—Bertrand Russell.

**A MAN** of genius makes no mistakes; his errors are volitional and are the portals of discovery.—James Joyce.

**I** DO not say that I was ever what is called "plain," but I have the sort of face which bores me when I see it on other people.—Margot, Countess of Oxford and Asquith.

**C**HILDREN always react to and revolt against parents, so we might as well stop trying to be good parents and be bad ones. That will give them something to kick about.—Lawrence Langner.