

THINGS TO COME

A Run Through The Programmes

THE concert from 1YA on Friday, December 11, should be welcomed by many listeners. Beginning with Mozart's Symphony in D Major (the "Paris"), the concert continues with a studio recital by Lyla Fastier and is followed by Beethoven's "Egmont" Overture performed by the studio orchestra. Later in the evening you may hear Bronislav Hubermann playing in Tchaikovsky's violin Concerto in D.

Inside America

America is to many so much a land of Hollywood stars, gangsters, and successful businessmen that a trip Inside America might seem disappointing if the sidewalks did not continuously echo the footsteps of glamorous girls, while big stiffs lurked round corners to kidnap the well-guarded babies of millionaires. A series of talks by Faith Mathew from 2YA on Tuesday mornings at 11.0 is designed to disillusion or reassure those who still think in such terms. Mrs. Mathew is concerned with life in a small but important part of America — New England. We look forward to her account of the quiet and gangsterless life in this, the oldest settled part of the U.S., where everyone who is not a New Englander is regarded as a foreigner, and where your way of living is still more important than what you make by it.

Rats and Mussels

"Biological Bits," the title of the series of talks by Elizabeth Richardson (2YA, Wednesday, December 9, at 11 a.m.), reminds us of what the neighbour's cat left on our back doorstep last week. But while cats, biologists, and small boys are frequently concerned with rats, Mrs. Richardson is making a welcome excursion into marine biology. Could our young hopeful hear this talk on "Mussels Form Pearls," we would tremble for the mussel population of our favourite beach this summer. But perhaps Mrs. Richardson will draw the pleasing moral that if you can get pearls from mussels, you can also make a silk purse from a sow's ear and a Nuffield from the family Silas Marner.

Reap the Wild Oat!

To quote two lesser-known Sanskrit proverbs, "If you can't teach your grandmother how to suck eggs neither can your grandmother teach you which basket to put them all in," and "If anybody thinks they can tell other people all about their mistakes and stop them making them themselves, they're very much mistaken, because they can't, because people will always make them, anyway." So if Jane Smith thinks all her listeners will profit by any advice she may give in her talk "I Learned by Experience" from 3YA on Monday she is probably mistaken. But it should still be worth hearing.

Vive la Campagnie!

We had always thought that bushcraft consisted in lighting two fires (or three cigarettes) with the one match,

taking stones out of horses' hooves with that spike-thing you have on your jack-knife, and knowing all there is to know about the Greater Crusted Wood Bumbler. But from the title of the talk which A. P. Harper will give from 2YA this Saturday (December 5), bushcraft is appar-



ently something which you use to cross rivers before you come to them, or perhaps after you have burned your boats behind you—at a safe distance behind you, of course. All of which, naturally, makes it a very topical talk, and one to which one can refer with confidence so long as there is one more river to cross.

Birds in Hand

Birds are again in the programmes, this coming week from 2YA (Friday, 11.0 a.m.) when Beryl Dowdeswell is going to talk about "Queer Birds". Without wishing in any way to horn in on the speaker's territory, we ourselves can think of quite a quantity of queer birds. Think, for example, of those poor, shivering unfortunates, the birds of one feather. No wonder they flock together

RECENT MUSIC

(No. 39: By Marsyas)

BEETHOVEN'S Fifth Symphony was performed by the 3YA Orchestra conducted by Will Hutchens. As the 3YA orchestra does not possess (or does not employ) two oboes, two bassoons, and two horns, nor even one of any of these, the work was bound to start at a certain tonal disadvantage. In the actuality it began at another and worse disadvantage — the opening figure, the famous V, was ponderously thumped out, one beat per quaver, and this in spite of the direction of *Allegro con brio* an inch or two away on the conductor's score. The man who gives the "don'ts" in the Air Force Morse broadcasts could have shown them how to "send" that V: ("Don't use the whole forearm to depress the key—you must use a light movement of the wrist . . ." etc.)

In the remainder of the work very clean playing (arising perhaps out of aural familiarity) failed to compensate for the absence of those three distinctive instruments which contribute the most meaningful individual utterances to the work.

FROM 1YA the Westminster Trio (two violins and piano) gave a good recital. Though reception was poor and the

FRIEDMAN CONCERTS

After several delays, Ignaz Friedman, the Polish pianist, has arrived in New Zealand, too late for his recitals last Sunday and Monday to be included in "The Listener." His programme of evening performances for the next fortnight is as follows:

STUDIO RECITALS:

2YA: Thursday, December 3; Sunday, December 6; Tuesday, December 8.

1YA: Friday, December 11; Sunday, December 13.

PUBLIC PERFORMANCES (re-broadcast):

1YA: Wednesday, December 16.

2YA: Sunday, December 20.

for warmth under such ruthless rationing. Then there is the bird thou never wert, the bird that the early worm gets, those lucky birds that live in gilded cages, and the unfortunate humming-birds who haven't a best friend to tell them. Then, too, there are birds of a different colour. Mrs. Dowdeswell, in short, will have plenty to talk about.

By These Presents

Christmas comes, if we may coin a phrase, but once a year, but when it comes it brings a flock of troubles and tribulations to harass us. We hope, for example, that this year we shall not (as we did in '39), so far succumb to the blandishments of salesmanship as to send Great-Aunt Agatha a needle and an anchor in return for her hand-embroidered whatnot. We shall, instead, listen to the ZB gift sessions and pray that our Christmases may be forgiven, as we forgive them that Christmas against us.

piano badly placed in relation to the microphone, enough of a *Handel Sonata in G Minor* came through to afford the impression that the players were enjoying the music itself just as much as I was.

They followed it with a *Sonata a tre* by the man of whom Handel said: "He knows no more counterpoint than my cook." Gluck's operas, as it happens, are still performed, whereas Handel's are not—not that this disproves Handel. But it would be as foolish to look for Gluck's known greatness in a *Sonata a tre* as to look for Wagner's in a string quartet (if ever he had written one), and it is true that this sonata sounded poorly after Handel in *G Minor*. Still, there were pleasant moments that distracted the ear from the concentration of waiting for something as broad and serene as *Orpheus*.

WHICH reminds me that the Christchurch Orpheus Choir sang two madrigals. The familiar *Silver Swan* (Gibbons) was delivered as a sort of dirge, heavy and brutish. Perhaps it was of such a performance that Coleridge wrote: "Swans sing before they die; 'twere no bad thing Did certain persons die before they sing." On the other hand, *Flora gave me fairest flowers* was lightly and happily sung.