

# THINGS TO COME

## A Run Through The Programmes

**T**HE 3YA gardening expert is going to talk about lifting bulbs on Monday next and we are looking forward to listening-in. Perhaps he will give us some instructions for finding the bulbs we intend to lift. We are full of that January-spring-planning feeling and so far nothing has come of it. We decided to lift those six expensive bulbs of *Narcissus bulbicodium* (petticoat daffodil, as our friends call them) from which there fluttered in September that one frail yellow cup—you remember? The one the snail nibbled. But funnily enough we can't remember just which stone marked them. There was the stone we put our *Narcissus jonquillus* beside, the one that has scarlet tulips all round it, and the one with the white and mauve crocuses or croci; but which is which of these and which other one shelters *bulbicodium*, we just can't remember.

### Keir Hardie

James Keir Hardie, a Lanarkshire miner who led the Socialist movement in England at the end of last century and up to the Great War, is commemorated in a BBC programme to be broadcast from 2YA on Friday, January 22. Hardie was born in 1856, and worked as a miner in great hardship until he was 24, when he became union secretary. In 1887 he founded *The Miner*, which became the *Labour Leader*, one of the earliest Socialist papers; from 1892 to 1895 he was a member of Parliament, and again from 1900 until his death in 1915. Within the Independent Labour Party he spread Socialist doctrines, and tried to persuade the Socialist\* International to call a general strike in the event of war. The failure of this ambition depressed him and is believed to have hastened his death.

### Bad Business

If any one still imagines that he might, but for the law, do business with Hitler, he will change his mind after listening to a few episodes of the new ZB serial *You Can't Do Business With Hitler*. This programme is based on the book by Douglas Miller, who was for 15 years U.S. Commercial Attaché to the Embassy in Berlin. It exposes Nazi propaganda methods and the political control of business—applied in milder form to American deals, in more brutal shape to other European states. The serial may be heard from 22B on Fridays at 6.30 p.m., from 12B on Fridays and Saturdays at 8.45 p.m., from 32B on Mondays at 6 p.m., and from 22A on Mondays and Wednesdays at 8.45 p.m.

### Junketing Around

The world of to-day is such a whirl of adventure in varying elements that we have to distinguish between air thrills, ice-capades, tropicalities, and ship-recklessnesses. In the last category comes the ZB serial *Adventure on the High Seas* (which may be heard on Fridays at 7.15 p.m. Saturdays, at 8.15 p.m. from 22B, and which starts from 12B on January 15, 32B on January 22, 42B on January 29, and 22A on February 5, at the same times). The adventures are retold by Dr. E. Allen Petersen, who went to China at the time of the out-

break of the war with Japan, was bombed out of Shanghai, and made off in a Chinese junk in which he sailed 17,000 miles round the Pacific.

### Which Foot First?

Etiquette is the first step toward civilisation; abandoning it is the second. But before we can do any abandoning



or acquiring we must know what etiquette is. This is what Mrs. Dorothy Beavis will tell us on Friday mornings at 11.0, if we listen to 2YA. Our artist shows how ignorance on points of etiquette may disconcert a dowager; and though there is no peerage in New Zealand we may practise in the quiet of the home lest we some day offend an honourable unawares. We look forward to hearing how we may address whom, and with which foot we may shake off the dust of what.

## RECENT MUSIC

(No. 45: By Marsyas)

**A** PROGRAMME of music by Canadian composers, recorded by the BBC Symphony Orchestra, under Sir Adrian Boult, was broadcast recently by 2YA. Violet Archer's overture *Britannia* opened it. Unfortunately it seems that by some mistake half the orchestra had the wrong parts on their desks—those of a well-known, but unwell-loved overture by William Walton. The result, a raucous cacophony and most unladylike. It might be described as *Portsmouth Point* without the point. *Marching Tune* for strings, by Hugh Bairncroft, a Winnipeg organist, is quite a passable contrapuntal exercise on a not very distinguished tune. A brassy *Rondo* for orchestra by Barbara Pentland, lacking clarity both of purpose and of execution, suffered a rueful fate—the BBC's recording developed a fault, and the 2YA operator was forced to fade it down and bring on the next commentary. The temptation to do this must have been present long before the needle reached the crack.

Godfrey Ridout's *Ballade for Viola and Strings* approached the opposite pole, of euphonious pleasantry. It is pleasant to hear, and an imaginative melodic invention is developed in the solo passages. John Weinsweig's *The Enchanted Hill*, based on a poem by Walter de la Mare, draws on much colourful material for brass instruments, but the whole effect is that of the familiar style of film music rather than what one would imagine de la Mare might hope for. Of Healy Willen, whose

## Romantic McKenzies

Nine McKenzies became famous enough during our first hundred years to earn a place in our Dictionary of National Biography; one as a Prime Minister (for 104 days) and one as a sheep-stealer. For every reader of *The Listener* who could write a hundred words of fact about the Prime Minister there are probably half a dozen who could do the same for the sheep-stealer, since we are a romantic race, and absurdly sentimental. But there is another McKenzie in our story who makes even the raiding shepherd a very ordinary fellow. A sheep stealer after all is just a thief; but the McKenzie who will be the subject of a talk from 4YA on Tuesday, January 19, was a thief and something very romantic besides. Tuna in at 7.5 p.m. and discover what.

## Music for Fairy Tales

Like Debussy, Elgar, Prokofieff, and others, the French composer, Maurice Ravel wrote music for the pleasure of children—a suite of piano-duet pieces called *Ma Mère L'Oye* (Mother Goose), and it is his own colourful orchestral version of this work that will be heard from 2YC on Wednesday, January 20, at 9 p.m. There are five pieces in the suite: The Pavane of the Sleeping Beauty; Hop o' My Thumb (depicting the adventure with the breadcrumbs); Little Ugly, the Empress of the Pagodas (who was serenaded in her bath on musical instruments made of nutshells); Conversations of Beauty and the Beast (describing in music the magical transformation of beast into prince); and the final piece, simply named The Fairy Garden.

choral-orchestral setting of *The Trumpeter* by Alfred Noyes brought the programme to a clangorous end, I would ask whether, after all, one kind of Noyes was not enough?

It would have been more encouraging to feel that these Canadian composers (some of them young) were denying themselves some things rather than greedily helping themselves to all the thousands of new pigments, patterns, and perspectives which modern experimental composers have made accessible—inventions which may seem at the first glance to be vast in extent and variety, but which may in fact be as limited in their scope as were the resources of the most poorly endowed periods musical history has known.

FROM 2YA the tenor W. Roy Hill carefully chose and tastefully sang a group of English songs, from Morley to the younger Arne, one a 16th century song on words generally ascribed to Ann Boleyn. The recital as a whole was almost beyond reproach, since Mr. Hill is a singer who is not afraid to lay his whole self at the disposal of the composer and poet of whatever he sings; and given a voice like Roy Hill's, the song will do the rest. If any fault were to be found, it would be the accompanist, who failed to follow the singer through his sensitive changes of mood. The parts were not clear in the Morley, and even trills were bumbled in the Arne setting of *Come Away Death*.

Misprint last week: "Mysterious ballet" should have been "meretricious ballet".