



worthless abstract painting. The talks were a survey of what had been and is being done rather than what I had hoped for: a series on the nature of aesthetic truth as it comes across in paintings and sculpture, whether past or present, representational or abstract. This is what is needed, and what I hope to hear from Mr. Westbrook in the not too distant future.

—Westcliff

Summer Programmes

SEVERAL weeks of thumbing through radio programmes without enthusiasm compelled me finally to examine myself to decide whether I was jaundiced or the programmes dull. I have concluded that if there is a mote in my own eye, the beam is in that of my brother, the programme organiser. Summer listening seems to be regarded as of minor importance; serious programmes, and by that I only mean programmes that are not totally a waste of time, tend to be kept for the winter months. Yet the lame and the halt and the parents of young children who probably make up the steady core of the listening public have their infirmities with them all the year round. At the moment, for their delight, a collection of aged serials has been arranged, a few "imperishable stories," and evening music which can rarely for an hour at a time be properly entitled a programme. With the reappearance of *Book Shop* and the most welcome addition of the BBC *World Theatre* to our programmes, however, it looks as if the period of summer repose is coming to an end, and perhaps at the time of the equinox we may look forward to good listening again.

Talking of Books

WHAT constitutes a good book talk I have never been able to decide. Careful analysis of plot and style in the manner of a literary review can waft the listener on waves of boredom into a private dream; too many books can be confusing; too few, dull. Among the most successful book talks are those of Gwen Sutherland, who broadcasts "A Farm Wife's Reading" from 4YA once a month in *Countrywoman's Magazine*, and the reason for her success is probably the enthusiasm she brings to her reading and to her talking about it. Her tastes are catholic; and one may be sure, whatever one's own interests, that

at some point Gwen Sutherland will touch them. I suppose most book talks are given by enthusiastic and confirmed readers. It is only after listening to Gwen Sutherland that I realise how few of them sound as if they are.

—Loquax

Present and Past

HOW grateful one is for the immediacy of radio, which gave us in the nine o'clock news on the very same night an interview with Yvette Williams, still dusty from the jumping pit, and then, a few hours later, presented a quiveringly alive broadcast of the All Blacks' match against the Barbarians. On the other hand I am frequently grateful for the fact that radio isn't always as immediate as all that. In the three *TIFHS* a week I listen to we never get further than mid-1953. At this rate, we can afford to dismiss as scaremongery the idle talk of gossip columnists that it isn't Joy Nichols, it's two other young women, and that Dick is in Australia doing Gently Bentley. The Nichols-Bentley-Edwards combination is solid to all who have no difficulty believing the evidence of their ears, and our 12,000 miles from the BBC should give us another six months of agreeable *status quo* while everyone else is taking dubious sips of the future.

The Well-built Character

AND NOT TO YIELD (A Story of Character-training Through Adventure) was a good example of the limitations of the documentary form when the object is to win friends as well as present facts. This programme, which deals with the "Outward Bound" system of youth training in Britain was guilty of the most fundamental failure in radio, a failure to communicate. Possibly it would have taken salesmanship to convince the average pretty-sitting New Zealander of the necessity for the vow of "no smoking, no drinking and a cold shower every morning" (which sounds to the irreverent ear as though it should be tagged on to Wallis Eaton's "Long Live Freedom"); but even within the limits of the documentary technique it could have been done if we could have heard the inside story from the boys rather than the outside one from Wynford Vaughan Thomas, who could afford to be enthusiastic. And it was perhaps unwise to give the sub-title "Character-training Through Adventure" when listeners were to be given no opportunity to view the Well-built Character.

—M.B.

Trade Unions Today

TRADE unionism in five countries is being discussed in talks from the YA and YZ stations at 9.15 p.m. on Thursdays, starting this week (March 4), when A. H. Berry, Secretary of the Auckland branch of the New Zealand Engineers' Union, talks about unions in the United States. On Thursday, March 11, R. R. Broadby, Secretary of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, will continue the series by discussing Australian unionism, and on the following three Thursdays there will be talks on trade unionism in the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and New Zealand, respectively, by F. L. Langley, National Secretary of the Carpenters and Joiners' Union; T. E. Chester, Director of the Acton Society Trust; and James Thorn, former New Zealand High Commissioner to Canada and a well-known writer on Labour questions.



The LORD MAYOR of BIRMINGHAM

Alderman G. H. W. GRIFFITHS says

"I would like you to know more about the great City of which I am proud to be Lord Mayor. It is with pleasure therefore, that I invite you to send for a copy of the latest Guide Book which, profusely illustrated, describes Britain's Second City, tells something of its history, of its civic activities and of its great variety of trades."



Take the Lord Mayor's advice and mail the coupon for your copy of the latest guide to BIRMINGHAM, Britain's Second City.

To the Rt. Worshipful the Lord Mayor of Birmingham,
c/o The City of Birmingham Information Department,
The Council House, Birmingham, England.

Please mail copy of latest guide to

Name (BLOCK LETTERS) _____

Address _____

N.Z.T.

