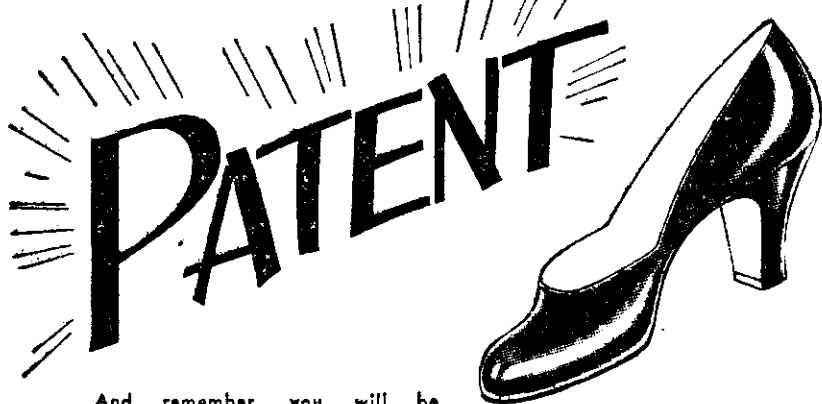


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RADIO REVIEW

Competent and Interesting

ON LOCATION, the hour-long feature woven by Arthur Jones around the recent invasion of New Zealand by a British film unit working on John Guthrie's *The Seekers*, proved to be one of the most competent and interesting documentaries produced in NZBS studios for many a long day. It was a brilliant piece of mosaic—with joins and cuttings neatly concealed—which managed to compress into its time a great deal about the technique of film-making, the special difficulties of making feature films in New Zealand, the nature of this particular picture, and specialised information from people in charge of costumes, make-up, continuity and so forth. I found the discussions with Ken Annakin, the director, and Peter Hennessey, the camera-man, especially absorbing; but Jack Hawkins and Noel Purcell, whether reading a part of the script or just chatting, were the real stars of the show. This feature was a credit to all concerned, and a particular word of praise is due to Athol Coates for a smooth job as commentator.

Psychiatry Without Jargon

THE series *The Foundations of Mental Health*, which has recently concluded from 1YC, seemed to me to contain an excellent amount of common sense, as well as to present some of the more important findings of modern psychiatry in language refreshingly free from jargon. The anonymous psychiatrist who was interviewed throughout was careful to separate speculations from experimentally established facts, and to define each technical term. I thought that the sessions on parent-child relationships were particularly good, not so much because of any new concepts they offered, as for their systematic justification of what instinct teaches the responsible parent. However, the presentation left a little to be desired. The interviewer, whom I guess from his voice to be Arnold Wall, asked his questions naturally and apparently spontaneously, while the psychiatrist himself was only too obviously reading, and thus gave sometimes an impression

of pedantry and pomposity which contrasted with the untechnical and down-to-earth nature of his comments.

—J.C.R.

Richard of Bordeaux

WRITING a paragraph about *Richard of Bordeaux* makes me feel rather like Shakespeare confronted by his wooden O. Perhaps I could begin by saying that any resemblance between Gordon Daviot's Richard II and Shakespeare's is purely historical. Of the two I much prefer the later model. Miss Daviot's blend of artist, philosopher and realist is much the more credible, though this may be because he expresses himself in 20th Century idiom, is influenced by reasonably 20th Century motives, and speaks to a 20th Century audience. (The Elizabethans, and even his contemporaries, would have found him incomprehensible.) John Gielgud makes him a moving and compelling character, though he failed to convey the youth of the Richard of the first few scenes. But if Gielgud did justice to the title role the adaptation did less than justice to author and audience. To reduce the play to the meagre hour and a quarter meant heavy cutting of the lighter scenes, and we were robbed of much of Miss Daviot's wit and of a great deal of necessary illumination.

Stepping Around in Asia

PROGRAMMES such as *Asia Has a Plan* are seldom enticing but usually worth-while. Perhaps because he is conscious of this, D. G. Bridson uses almost a barker's technique to get us in—the playing of some torchy theme song from a contemporary Indian film, which the announcer assures me I'll still be whistling in 50 years' time (unlikely), and then some gay chit-chat about why I can't get fish-suppers in Lancashire. Once we're caged, however, the temperature drops and the intellectual level rises—from now on no concessions are to be made to painless listening. Fortunately, the material presented is important enough and interesting enough to need no bush, and the documentary technique is enough. But I would have appreciated a little more visual help than that provided by such clichés as "The road grew ever more narrow and tortuous," and there are surely better ways of getting listeners from one place to another than telling them: "We've talked a lot about Ceylon and now we must be on our way again." Hues of Fitzpatrick!

M.B.

"I KNOW WHAT I THINK . . ."

VICTORIA DE LOS ANGELES

I AM prepared to chase Victoria de los Angeles all round the dial, but I naturally hear her best from a local station. I am happy to report she was in excellent voice recently from 4YC. Her programme of four songs made a pleasant break between Chausson and Sibelius, especially as three of them were popular Spanish songs. The intensity and thrilling deep notes of her voice were beautifully heard in the "Clavelitos" of Valverde, when she gave the third syllable the resonance and the peculiar timbre of Spanish singing, and it was interesting to compare Guridi's "Jota" with the orchestral "Jota Aragonesa" from the same station the following evening. But the most interesting song of the programme was Schumann's "The Nut Tree" (or "The Almond Tree," as it is sometimes called), which sounded different from a German rendering of the same song, and was not quite, I should think, the song Schumann intended.

—Palladian

(Readers are invited to submit comments, not more than 200 words in length, on radio programmes. A fee of one guinea will be paid after publication. Contributions should be headed "Radio Review." Unsuccessful entries cannot be returned.)