

talk, since it left so many questions up in the air. However, the unscheduled surprise of Solomon playing Beethoven on relay to 1YC later in the week cancelled out any slight disappointment that the over-generous allocation for Troy might have caused. After all, people like myself who really want to hear long talks are queer, I suppose.

—J.C.R.

Pickled Crime

TO read the details of a crime in the daily paper or to attend a trial in person lays one open to a charge of morbid curiosity, whereas to listen to a series of Famous Trials is in the acceptable category of intellectual pursuit. Such is the difference between viewing human nature in the raw and having it served up after it has been duly salted down in legal brine. To most of us pickled crime is much tastier. And quite the most fascinating series I have so far heard is Edgar Lustgarten's *Prisoner at the Bar*. These have had a certain amount of the legal brine washed off them, though without ruining the flavour. Quite the contrary—in fact, there have been moments when I have felt that Lustgarten's talent for dramatisation has brought his characters too close for comfort, though not for excitement. The vividness of the presentation abets our natural appetite for sensation while remaining this side of good taste.

Danger Twice a Week

I'M sure Tom Corbett, Space Cadet, is very good listening for children. I'm sorry, since it seems to be my fate to listen to it twice a week, that it does not yet inspire in me that anaesthetised fondness I was beginning to feel for Superman. Ethically I should say it's superior, since it has rejected the *deus ex machina* solution—the boys defeat danger by facing it, aided, of course, by Scriptwriter's Loophole, a device whereby the cliff we hung from on Tuesday is seen by Thursday to have a handy path leading down from it. What I don't like about the programme (yet) is its technicality, the humiliation of having to ask one's child, as well as

one can through the scream of supersonic flak, exactly how an air-pressure neutraliser works. The programme is largely lacking in literary quality, though I had hopes for Roger when he described some Martian Moloch as having a face "as blank as a radar screen." It turned out, of course, that it actually was a radar screen. M.B.

Sea, Beach and Bush

THE charm of Olga Sansom's talks, "Growing Up in Stewart Island," at present to be heard from 4YA, lies in their evocation of sea, beaches and bush, and the sense of wonder that accompanied childish discoveries. As radio talks, these are not polished, nor in recalling her memories does Mrs. Sansom appear nearly as fluent a speaker as she has on previous occasions on the air. Yet in this case the occasional stumble and hesitant groping for a word give the impression of exactness in the finally captured memory, adding something to the quite distinctive atmosphere which makes these talks unusually pleasant listening.

Wit and Humour

THREADING jokes together like beads on the string of a sturdy linking narrative has always seemed to me an infallible method of constructing an interesting radio talk—always provided, of course, that one can see the point of the jokes. Professor Joseph Jones, in his series of talks on Modern American Humorists, has selected some gems of wit and humour, some old friends who lost nothing in their re-introduction, others new and valued. Although some of the talks, notably those on the cartoonists, had to rely to a large extent on knowledge of technique shared by the listener, Professor Jones overcame the difficulties very well, and he deserves particular praise for his treatment on the air of Will Cuppy, whose forest of footnotes might well have proved an impassable barrier to comprehension. By ringing a bell to denote a footnote, the speaker was able to convey both style and sense without losing any of the humour.

—Loquax

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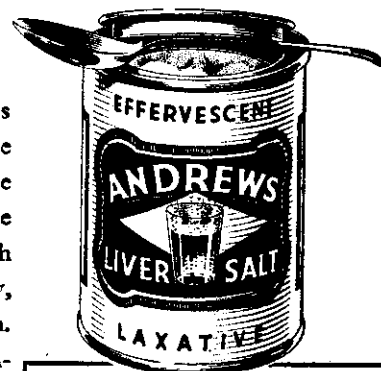
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