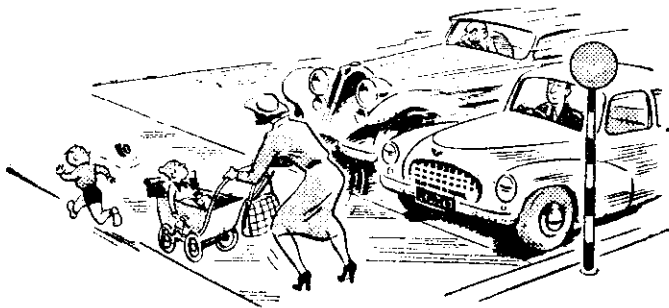


ROAD FATALITIES

February 1953 **21** February 1954 **32**

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Now at the pedestrian crossing, mate!
The rule is not to overtake.
The missus with a chick or two
Is pushing for home as well as you.

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Radio Review

WORDS AFTER MUSIC

THE newly-established custom of reading a poem or two during the interval of a concert hall broadcast is singularly appropriate. First, it is so different from the music that it makes a real "spell," and does not intrude upon the form of the main programme. Secondly, the music predisposes one to listen to poetry. "Evening Walk," by Charlotte Brontë, read by John V. Trevor during the Solomon broadcast from 3YC, brought the charm of a little-known poem to a wider public. Here and there, I confess, the poem's insistence on three consecutive rhymes at the end of long lines cast my memory back to Cyril Fletcher's "odd ode" where the too obvious device has an amusing ring, and some of the rhymes which Mr. Trevor so neatly weighed and delivered demanded all his considerable skill if they were to succeed. On the other hand, the length of the poem and the cumulative effect of the successive images from deepening night slowly pervaded the imagination with all the delights of evening. Since the poem is not readily accessible I hope we shall hear it again some time, read by Mr. Trevor.

Another John Wesley

"THE WORLD IS MY PARISH" presented a John Wesley of whose existence I had not the slightest suspicion. Harried by doubt and failing in human relationships through vacillation and inconsistencies, he was certainly made to step from his saintly niche down into the mortal throng. Perhaps too much so, for while those who look only at the radiant white of righteousness may forget the burning which produces the light, a preoccupation with the heart of the furnace itself can only show us a wretched creature fit for the pathologist. This BBC programme, broadcast from 3YC, concentrated so fiercely on the John Wesley upon whom had been visited the sins of the parents that one was left wondering how such a man could possibly have had such a wide and beneficial effect upon the life and thought of his nation. There are, after all, thousands of men burdened with as many complexes who do not burn so brightly, and surely the search for the man John Wesley must be a search for the whole man. In such a man the essential part lies not in his faults but in his effort to respond to the God in whom he believed.

—Westcliff

Good Discussion

IT does make rather a difference, to the quality of radio discussions if the "experts" are not only articulate, but are also genuine experts. Largely because this was the case in the radio-telephone *Question Mark* discussion between an Auckland team and a BBC one on changing attitudes towards the Pacific, it turned out to be a particularly interesting one, which taught at least one listener a good deal about the importance of "our" ocean and our responsibilities towards the peoples living in it. It was rather a pleasant idea to

have a New Zealander on the London team and to balance him by an Englishman on the local one, thus putting on each side a member who saw the topic from both points of view. A wide range of problems was covered, but Graham Hutton's expert chairmanship kept the talk on the point. Although this was not a debate, I felt that C. G. McKay and Dr. Cumberland had the most to contribute, perhaps because the English team seemed inclined to defer to the opinions of those who spoke from the centre of things, as it were. The technical quality of the transmission, by the way, was excellent.

Improbably Resourceful

I'M afraid that 1YA's new series *The Affairs of Harlequin* doesn't strike me as the kind of thing that is likely, in a manner of speaking, to hold children from play and old men from the chimney corner. The first episode introduced an improbably resourceful Mr. Harlequin, who quotes his own translations of Chinese poetry, uses "old boy" in every sentence, and is some kind of free-lance secret agent and one-man spy-catcher and crook-eliminator; and involved him in a dog-eared plot set in Prague and thick with murdered couriers, beautiful female agents and suave Greek thugs. A compound, it appeared, of Manning Coles, Francis Beeding and E. Phillips Oppenheim, with dashes of "The Saint" and Philo Vance thrown in. This kind of thing is very hard to do well, unless it is slick, witty and a bit tongue-in-the-cheek; but in this case neither script-writer nor cast had anything new to contribute. I can't say that I really care whether Mr. Harlequin's next assignment takes him to Vienna or Timbuktu.

—J.C.R.

Not Only for Farmers

IT seems that 2YA's Farm Session is something I should pay more attention to. I tuned in to listen to *Island of Isolation* (an NZBS feature about Wellington's Quarantine Station) and after turning a deaf ear to a talk on farming in the Chathams found my attention riveted by the BBC Farming News. This was concerned with the brilliant invention by a British farmer of a device for catching rabbits by means of an enormous butterfly net arrangement attached to the front of a tractor. The tractor blazes away with its headlamps, the rabbits sit mesmerised, the driver presses a button on the dashboard, and the net descends. Even without Harry Tate the talk seemed to have the hallmark of Variety. After this came the *Somes Island* programme—definitely homespun. I felt it could have made more effort to live up to the tang of romanticism in its title, and some of the past history of the island might well have been included. But it was discerning of the NZBS to give us a programme about *Somes Island* in the first place, since this is as near as most of us will get to it, and the method used for the feature—the direct recording of a visit to the island by a member of the NZBS—had an honesty that compensated for some gawkiness in presentation.

Desert Gold

FEW nature programmes have me sitting on the edge of my chair—the BBC *Quest in the Desert* was one of

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