

EUROPEAN JOURNEY

NOT many travellers come home to us these days with first-hand reports from East Europe, but Czechoslovakia was one of the countries visited by James Bertram on his recent trip to Europe, and in two talks of a new series, *European Journey*, which he has recorded for the NZBS, he tells what he saw there. Mr. Bertram has already written for *The Listener* about some of the places he visited overseas, and

another article is to appear shortly. In his broadcast series he takes listeners to Spain and Austria, and from there makes the journey to Prague.

"Spain—for those of us who came of age in the 'thirties—is a country of mixed and rather bitter political memories," says Mr. Bertram in his first talk, which will be heard from IYC at 9.30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 11. But since the war, he says, Spain has become one of the favourite travel-grounds of Europe. The exchange is favourable,

it is a relatively cheap country to visit, it really is sunny, and it probably has more to offer in the way of architecture and embodied history than any Mediterranean country except Italy. Mr. Bertram's journey took him from the French border town of Hendaye through San Sebastian and Avila to Madrid; though Toledo, not far away, interested him more, and he talks of its cathedral, the ruins of the Alcazar, and of the city's associations with El Greco. In Granada he visited "the true meeting ground of Cross and Crescent," where he found close by the Alhambra a solid four-square stone Renaissance palazzo, built by the Emperor Charles V "to show that Christians too could have magnificent palaces." Finally, Mr. Bertram travelled north again through Valencia to Barcelona—"another world from the rest of Spain"—with its luxury shops on the one hand and squalid tenements on the other.

Mr. Bertram went to Austria by way of Switz-

erland, which he briefly mentioned in his second talk. He had known Austria before the last war, and he suggests that today it is for the modest traveller the most attractive country in Europe—for food, lodging, travel and almost anything you may want to buy it offers quite astonishing value, and "no Euro-



CHRISTMAS trees on sale outside the Circus Building in Prague and, at top of page on left, a panorama of Toledo, showing the Cathedral on the left and on the right the ruins of the Alcazar

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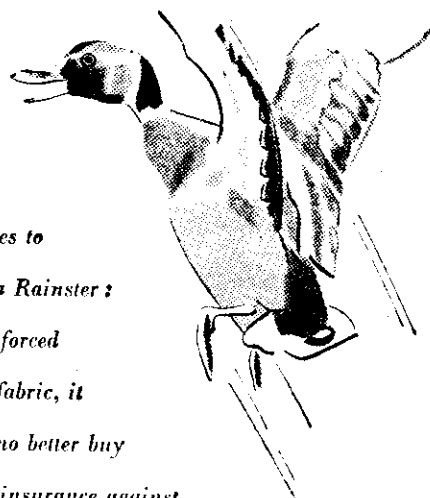
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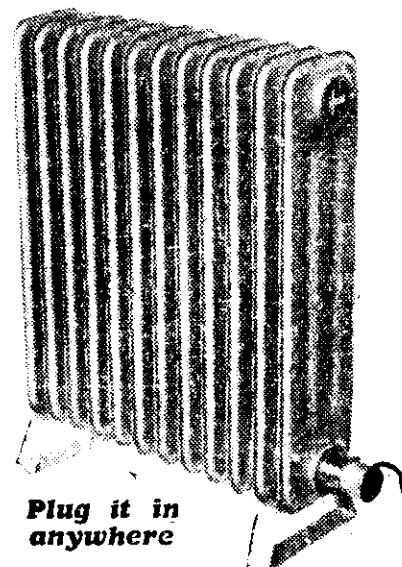
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