



"After listening to the Quiz Kids, I sometimes wonder if we're normal"

original scripts. If so, this is a distinctly retrograde step. The simple fact is that of the 12 plays broadcast from Auckland National stations during the past month, half have been BBC scripts or productions, and half NZBS "adaptations." All of which suggests that the NZBS is not breaking its neck to find local playwrights.

An Audience Singing

I WOULD never have expected Paul Hindemith to conduct community singing. Yet this is in effect what he did in *The Canticle to Hope* (1YC), his choral work for Unesco on Paul Claudel's libretto, which provided for the audience to join in the final portion. Hindemith's manifesto spoke of the need to return to simpler forms in modern music, and urged "audience participation" to bridge the gulf between performers and hearers. To my ear the *Canticle* sounded by no means easy, but, at the appropriate place, the huge Brussels audience, who had copies of the music, joined in with stirring effect. Musically this was an impressive work, suggesting aspiration and optimism, although the performance verified Gilbert's theory that:

No single word is ever heard
When singers sing in chorus.

There may be something in Hindemith's idea. Surely the yearly audience at our *Messiahs* could take a hand in the "Hallelujah" chorus by now. However, even if they did, I doubt whether the result would be half as effective (or as melodious) as that achieved by the polyglot audience in this unusual Unesco programme.

—J.C.R.

Colling Absent Friends

MY Scots blood boils with indignation that 4YA's recently established Scottish session *Calling All Scots*, should be timed to clash with 4YC's *Review*, a programme not ashamed at times to devote itself to the cultivation of the intellect. The implication appears to be that the Scots will not be interested in the subjects dealt with in *Review*, an unwarranted aspersion on a race traditionally associated with a love of learning. Or is to be regarded as a blow at Scottish prestige, dealt by the hand of the Little Enemy still in our midst? At all events, such a clash of sessions might well produce irritating results, not only to those of us who enjoy listening

to the soft accents of William Brown and are interested in most things Scottish, but to all who would like to see the Scottish session reflecting with some breadth Scottish interests. Unless *Calling All Scots* is to rely on the products of the Scottish music-halls, and it shows no signs of doing this at present, and avoids the use of Scottish music and poetry, which would be regrettable, the clash between the two sessions will become even more pronounced than at present, and should be avoided if at all possible.

Professional Production

TWO or three times a year, usually when I am reaching a state of profound gloom engendered by the amateur quality of too many programmes of local origin, I hear something which restores my faith. This time, it was the NZBS documentary *Of Ye Meat and Of Ye Drink*, written by Oliver A. Gillespie, read by New Zealand actors and produced by Bernard Beeby. This programme, which gave an account of the changing food habits of the British people over seven centuries, was packed with interesting comments and quotations, and a great deal of information, but the excellence of the script and the "professional" quality of its production, which was swift and vigorous without becoming over-excited, maintained an admirably light touch. This programme seemed to me fully up to the normal standard for a BBC documentary, and was better than some we have had recently.

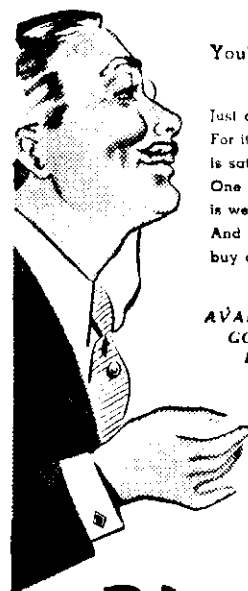
—Loquax

Comfort for Pessimists

FROM the McCarthy inquiry to the H Bomb, the sense of moral indecision and the fear that plain men may not even know where the good and right lie in these matters—this fear confronts and appalls us. Is there, for example, a moral distinction to be drawn between the stone age man who clouts a comrade with his adze and the immolation of a flattened city? And if there is a collective as well as an individual responsibility for such things, on whom does it lie? And so one could go on, itemising the burden of fear, shame and guilt that modern man bears. The ordinary man sighs, I suppose, and flips over the pages of the paper to the racing news. —A. J. Danks, in an NZBS *Lookout* talk.

N.Z. LISTENER, MAY 28, 1954.

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