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'BLISS WASHES WOOLLIES SOFTER, FLUFFIER THAN NEW,' SAYS ELIZABETH



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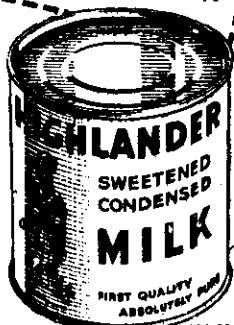
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Radio Review

THE WOMAN'S ANGLE

I FIND panel discussions in the Women's Sessions much livelier than those I hear in the evening. Of course, the women's panel has all the advantages. To begin with, we have a team of specialists talking to an audience of specialists, and this gives rise to the most delightful of discussions—shop. Then there's the Dorothy Dix angle, since the talk usually stems from a problem sent in by a worried listener; and the panel, if not quite in the same box as the writer, usually have friends that have been. The discussion, in fact, never has to resort to the academic. A typically good session was the recent treatment by the Auckland panel of two questions, one concerning teen-agers and drink, the other concerning the effect of divorce on children. I noticed that it was the man in the team who spoke from general premises, and the women from actual or near-at-hand experience. And what a difference one notices, morning or evening, towards the member of the minority sex! In the evening courtliness creeps in, but I'm pleased to be able to report that the morning's Mr. Somerville is treated like one of the girls.

North Country Accent

THE New Zealand artist may be caught in the familiar cultural dilemma, but the New Zealand consumer is in the happy position of getting his culture coming and going. Last week I heard a very enjoyable performance of Priestley's *When We Are Married* by an NZBS cast. A third-generation New Zealander, I am still sufficiently close to transplanting from British soil to feel a kinship with that North Country accent, and the richly comic situation is equally valid here or there. But there was food for thought in the fact that the locale of this New Zealand production was so convincing that it could equally well have come from BBC Regional. Granted the diffusive effect of radio is it too late, rather than too early, for us to produce a typically New Zealand culture? Or will our triumph come when we can hear a BBC production of a New Zealand play written for an Auckland accent?

—M.B.

Unfortunate Gourmets

ALTHOUGH I am still seeking for more new plays, *The Man Who Ate the Popomack* (1YC), which I had not heard before, made quite pleasant listening. I remember W. J. Turner as the witty Australian who wrote those entertaining stories about Henry Airbubble and the Duchess of Popocatapetl, and the haunting lines about the enchantment of "Chimborazo, Cotopaxi," and so I expected something out of the ordinary run of fantasy. I wasn't disappointed with most of this fable of the men who ate the exotic Popomack fruit, thereby acquiring its repulsive smell, which causes them to lose friends, and, in one case, a fiancée, despite such expedients as a diving-suit. William Austin, I thought, in particular, gave a nicely-judged performance as one unfortunate gourmet. But I always feel horribly

cheated when "it all turns out to be a dream"; and wish that Mr. Turner could have devised a neater and more meaningful ending than this last refuge of flagging invention. Here is one case in which the NZBS might justly have called in its busy play-doctors. But, then, I believe that Mr. Turner is still alive, whereas Shakespeare has been decently dead these many years.

The Early Church

PROFESSOR E. M. BLAICKLOCK'S new series from 1YC, *The World of the Early Church*, is a logical sequel to his earlier talks on *The World to Which Christ Came*. Unlike most sequels, they have all the point and interest of the original. Dr. Blaicklock manages to weave the results of modern historical research into a picture which has life and vividness, without being in any way related to CinemaScope Christianity. I was especially struck by his most recent talk on "The Early Church and the Working Classes," in which he discussed the guild formations of Roman times and the particular social atmosphere in which the Church grew, and in a few crisp sentences examined the part of Nero in the burning of Rome. In the past the BBC has given more attention to this kind of broadcast than has the NZBS. But recent programmes, these talks included, seem to indicate a broader policy. They certainly reveal that we have no lack of able and interesting speakers to discuss religious topics.

—J.C.R.

For Men Also

"IT'S an ill wind that blows nobody good," I thought, as, confined to the house for a day, I settled back to listen to 3YA's *Mainly for Women*. The chief item of interest in this particular session was a discussion between Professor McCaskill and Mrs. Cridge on improvements which could be introduced in the country's consolidated schools. This discussion, compered by Arnold Wall, was worthy of fuller treatment. It brought to at least one listener knowledge of a hitherto neglected aspect of our national life. I did not know what a "consolidated" school was, that teachers also drove the school bus, or that intellectually handicapped children in the country do not have the same facilities as town children. The afternoon session brought me the life history of a Parka; Grace Adams's whimsical story of the adventures of a species of hood and cape subjected to the contempt of a deer stalker, and the even more destructive restorative measures of a certain young man whose own tent, treated with the same oils, nearly went up in spontaneous combustion.

No Further Forward

IN our day of research and analysis the most unlikely topics are subjected to scientific observation and comment. Such treatment may have quaint and amusing results. For example, certain portions of the Kinsey Report are in their own way as amusing as would be a solid archaeological report on the Paleolithic culture of the fairies of Great Britain. On the other hand, if the subject of the research is itself humour, as in Professor Joseph Jones's 3YC talks on *Modern American Humorists*, then it may be neither humorous, nor, at least in its lower flights, relevant. To be sure,

N.Z. LISTENER, JUNE 18, 1954.