

own opinion of two of the Festival performers by hearing Jan Smetelin in a studio recital from 2YA and Andrew Gold in a Wellington performance of *Judas Maccabaeus*. In the same fortnightly Review was a review of the Players' performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, by Russell Reid and Mary Mackenzie, the latter a performer in the Festival *Wild Duck* (seen earlier by Wellington audiences), praised by J. C. Reid in the same programme. The next Sunday promises the pleasure of cultural rumination to those of us who saw the Stratford Company's *As You Like It*, since the same star will play in the BBC World Theatre version. It's all very *intime* and there's the pleasure of many a satisfying crunch, since a reviewer or performer can scarcely avoid putting his foot on someone's preconceived idea.

—M.B.

domestic tragi-comedy. At first the production seemed hesitant, the children particularly unconvincing, but the quiet force of the dramatist's conception of Jane Clegg soon gathered the play together. It seemed to me artistically perfect in the last scene where Henry, the weakling and profligate husband, draws from his complete defeat a minor triumph—without, however, robbing Jane of a cubit of her stature. The play seemed the right size for radio. Its snug interior set, small cast, its easily comprehended but seldom experienced domestic embroilments, made for listening that was more than comfortable, less than disturbing.

The Arts Reviewed

WE may have comparatively little culture in New Zealand; it may be spread thin; but thanks to broadcasting it is certainly spread evenly. Last Friday I listened to the fortnightly *Arts Review*, which included remarks on the Auckland Festival by J. C. Reid. On Saturday night I was able to form my

Half-hour Doses

THE choice of *Westward Ho!* as a serial to be administered to 4YC listeners in half-hour doses is perhaps an indication of how far some YC stations have deviated from the original plan of providing their listeners with adult programmes of a high standard. This BBC production does not appear to be of such high artistic merit as to justify its inclusion in 4YC's evening programme, while the story itself, broken into thirty-minute fragments, tends to lose the excitement it may possess when taken in one gulp. While I should not like to deny that *Westward Ho!* has any function in our programmes, I feel it would be better placed at the end of the evening, where its decidedly soporific effect might be of some value. And even this is of minor importance, when one remembers that the time occupied so unprofitably by *Westward Ho!* could be used by work of greater merit, or by our local writers.

—Loquax

Early Otago Verse

When days are short and nights are lang,
I sit me down to write a sang
In hamely Scottish jingle;
It helps to break a weary thought,
It reconciles me to my lot,
And to my homely ingle.

THAT is what John Barr wrote in some verses explaining his motives and methods of writing. Barr, who came out to New Zealand in 1852 and printed his first book in 1861, is one of the Scottish Colonial poets whose work will be heard, and discussed by Joan Stevens, in two programmes to be broadcast from 4YC, the first at 8.0 p.m. on Sunday, July 4. A love for native Scots verse, says Miss Stevens, was one of the treasures that crossed the Pacific in the Wycliffe and the Philip Laing more than 100 years ago. Burns was in either the pockets or the memories of many pioneers, and "so the tradition of poetry in Scots was transplanted as happily to Otago as any gorse or thistle."

MUSIC FOR THE QUEEN

MASTER of the Queen's Musick, Sir Arthur Bliss, composed two pieces for the Queen's return to London—a military march and a "Song of Welcome." The latter, lasting about 18 minutes, has words by Cecil Day Lewis. This professor of poetry at Oxford was asked to write the words because, says Sir Arthur, "he is such an excellent musician." He is also an excellent writer of detective stories under the name of Nicholas Blake.

As for breadth of interests, the professional musician was himself recently commended at the annual dinner of the Royal Society of Arts for his composition, "Tribute to Painting."

Sir Arthur Bliss recently conducted for the first time at a public performance at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. The occasion was the 275th production of his ballet *Checkmate*. He recalled that at the first performance during the Paris Exhibition of 1937, Margot Fonteyn filled the minor role of one of the pawns.

—J. W. GOODWIN (London)

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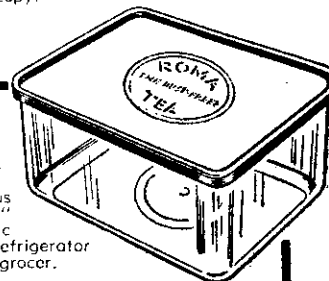


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