

FESTIVAL CANTATA

BENJAMIN BRITTEN'S Festival Cantata, *Rejoice in the Lamb*, was specially commissioned for the silver jubilee of Saint Matthew's Church, Northampton, in 1943, and was first sung on Saint Matthew's Day that year in the church. Listeners to 2YC will be able to hear a broadcast of this work sung by the Wellington Training College Choir at 9.15 p.m. on Saturday, July 31.

The words of the Cantata are taken from a long poem of the same name

by Christopher Smart, an 18th Century poet who was deeply religious but of somewhat unbalanced mind. The poem was actually written while Smart was in an asylum. It is chaotic in form but contains many flashes of genius. Britten chose a few of the finest passages to set to music, and the main theme of the Cantata, as of the poem, is the worship of God by all created things, each in its own way.

There are ten short sections in the Cantata. The first sets the theme: the second gives examples of the Old Testament to join with some creature in praising God. Subsequent sections take various examples of nature praising God; the poet refers to his own sufferings, even these being an occasion for praising God; and the work ends with a quiet and ecstatic Hallelujah.

The silver jubilee of Saint Matthew's Church was made the occasion for commissioning another notable work of art, the Henry Moore Madonna and Child which is reproduced on this page. The sculpture was conceived and made for a particular position in the church, in the north transept. Facing it, across the church in the south transept, is an eight-foot square Crucifixion by Graham Sutherland, the contemporary British water-colourist, which was also specially commissioned for placing in the position it occupies.

Among other works which the Saint Matthew's Church of Northampton has commissioned are a magazine cover by John Piper, a Litany and Anthem for Saint Matthew's Day by W. H. Auden, a poem by Norman Nicholson, and various musical works over the years. These include



HENRY MOORE'S "Madonna and Child"

HISTORY FOR EVERYMAN

IF the H-bomb blasted our civilisation to bits and Western man returned to the culture of the Stone Age, would he develop again through all the various stages, Stone Age, Bronze Age, Iron Age, up to the Steam Age and the Atomic Age as he has done before? This is one of the questions asked by Professor G. A. F. Knight, a speaker in the series of talks on *Lessons of History*, which begins from Station 2YC at 8.15 p.m. on Thursday, July 29. There are five talks in the series, the first speaker being Dr. Peter Munz, of Victoria University College. Dr. Munz discusses the changes in our concepts of the past which have occurred since the 17th Century, when history was explained in Biblical terms. Two main kinds of pattern have been thought out to explain man's development by modern historians, the pattern of progress and the pattern of the life-cycle. The theories of Spengler and Toynbee are contrasted, and the idea of progress is analysed. Other speakers are Professor W. T. G. Airey, who discusses



Spencer Highis photograph
DR PETER MUNZ

"History and Science," the Rev. G. H. Duggan, whose theme is "The Limitations of History," and Dr. J. G. A. Pocock, who will talk on "The History of History."

N.Z. LISTENER, JULY 23, 1954.

A Fanfare for Brass Instruments by Michael Tippett, *The Revival*, a short anthem by Edmund Rubbra, *Festival Anthem* by Lennox Berkeley, *Laudate Dominum* by Malcolm Arnold, and *The Full, Final Sacrifice*, by Gerald Finzi. Benjamin Britten has also written for the church an Organ Prelude and Fugue on a theme of Vittoria.

These works by contemporary artists are largely the result of efforts made by the church's vicar, the Rev. Canon W. Hussey, who has been very keen over the years to reforge the ancient link between the Church and the Arts. In a letter to Thomas Young, the conductor of the Wellington Training College Choir, which will give the New Zealand broadcast of *Rejoice in the Lamb*, Canon Hussey says, "It is encouraging to see how genuinely the people of this very ordinary, largely artisan parish have grown to love the various works of contemporary art which the church has commissioned."

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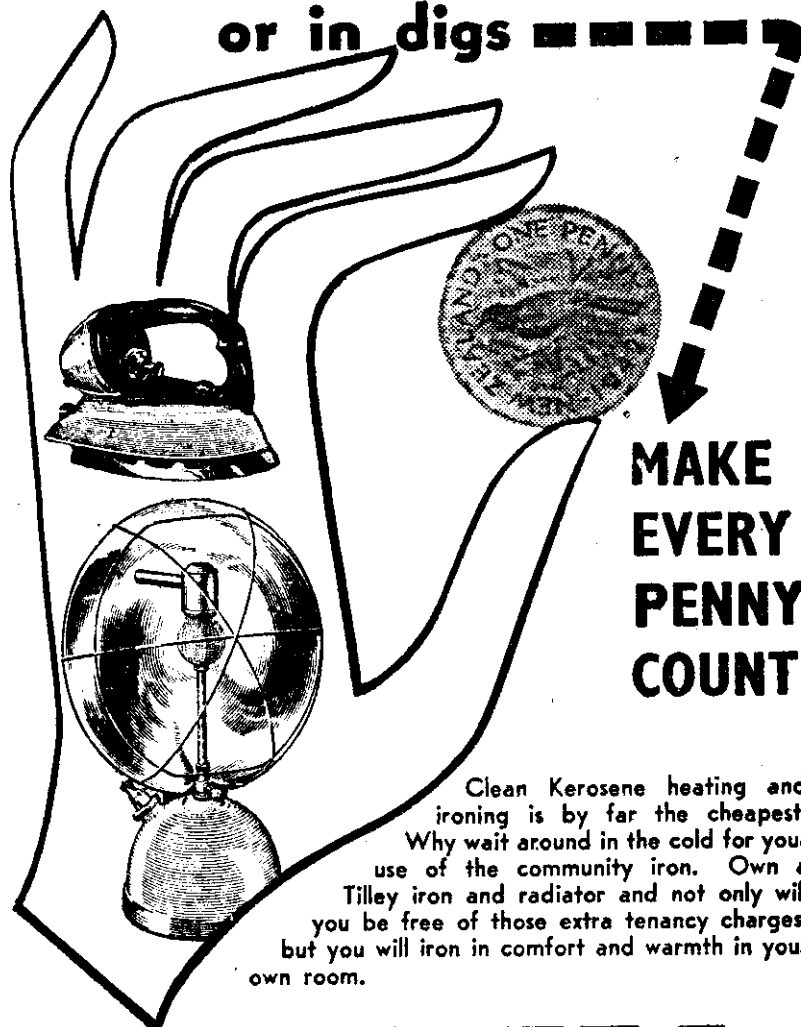
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