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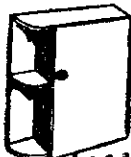
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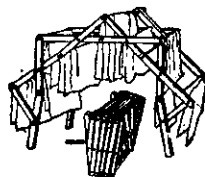
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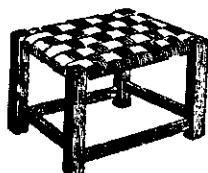
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Radio Review

INTERPRETING THE MUSIC

THE spirit is willing but the flesh weak. The programmes have been there, but "sleep it is a blessed thing," and this instinctive reaction to the long winter nights has found me sometimes nodding before the end of a programme which interested me. For instance, the last talk given over 3YC by Arthur Jacobs, which began "That was Rachmaninoff by Rachmaninoff," was among the most illuminating and whimsical by him that I have listened to. The fact that Bach scores were not originally marked for interpretation gives the player great elasticity; that Beethoven used the "pedal" when playing indicates the dominant mood he thought fitting for his music. It is no reflection on Mr. Jacobs, therefore, that I did not hear him out. On the whole, however, his anecdotal approach to music has not as often pierced to the heart of the matter as one could wish, and there have been sessions given by our own people which really did interpret for us the form in which the music has been cast.

From Myth to History

WHEREVER you stand in history the past is immeasurable and poetic. It cannot be reduced to the terms of the present, for with both the poet and the historian the past is fed into the present through an interpreting and colouring mind. But with Schliemann's discovery of Troy I like to think that poetry is more splendidly authenticated. Troy once a myth is now his-

tory. That city, the seventh Troy, according to Denys Page (over 3YC), was destroyed by fire. Then the site was for the first time in 2000 years abandoned by civilised men—2000 years, a mere pocket tucked away in time's coat, an epoch longer than ours about which we have a haystack full of facts. Of this Troy we know little; and that we owe not to a Thucydides but to a Homer, more shadowy than the walls he wrote of. Yet upon a seemingly fragile thread he strung the facts of time to suit his tale. And this tale waited until surely the most poetic of all archaeologists, nursing a childhood vision, established the grand harmony between the city as it was and as it existed in Homer's mind.

—Westcliff

Religious Discussion

THE Question Mark discussion "What has the Church to Say About Its Own Disunity?" was distinctly superior to the earlier "Empty Churches" session, both in cogency and fluency. However, the exclusively Protestant composition of the panel, implying a rather special interpretation of "the Church," meant that all members took for granted a conception of "unity" which is certainly not that of the majority of the world's Christians. Why does the NZBS apparently assume that Catholics and Jews have nothing to contribute to religious discussions? The "family affair" tone of this session limited its appeal and its effectiveness considerably. For a considerable time I thought it was going to contain nothing but propaganda for the World Council of Churches. Full marks, therefore, to the chairman, E. K. Braybrooke, for his realistic approach to the topic. By asking persistently what the present situation means to the man in the street, and by stressing the real differences in creed and organisation between the

(continued on next page)

★ The Week's Music... by OWEN JENSEN ★

A STAGE of deserted stands, dimmed lights, and three thorough-going New Zealanders—two of them sawing away at the final bars of Haydn's "Farewell" Symphony and the third gravely conducting. This, of course, was Warwick Braithwaite's gesture of goodbye to his New Zealand audiences, and the two players shaking hands, as it were, in the music, were Vincent Aspey, leader of the National Orchestra, and Haydn Murray, principal second violin. The Wellington Town Hall was full, and there was much enthusiasm.

Somehow or other, Warwick Braithwaite's last concert (2YX and, last half, YC link) was typical of the man. He did not seize the opportunity to glamourise the occasion with a presentation of "favourite" pieces culled from past programmes, or to turn on a shower of musical rockets. Instead, we were given a good solid slice of listening with a Sibelius symphony, new to this audience, and a big work of Rachmaninoff's to chew on. In between was the cool musicianly playing of Ken Smith in the Haydn Trumpet Concerto.

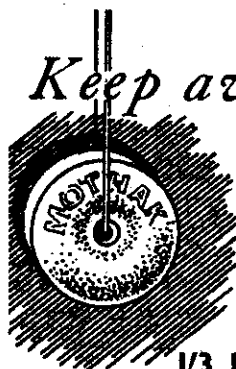
One might have thought that this Haydn Concerto would have been the pivotal mood of the programme, developing a festive air, but the rather sombre Sibelius with only an occasional wan smile, and morbidly romantic Rachmaninoff carried the night. This was one of the occasions when one wondered just what was behind the general lay-out of Mr. Braithwaite's

programme. But if the basis of his programme planning has not always been clear it can be said that Mr. Braithwaite has never played down to his audiences. He seems to have honestly tried to give pleasure to the greatest possible diversity of taste. Judging by the audiences during the last two seasons, he has succeeded in very great measure.

Mr. Braithwaite has worked with the orchestra as a patient, skilful and enthusiastic craftsman. Moreover, he has been frank with the orchestra, commending his players when they have done well, yet being ready to put them on the mat if they have paid too much attention to the old New Zealand motto: "She'll do!" He has never pretended that the orchestra is better than it is, but has been sure we appreciate it when it reaches above itself. And then, Warwick Braithwaite has constantly emphasised how valuable an asset we have in the National Orchestra. It is ours. As Mr. Braithwaite remarked at the final concert, the best praise we can give the orchestra is to go along and hear it.

The "Farewell" Symphony was an excellent piece of organisation. Players filed off the stage at the appropriate times without falling over any of the impedimenta, and lights were chastely dimmed. It was as happy a way as any to say "Cheerio" to Warwick Braithwaite and, at the same time, "How-do-you-do" to new conductor, James Robertson.

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