

FAMILIAR VERSE

THOMAS GRAY'S *Elegy* Written in a Country Churchyard is probably the best known and most quoted poem in the language. Remember? As if you didn't!

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea.

And so on to the Epitaph at the end. There are those who despise it because it is so well rubbed, just as there are some who think Beethoven's Fifth has been soiled by being played too often. But even if you belong to the fed-up-with-Gray's *Elegy* school and don't agree that it's one of the best loved poems in



"Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight" —Gray's "Elegy"

the language you couldn't deny it a place in a programme of "poems we all remember." In fact, the *Elegy*, which was first published anonymously as a pamphlet 203 years ago, is properly the very first piece in *By Heart*, a BBC series of readings of well-known poems which will start next week the rounds of National stations. The second poem in this opening programme is *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College*, also by Thomas Gray, who was at school there. The poems are read by William Devlin. Station 1YC will broadcast this programme first, at 9.30 p.m., on Monday, November 1.

The second programme of *By Heart* is a selection of Scottish border ballads read by James McKechnie. Sir Walter Scott naturally has a prominent place in this programme—it includes extracts from *Marmion* and *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*. But Mr. McKechnie also reads *Lord Ullin's Daughter*, by Thomas Campbell, and the traditional ballads *Sir Patrick Spens* and *Helen of Kircornell*. This programme will be broadcast



"— and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness"
—Edward Fitzgerald

first from 3YC at 8.17 p.m. on Sunday, November 7.

Bringing this short series to an end are readings by the distinguished British actor, Sir Ralph Richardson, of quatrains from *The Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam in the translation of Edward Fitzgerald. These will be heard first on Sunday, November 7, at 8.0 p.m. from 4YC. All the poems in *By Heart* were selected and arranged by Patric Dickinson, who also introduces some of the programmes.

In the Palm Court

If you imagine yourself at a good hotel, settled comfortably in the Palm Court for half an hour of pleasant light music after a good meal—that's the idea behind *Grand Hotel*. For a long time this imaginary hotel was a very real place for the BBC's listeners when they joined the Light Programme on Sunday evenings for the concerts given by Tom Jenkins and the Palm Court Orchestra. Two of these popular programmes have now been issued on BBC transcriptions and are to start next week the rounds of National stations of the NZBS.

A selection from *King's Rhapsody*, by Ivor Novello, opens the first concert, which will be heard from 4YZ in *Week-end Review* at 1.45 p.m. on Sunday, November 7. This concert also includes music by Delibes and a Mendelssohn Fantasia. The soloist is the Australian baritone John Cameron, who toured Australia and New Zealand in 1948-49 and later joined Covent Garden Opera as principal role baritone. He sings two old favourites, "The Road to Mandalay" and "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen." A regular feature of *Grand Hotel* is a violin solo by Tom Jenkins, and for this first performance he has chosen "Gipsy Carnival," by Jascha Krein.

A selection from *The Desert Song* opens the second *Grand Hotel* concert.

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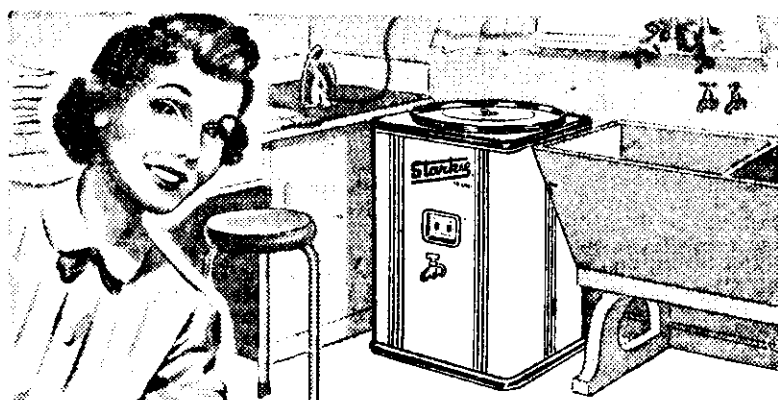
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