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



'BLISS CUTS GREASE COMPLETELY - LEAVES DISHES SPARKLING' SAYS MRS. DOROTHY M.



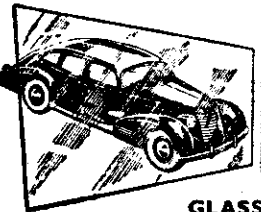
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RADIO REVIEW

The Distaff Side

STATION 1YA's *Feminine Viewpoint*, with Cynthia Dale as cicerone, continues to be pretty good value. The fact that most of it interests a male listener is a measure of its success as an intelligent women's session, for I cannot believe that any radio programme composed entirely of "women's interests" would interest many women. I still deplore the changing of the once-excellent *Background to the News*, originally geographical in emphasis, to a miscellaneous and often dull "current affairs" session. And the interminable *Country Doctor* is surely the soap-opera to end all soap-operas. Yet there is usually a good serial going (currently the choice *Dead Silence*); the film and occasional book reviews are a piquant contrast to their commercial station equivalents; interviews are frequent and well arranged, and there seems to be an ever-widening circle of good women speakers. Olive Johnson's talks on life in the Americas have been quite outstanding, and Janine Regnaud on France scarcely less interesting. And Charles Lawrence's gardening talks show that the session is no preserve of Amazons. I know little about gardening, and care less, but under the spell of Mr. Lawrence's sage personality, I find my attention caught even by the humble wire-worm.

Vintage Priestley

THERE is alleged to be a Chinese proverb: "One picture is worth ten thousand words," although I suspect that the saying is the invention of an Ameri-

can TV publicity agency. However, it isn't very far from the truth. In listening with great enjoyment to 1YA's Friday evening serial *The Good Companions*, I find that, although I read the book before seeing the film, and again some time afterwards, I still identify the main characters with their screen equivalents. Despite the radio presence of Wilfred Pickles that most ingratiating of commentators, Jess Oakroyd is Edmund Gwenn, Susie Dean is Jessie Mathews, and Inigo Jolifant is John Gielgud. Perhaps this is only because the radio version catches, as did the film, the happy spirit of Priestley's book. The story wears surprisingly well, and I don't believe that J.B. has ever recaptured its good-natured vivacity and cheerful humanism. Stereotypes the characters may be, and some of the situations obvious, but it has, I do believe, more of the real stuff of life in it than some of the very clever Third Programme things we listen to with respectful awe.

—J.C.R.

Champion of Liberty

BECAUSE a virtue is only as large as the courage with which one practises it, it is an axiom, almost, that brave men do good despite themselves. John Wilkes espoused a cause beneath which he could line his own pockets. In the public mind he appeared the champion of liberty they kept returning to Parliament. Listening to the NZBS play *The Demagogue*, I wondered if the nobility of Wilkes's cause almost made an honest man out of him. At least he seemed to be disturbed by his own lack of integrity, and that is not ignoble. On the whole I find myself tolerant towards men of action and suspicious of contemplatives. When the Edward the Confessors are exonerated for their failure to rule on the score of retiring piety I wonder if they are really good or

(continued on next page)

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

"MUSIC FOR SCREAMING" (YA link) is a programme you shouldn't have missed. It was like having an electric vibrator run through the scalp at full belt. If you were able to stand it, the toning up must have been just as effective. Jerry Colonna, maltreating "four old favourites"—"On the Road to Mandalay" was one—which have so often been put through the mangle that another going-over wouldn't do them any harm, has a voice calculated to shake every termite out of the rafters. In fact, about the nearest thing to it would be a waterfront siren with a fog in its throat, except that Mr. Colonna times his effects with what must be a quite high degree of both art and technique. In these frustrating times when, in the city at least, it is dangerous to raise one's voice in uninhibited exuberance, Jerry Colonna's screaming was a welcome vicarious pleasure. The presentation was excellently done, too.

From the human voice as a cathartic, let's turn again, refreshed, to human voices in concert, as a musical instrument. These voices were those of the girls of Victoria College for Maori Girls and the boys of St. Stephen's Maori College, featured in *Song and Story of the Maori*, which has been going the rounds of the stations. I cannot really believe that the voices of Maori young people are in general superior to those

of pakehas of the same age. That is, I can't see any physical reason for it. That this particular singing was so enlivening was due, I am sure, to the admirable combination of enthusiasm and hard work with the very significant basis of music that the singers knew, understood and loved. As music, too, it was as different as chalk from cheese to much that is palmed off as Maori music. In fact, it made most interesting and pleasurable listening.

For a surprise packet of interesting listening, too, let me recommend ZB Showcase (remember *Amahl and the Night Visitors*?) which can almost invariably be counted on to turn on something off the beaten track. This week it was a very much beaten track with the weeds cleaned up to let something a little more fragrant come through. *A Man and His Music* was a BBC production of the music of Sir Edward German. In avoiding the common fault of romanticising or over-dramatising the composer, the producers did not, perhaps, sketch in the man as clearly as might be, but the variety of music presented said what was needed to be said. It was well to be reminded that German's talent, for talent it was with no more than just a touch of genius, ranged wider than *Merrie England*, although as sung by the BBC Welsh Choir with orchestra, even this chestnut came over fresh rather than roasted.

N.Z. LISTENER, JANUARY 28, 1955.