

Lodge Listens . . .



"Here is a report from the National Rifle Shoot"

occasional; it is only since the Renaissance that music, simply as concord of sweet sound, has been listened to for its own sake. I grudge none his Sunday soporific; what is more alarming is that, to most of us, music, as a vague rhythmical or glutinous background to the overpowering tedium of the mid-20th Century, is the only occasion admitted.

—B.E.G.M.

Portraits from Life

I MET three people this week over the air, two of whom I should like to meet elsewhere. The third was F. E. Smith, First Earl of Birkenhead (*Smith of My Own Fortune*—2YC, February 18), renowned for his rapier wit, used chiefly, it seemed, to take pokes at people scarcely endowed by nature with the means of defending themselves. The compiler of the programme concluded by quoting Sir Winston Churchill's endorsement "Gay, brilliant, loyal and lovable." But too late, as we were still shivering in the shoes of the squelched. The *Portrait from Life* of Dr. Agnes Bennett (2YA, February 17), I found equally entertaining, but altogether more heart-warming and inspirational. Third portrait was Sarah Campion's "My Aunt Katie" (2YA, February 18), a personal reminiscence done with wit and style. And in this case also we found someone whom it would obviously be a pleasure to meet, especially as the wit was her biographer's.

At the Boundary

WAS Hamlet mad or wasn't he? From the audience viewpoint it's largely irrelevant, and I suspect from the author's too. For, listening to Strind-

berg's *The Father* (2YC, February 20), I realised for the first time that the madness of a character can be the dramatist's means of shifting gear into a higher dimension of tragic reality. Just as the emotional stresses to which Strindberg's hero is subjected force a breakout from the normal boundaries of personality, so the overwhelming tragic force of the play cannot be contained in the ordinary envelope of words and breaks free in the transcendental final scene of madness and death. A magnificent play, out-Freuding Freud in its vision of the struggle between sex and sex and generation and generation, and acted by players capable of channelling and concentrating the author's sense of human agony.

—M.B.

THE Supervisor of Productions, Mr. Bernard Beeby, points out that J.C.R. was inaccurate in his statement last week that in the previous three weeks no new NZBS productions had been heard from the Auckland National stations. There were three new productions broadcast, one being reviewed by J.C.R. himself in the issue of February 18. The lack of New Zealand plays is greatly to be regretted. Every endeavour is made to encourage local authors but the amount of material offering is small.

Time for Digging

"THE young woman who said to me yesterday, 'The digging season has begun,' was not thinking of flowers or vegetables. This young woman was an archaeologist, and what she was talking about was the season for opening up ancient sites, which lasts it seems from March till September."—Francis Watson, talking in the Pakistan section of the BBC's Eastern Service.



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