

PLAYBILL FOR NEXT WEEK

PLACE a beautiful woman in a romantic holiday resort in the hills south of Vienna; mix in some Hungarian gipsy music, a handsome young baron and date the whole thing July, 1911—and you have all the ingredients of a charming little radio romance. But unfortunately the beautiful woman is the mother of an eleven-year-old problem child for whom railway lines hold a morbid fascination, especially when express trains are passing.

When the lonely lad discovers that the baron's interest in his boyish affairs is only a means of attracting his mother, his jealousy, rage and humiliation transform the play from romance into drama. However, family loyalty triumphs over sorrow and the ending of *The Burning Secret* is not an unhappy one.

The Burning Secret is a play by Alan Jenkins, based on a story by the famous Austrian Jewish writer Stefan Zweig. The boy Edgar is played by Ian Hindle; his mother by Monica Grey and the baron by Noel Johnson. The play was produced by Archie Campbell and will be heard from 1YZ at 8.0 p.m. on Monday, March 14, and from other YA and X stations.

The Wind of Heaven, by Emlyn Williams, is set in Wales. It tells the story of the lad who worked a miracle (or was it mass hypnosis?) and his influence on a lonely widow and a flint-

hearted circus owner. The play begins in the summer of 1856, with the war in the Crimea just over. The village of Blestin is quiet, settled among its green, Biblical hills. In the house of proud, reticent Mrs. Parry (Davina Whitehouse) her niece (Paddy Turner) is telling her of the return home from the war of her sweetheart, Captain Isslwyn Pugh. They are interrupted by the en-



N.P.S. photograph
PADDY TURNER

trance of a local boy made good—the flashy Ambrose Ellis (William Austin) who has come to try to find a mysterious young boy for his circus. This boy, an “innocent,” has been heard to conjure music out of the air. Now music—any music—in Blestin is a miracle, for eleven years before all the children of the village under ten and many of their mothers had been drowned in a great storm. Since then only one child, this boy, had been born in the bitter village.

The child begins to heal the sick. Captain Pugh dies from the cholera he has carried back with him from the war. The child goes to the hospital where he lies dead and raises the soldier. Ambrose Ellis is overcome with the sense of a mission that he must follow the boy, preach and teach for him out in the fields, assisted by Mrs. Pugh, the former atheist. But the five-day miracle ends. The wind of heaven takes away the new Messiah, leaving the village with life renewed. Pitter (Kenneth Firth), the doubting Thomas, says to Mrs. Parry at the end: “If you believe, then he is. And whatever sand we may wager your faith is built on, the work you do will be good. I, and those like me, may be in every way better informed, but we have nothing like that. Have we even more than the mole, piteous in his deformity, burrowing blindly through the

dank earth, when an inch above his snout there is air, and sun, and the wild, stinging, cleansing rain . . . are we better than the mole?”

The Wind of Heaven, an NZBS production by Bernard Beeby, will be broadcast by 2YA on Thursday, March 17, at 9.30 p.m., and later by other YA's and YZ's.

For a little on the lighter side, the NZBS offers the H. Oldfield Box comedy *He Who Laughs Last*. In this Cinderella story, there are not one, but two Cinderellas, only they answer to the name of Edward Middleton and his wife Louie. This happy but poor couple are unfortunate enough to be the butt of their friend Henry Trew's practical joke. He simply writes them a fake lawyer's letter telling them they have been bequeathed a legacy. What happens when Teddy and Louie, dizzy with happiness, begin to splash around in the social whirlpool on the strength of their expected legacy it would be unfair to say here.

Roy Leywood produces. Kenneth Firth plays Trew, and Paddy Turner and William Austin play the Middleton pair in *He Who Laughs Last*. Already heard from 1YA and 2YA, it will be broadcast from 3YA at 9.30 p.m. on Monday, March 14; from 2YZ at 7.30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 15, and from 4YA and the other YZ stations later.

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