

plot. The music by Brian Bell is admirable, scored to take in the credits at the beginning and the end, in the manner of a sophisticated film. Padua is behind the action most of the time and if sometimes a trifle noisy, is remarkably authentic in flavour with street vendors' yodels and nobles chattering away in what sounded remarkably like Italian. Barbara Jefford is a splendidly mettlesome fiery Shrew, the most recalcitrant and vituperative of unbroken fillies, and Keith Michell handsomely accompanies her with his fine voice and boisterous attack. All the Players were in good voice, better, in fact, than I have ever heard them. And what an excellent comedy it is! Women may feel that the closing scene is a piece of special pleading for male supremacy, but this is taking it too seriously. I recommend that husbands and wives listen to it together, marking down the points for each sex. It comes out just about all square.

Eugene Onegin

FROM the brash lustiness of 16th Century Padua, it is, as they say, a far cry to provincial Russia of 1823. Pushkin's masterpiece has been freely adapted by the BBC in an exquisite production which I heard the other night from 2YC. It was pervaded with that characteristic, poignant melancholy which is the *leitmotiv* of 19th Century Russian literature, where in the good families, men are strange, ungovernable and secret, and women live in slow, refined torment like imprisoned birds. And how evocative of that buried world are the sleigh bells, the stamping horses and the far-off sounds of a sad peasant chorus. All this may be heard in the BBC production, and I found it most moving. Onegin is played with the perfect taste and discretion which we have come to associate with that most sensi-

Galsworthy Story

WHEN *The Man of Property* was first published in 1906 its author, John Galsworthy, was only 39, and the book helped to establish him as a writer. This first part of *The Forsyte Saga* has become as popular with listeners as with readers, and the serial now being heard from 3YC on Mondays and 1YC on Wednesdays is the second produced by the BBC. Muriel Levy, who wrote the



radio adaptation, says that *The Man of Property* shows us Beauty striving to find its place in an ugly possessive world. "It is also," she says, "a study of the upper middle class in Victorian England. Above all, it is a human story with weak and strong characters jostling for place. They hate each other, these Forsytes, but they love each other, too; and woe betide anyone who tries to smirch the family character!"

tive of young English actors, Denholm Elliott; the other actors were equally good, but they were not named.

—B.E.G.M.

★ The Week's Music... by SEBASTIAN ★

THE post-Easter doldrums have been avoided chiefly by the efforts of the Pascal Quartet, the French ensemble recently "imported" by the New Zealand Federation of Chamber Music Societies. This is one of the finest combinations of its type in the world, and its members have played together for over a dozen years—quite enough time to allow the development of that oneness of thought which is the prerequisite of chamber playing. Besides a wide selection of quartets from the early romantics to the late moderns, they are also in the process of presenting the whole 16 Beethoven quartets in New Zealand—a monumental feat. In the first of these programmes (YC link) three of the quartets were heard, one from each period of Beethoven's creative life. The early work (No. 2) was a refreshing opening, though dwarfed by the others the first Rasoumovsky and the great Opus 95. In the latter, in particular, the incisive interpretation, the pure tone of the individual instruments and their unanimity of feeling combined to produce a work of true art.

In an earlier programme the same Quartet played the Honegger Quartet No. 2, a new work to most New Zealanders, and not an easy one to absorb at a hearing. Its style I might call con-

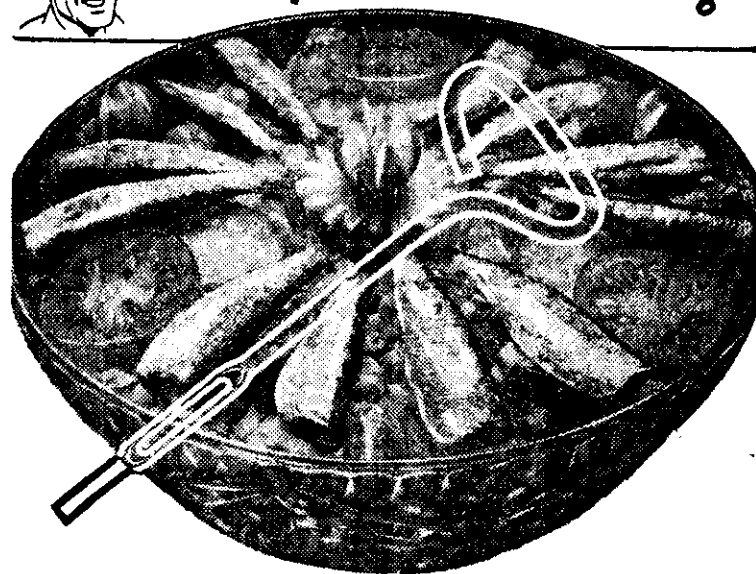
trational—implying polytonal counterpoint—but not too dissonant for any but conservative ears. The Pascal Quartet gave it a strenuous and convincing reading—one which I hope will be available on record before long.

Joyce Burrell is a well-known pianist in Christchurch circles, and she gives characteristically competent recitals: her last programme (3YC) was marred only by the fact that the Mozart sonata she chose—K.331—had been so recently lampooned by Anna Russell. If one could forget the anti-climactic association, then it was a very pleasing performance, with the accuracy and delicacy demanded by all Mozart, and especially so in a familiar piece such as this.

One of the most illuminating programmes I have heard lately was that by Owen Jensen, discussing the Grieg Piano Concerto with well-timed illustrations—not a discussion by a great expert for other great experts, but for the people who will hear it in live performance. If we are to have "appreciation" programmes, preferably with an immediate end in view, this is the best form they could take, with each point made clearly and neatly by the music itself. Presented in this light, even a rather worn diamond like the Grieg Concerto can reveal new and entrancing facets.



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