

of modern, atomic-backed warfare. When Dien Bien Phu seemed about to fall, the French requested President Eisenhower to authorise an atomic explosion in Viet Nam "to save the honour of France, and preserve the flower of her army." The President, to his lasting honour, refused, and Dien Bien Phu fell, but far from being extinguished the honour of France was vindicated, even rose, and the flower of her army was saved. Finally, therefore, the bomb is pointless and achieves nothing that is claimed for it. It all comes back to the same crystal simplicity: "We want peace!"

The Honour of France

IT is possible to argue that the bomb is merely the awful consummation of the fires and horrors we all carry inside us, and instead of resolving them within ourselves, we unleash them on the world in ever more monstrous forms. It is also possible to argue that these torments can be transformed into art, and so made fruitful, by the man of genius. Some such notion seized me after the magnificent performance of the great Ravel quartet by the Pascal people, who are, praise be, revisiting us. Their miraculous tone, richer even than when they were here last year; their beautiful, suave, civilised playing moved me to exaltation. The work in their hands had a golden heaviness which banished past and future, an attribute of all great art, which aims not only to reconcile us to the present, our only tangible possession, but to enrich it. Here is the honour of France, triumphantly vindicated for us. Chartres, Racine, Debussy, Gauguin, Renoir, Rousseau, Ravel. That is France.

—B.E.G.M.

Much Mozart

THE danger of centenaries of composers, as we celebrate them nowadays, is that at the end of the relevant year, we are likely to become heartily sick of the music of the honoured one. As the Duke says in *Patience*: "Toffee in moderation is a capital thing. But to live on toffee—toffee for breakfast, toffee for dinner, toffee for tea . . . how would you like that?" I felt that the actual date of Mozart's birth was allowed to slip by comparatively unmarked on the radio; but since then it's pretty clear that we are in for a feast of Mozart, to become an orgy as overseas bicentennial recordings come to hand. I think my own enthusiasm will survive the flood, but only if radio Mozart is presented with chasers of Brahms and Milhaud. In the meantime, I am enjoying the 1YC Mozart programmes arranged by Owen Jensen, each so far offering some unfamiliar compositions. It is pleasant to hear Mr. Jensen in full cry again. He seems to me to be quite incomparable in his own field of popular musical exposition. Perhaps only he could get away with elaborately introducing a work for a Mozart programme, and then wincing up by telling us that nobody knows for certain whether Mozart wrote it or not!

On the Cob

NOBODY could accuse ZB Sunday Showcase of adhering to a stereotyped pattern. Hard on the heels of

MAGNOLIA

*FROM your dim boughs at daylight's close
Splendid, remote, such moons arose
As lit the whispering dark for us
And left our childhood luminous.*

*And when, as if to rival them,
Earth's moon hung, brilliant, from
night's stem*

*She seemed, where light's perfection was,
Flamboyant, bold, a flower of brass.*

—Ruth Gilbert

Jean Anouilh's charming *Leocadia*, with its combination of poetic fantasy and sardonic wit, *Showcase* last week gave us what is surely the most corny melodrama ever to appear in this session, *Within the Law*. It is probably attribut-

ing too great a subtlety to programme organisers to believe that these successive plays were juxtaposed to set off each other, but the effect was certainly to accentuate the triviality of *Within the Law*. Played with vulgar vigour by Gingers Rogers and flat indifference by buzz-saw-voiced Lee Tracey, the hokum concerned an innocent shop-girl imprisoned for theft who revenges herself on her employer by marrying his son, only (you've guessed it!) to fall in love with him. From internal evidence, the play dates back about fifty years; age has added not a patina, but cobwebs. A few years ago we might have accepted it on the radio with pleasure, but it is a tribute to the high standard of *Sunday Showcase* and to the increased quality of radio plays in general that *Within the Law* sounded infantile, dated, and at times like a *TIFH* parody of crime plays.

J.C.R.

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