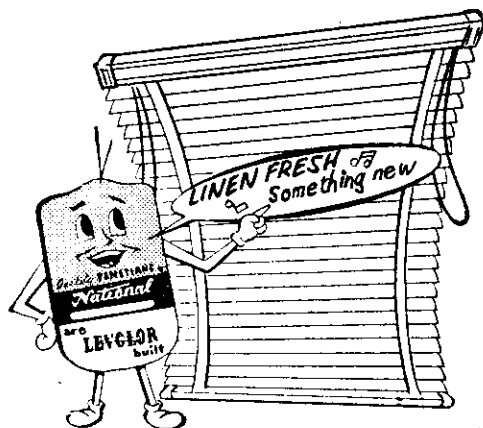




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RADIO REVIEW

School's In

IT is surprising that nobody has apparently thought before of using radio to bring to parents some idea of just what their children do in school, to show them how they can help youngsters in their early learning years, and to explain, without pushing any particular crankism, why some modern techniques of teaching differ from those of their own day. However, the omission is remedied in the series *Their Guided Years*, broadcast from IYA on the first Tuesday of each month, which I cordially recommend to all parents. Promoted by the Auckland Parent-Teacher Association, the programmes, semi-documentary in style, impress by their unacademic exposition, their freedom from pedagogical jargon and their skilful use of classroom material. The most recent session on *The Teaching of Reading*, presented by Dr. D. Barney, should go some way towards clearing up the confusions of parents whose only knowledge of "Look and Say" and phonic methods comes from their children. One merit of the series is that it does not plug any extreme educational theories. I hope, however, that in a later session room might be found for a genuine, not a mocked-up, Devil's Advocate to draw attention to those things in our educational garden which are not so rosy.

Gregory's Legacy

I REMEMBER someone saying to me once, "You have to be a very good musician to appreciate the musical beauty of Gregorian chant." Over the years I have heard enough Gregorian to recognise its liturgical fitness. But I had never realised its subtlety, its variety and its colour until I heard the illustrated talks on the chant which Joseph Papesch has been giving from IYC. Mr. Papesch, who has studied Gregorian at

the fountain-head, gave an exposition so lucid, so penetrating and so enthusiastic as to open, I am sure, the ears of many listeners to the richness and purity of a form which a 19th century writer described as "that dull Popish drone." What made the talks more remarkable is that the speaker is blind. Yet his easy assured delivery and absence of fumbling for words could serve as a model for many radio speakers who have the benefit of scripts. The illustrations, sung *con amore* by the students of the Greenmeadows Marist Seminary, were superb. It is something worth reflecting on that in this tiny land, dominated, we are told, by crass materialism, one of the most ancient forms of devotional music is cultivated with love, and plays its part in the worship of a high proportion of church-going New Zealanders.

—J.C.R.

Lost Opportunity

ANYONE familiar with the prickly subject of religious broadcasting in this denomination-ridden country must have been disposed to welcome a discussion between four differently-labelled clergymen. And indeed the speakers in the first *Christian Question-Box* were a friendly and lively team, especially on the subject of the Church's use of mass communication, which is the special interest of several of them—notably Father Agnellus Andrew, of the BBC. Yet at the end of it the listener was left almost wholly in the dark as to just how closely these men from different Christian traditions could get together on the fundamentals of their faith, since nothing fundamental was touched on. The question scarcely rose above the level of ecclesiastical shop. One might have taken them further, if it had been better phrased. It asked whether, when there is such a terrible need for salvation in New Zealand, we should send missionaries overseas. This took just too much for granted. I believe some of the later questions are to go

(continued on next page)

The Week's Music . . . by SEBASTIAN

THE open season is with us once more, and the voice of the choral society is heard in the land. The Christchurch Harmonic Society was broadcast only locally (3YC), unfortunately, because as a technical *tour de force* Maurice Jacobson's setting of "The Hound of Heaven" would be hard to better. The hand of the composer's mentor, Holst, shows in the marshalling of the forces and not a little in some of the more acidulated harmonies; but for the most part the work is quite original, and often very lovely. Mystic in mood, the music matches the words, sprinkled with plainsong-like melisma, sometimes too much so for my mental comfort. At some moments the force of the words was lost, but most of the time there was a consistent virtuosity that was both disarming and overwhelming. Bouquets to the conductor, Victor Peters, fewer to the choir, which was efficient but frequently muddy, and more to the 3YA Orchestra, which excelled itself: and a special bunch of rosemary to the tenor soloist John Forrest, who handled a most exacting part most exactly, with an unlooked-for sensitivity and an unstrained smooth tone. In musical contrast, Handel's cantata "Mirth and Melancholy" (a literal setting of Milton's words)

drew delightfully fresh singing from the choir, and produced some fine trumpet solo work.

The other contender for musical honours was the Dunedin Choral Society who performed Bach's *St. John Passion* (4YC), a trifle late for Passiontide perhaps, but since we so rarely hear the work, a welcome change. Mr. Walden-Mills, the conductor, wrought his considerable effects not so much by nuance as by a brass-choir technique of wholesale changes in dynamics. The choir, though a little frail in the male section, dealt manfully enough with the dramatic sections, and gave a most expressive final chorus. Mary Pratt's warm tone graced the alto solos, and Owen Bonifant made a good job of the Evangelist's exacting part. The 4YA Orchestra was quite adequate, with some very appealing oboe work; altogether this was as good as one is likely to hear in local concert halls.

If your taste veers toward the modern, you may have heard the flautist James Hopkinson with David Galbraith at the piano (YC links) playing various works, one of the most interesting without being eclectic with Hindemith's sonata. The music, though not easy, is rewarding to the listener, and, as usual, so was Mr. Hopkinson's playing.

N.Z. LISTENER, JULY 20, 1956.