

reason for the attraction of Spain is that it's strange enough to be fascinating but not so strange as to be incomprehensible—at first sight, anyway.

Missing Experts

LISTENING for the second time, after the lapse of a year, to Donald MacKenzie's talk on remedial work in the series *The Criminal Mind*, I was reminded of a story I heard when the talks were first broadcast. I was told that long-term prisoners in one gaol who had their own radios listened with notebooks ready, and some expressed the opinion that the speakers had something there, and some said they didn't know what they were talking about. Which made me think that for a balanced view of the criminal mind some of the speakers ought perhaps to have been criminals. And why not have juvenile delinquents talking about juvenile delinquency? An engaging prospect but perhaps they might remain as inscrutable as adolescents talking about adolescence, an experiment which has been tried. Meanwhile, speaking with no first-hand experience—that the law knows about—I found all four talks admirable and this one not the least. It was, perhaps less assured and hopeful than the others, since, as Mr. MacKenzie said, diagnosis is easier than cure; but I found it a hopeful sign that our prisons would employ a man who is ready to say that prison is a wholly unnatural environment in which to try and adjust men to society.

—R. D. McE.

From Australia

THE *Tintookies*, the Australian musical play for marionettes heard from 1YA last Saturday, was an odd affair, old-fashioned in the way a great deal of native Australian theatre seems to me to be, yet, in its fashion, not without a certain attractiveness. Although it is probably very unneighbourly to say so, I feel that corny and parish-pumpy qualities are to be found in many Australian literary products. Certainly, parts of *The Tintookies* sounded like an

Edwardian children's fairy-play. This impression came mainly from Kurt Herweg's music, which was utterly without distinction, and the lyrics, somewhat lumberingly imitating old-style musical comedy, with Savoy echoes—the whole resembling a tenth carbon of *Toad of Toad Hall*. There was a genuine charm in the *Tintookies* themselves, who had renounced magic for the dubious joys of civilisation, and in the three animal heroes. But besides the usual *Theatre of Music* show, *The Tintookies* sounded unsophisticated to the point of banality. Perhaps Australian folk-lore doesn't travel well. Yet the work was, at least, a try: we shall be in a sounder position to look disdainfully at indigenous Tasman theatre when we have something—anything—of our own.

Out of the Past

WHY do so many people of my acquaintance, like myself, find 1YD the most soothing local station to listen to during the weekend? Partly, I suppose, because the music goes on for such long periods uninterrupted by chatty announcers, news bulletins, time-signals and the like. But also because only on 1YD do we hear nowadays those old records of up to a quarter of a century ago, which recall both the early days of broadcasting, and, nostalgically, the schooldays and youth of those just over two score. Sandy Powell, Jack Buchanan, Leslie Henson ("I don't give a damn if you burst into flames"), George Formby, Jack, Cicely and Claude Hulbert, Flotsam and Jetsam ("Is he an Aussie, is he, Lizzie?"), Flanagan and Allen, Horace Kenny, Maurice Chevalier, the Village Concerts ("Life is butter melon cauliflower"), and even the "Two Black Crows" whose jokes we used tirelessly to exchange at play-time—these, coming a trifle scratchily from 1YD—seem to convey the mood of a less angst-stricken age. Is this feeling mere sentimental recall? I don't think so for, as one of my brood remarked with astonishment recently, "You know, those characters are really quite funny!" —J.C.R.

ADVICE TO YOUNG PLAYERS

REDMOND PHILLIPS, who returned to New Zealand last year to take leading roles in the last three productions of the New Zealand Players, saw many of the New Zealand amateur dramatic groups while he was on tour here with the company. He has a great respect for these Little Theatre members and their enthusiasm for producing good plays, and before he sailed again for England he recorded three talks designed to help these enthusiasts. These are being broadcast in the Women's Hour from Commercial stations and have already been heard from 2ZB and 3ZB. This week they are scheduled to start from 4ZB and 2ZA, and they will be heard from 4ZA, 1XH later in the month, and from 1ZB in March. Mr. Phillips deals with ways of increasing membership and discusses some plays which a small group could well perform, with a special plea for Shakespearean comedies, as well as some warnings of plays to avoid. On the production side, he has much valuable advice. He stresses the importance of having things well organised, from the time when everyone concerned with the play assembles at the first reading. The producer should know exactly what he wants, and the actors be enthusiastic and confident. Mr. Phillips would like to see as many young helpers as possible to attend to the de-

tails which often place such a strain on the producer. He places emphasis on the prompt-book keeper, and on the stage-manager, who should manage all business, attendance and order, leaving the producer free to produce the play.



Redmond Phillips

"Cornelia" from NZBS

ON Monday, February 11, the YAs will broadcast an NZBS production of *Cornelia*, a play by Gordon Daviot. Bernard Kearns, the producer, also plays Lucas Bilke, the middle-aged bachelor who becomes *Cornelia*'s guardian, and Dorothy Smith is the girl from Labrador who devastates his household. *Cornelia*'s delight in the luxuries of civilisation is balanced by her practical view of its absurdities, and as the men in the play capitulate to her, she treats them with an unfailing good humour and sense. The young Lord playing at Socialism is made aware of his real interests, and the butler is shown a new way of life. *Cornelia* knows what she wants, and in getting it provides listeners with a gay comedy that nevertheless has some tart comments to make.

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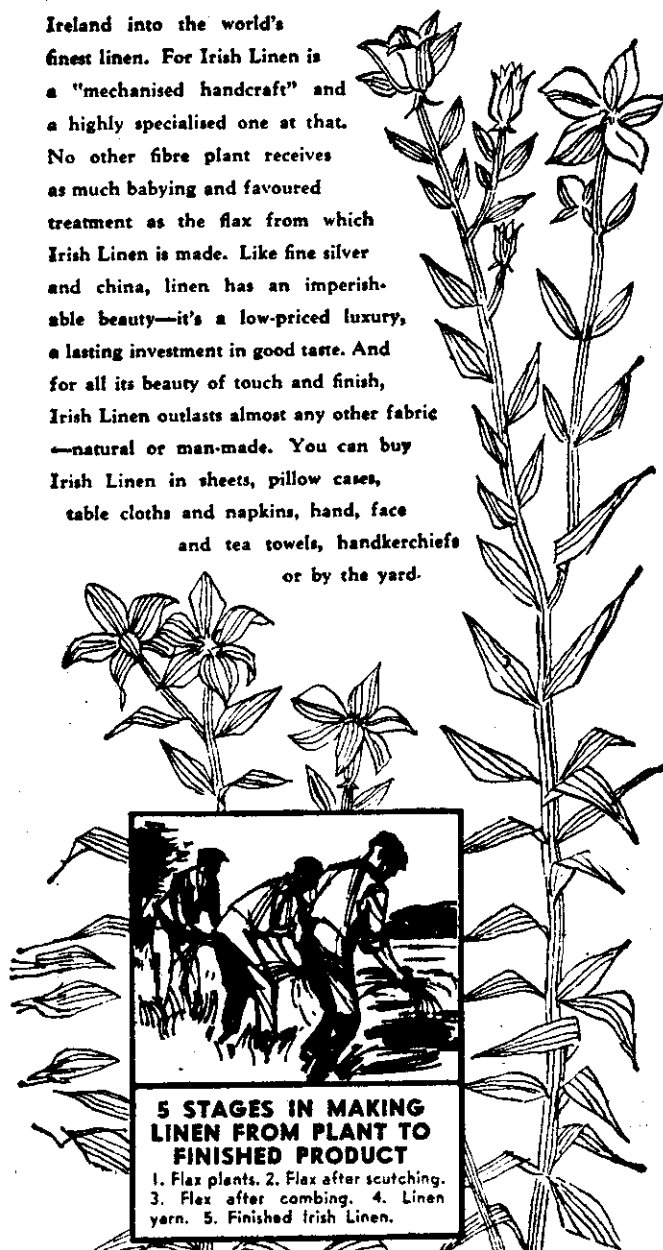
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