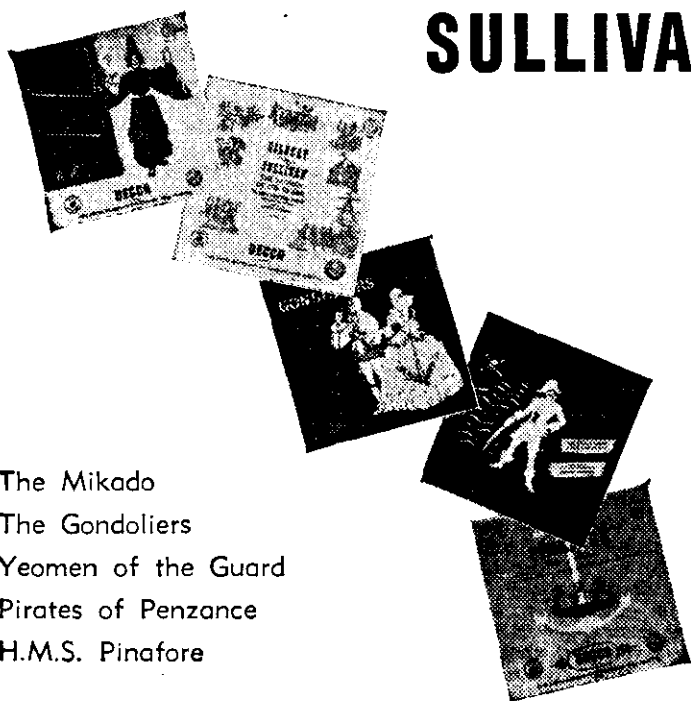


GILBERT AND SULLIVAN



The Mikado
The Gondoliers
Yeomen of the Guard
Pirates of Penzance
H.M.S. Pinafore

All the heart-warming gaiety and infectious melody recaptured by the magic of microgroove on

HI-FI DECCA L.P.

by the world-famous

D'OYLY CARTE OPERA COMPANY

The Mikado—DECCA 12in. LKM 4010-11 (2 records).
The Gondoliers—DECCA 12in. LKM 4015-6 (2 records).
Yeomen of the Guard—DECCA 12in. LK 4029-30 (2 records).
Pirates of Penzance—DECCA 12in. LK 4004-5 (2 records).
H.M.S. Pinafore—DECCA 12in. LK 4002-3 (2 records).

ASK YOUR RECORD DEALER
for a regular copy of

HMV'S MONTHLY RECORDS MAGAZINE

Fully Illustrated . . . in colour . . . lists all the latest discs from Capital, Columbia, Decca, Parlophone, H.M.V., London, M.G.M., Regal-Zonophone, Beltona and Vogue, Felsted.

Only 6d a copy.

AVAILABLE AT YOUR H.M.V. RECORD COUNTER



HIS MASTER'S VOICE (N.Z.) LTD.,
Box 296, Wellington; Box 1931, Auckland;
Box 708, Christchurch.



NEW ZEALAND LISTENER

INCORPORATING N.Z. RADIO RECORD

Every Friday

Price Sixpence

MARCH 8, 1957

Editorial and Business Offices: Hope Gibbons Building, Inglewood Place, Wellington, C.1.

P.O. Box 6098.

Telegraphic Address: "Listener," Wellington.

Telephone 54-106.

Mr and Mrs Temple

IT is always pleasant to renew acquaintance with Paul Temple and his wife, Steve. By the time the first drinks have appeared, the first telephone has been answered, and the first corpse discovered, listeners are generally able to forget that the acquaintance has ever been interrupted. But in the latest of these BBC serials, now approaching the show-down at YA and YZ stations, one side of Paul's character seems a little more pronounced than usual. He has always been brusque with his wife, in a well-bred way, when under pressure. Presumably the trait is intended to fill out the personality of a man who otherwise might be rather more or less than human. Yet sometimes, if the action is halting, or the listener's attention is straying from the lines laid down for it by the producer, the brusquerie stands out baldly. Perhaps we are getting too used to it.

Paul Temple is devoted to his wife. He has every reason to be, since for his sake she has escaped death by a hair's breadth on occasions too numerous to remember. A writer-detective who is constantly saving his wife from violence must end by valuing her highly: he is, as it were, renewing his hold upon her affections. Still, a man is only human; and if moments of strain cannot be revealed to listeners by the twitching of a nerve in the cheek or a sudden tightening of the jaw, they can at least creep warningly into the dialogue. After a while we can hear them coming. In the way of all women and most men, Steve cannot be silent when life is becoming interesting. She begins to speak while "Sir Graham" is about to pass on some vital information; and Paul, perfectly controlled but in no mood for nonsense, becomes curt: "Just a minute, Steve!" And the charming creature, understanding that brains superior to her own are at work, falls obediently silent. Or it may be that, if the news is startling, husband and wife both

utter sounds of incredulity. "Are you sure?" asks Paul; and we know at once that he is gaining time while his thoughts race ahead, his mind razor-sharp among the impossibilities. "But what does it mean?" asks Steve, trying to keep up with him. And swiftly he turns upon her: "Steve, do you mind?" We sense here the controlled impatience of a strong man who has a purpose behind every question of his own, even when it sounds inane, and who knows quite well that his wife is merely prattling, and in danger of holding up the action.

The Paul Temple serials have a deftness which makes the improbabilities easy to swallow; but if listeners find themselves noticing lines which seem to be superfluous it may be supposed that the production is flagging. It must be extremely difficult to avoid lapses into banality when so much depends on the mechanics of the plot. Little habits of speech, carried over from one serial to another, are at first amusing; but presently they bring a feeling of flatness, and all at once the paste-board looms beyond the voices. The listener, unwilling to turn away because he wants to know what will happen next, begins to use dialogue of his own: "Steve, would you mind?" And the answer comes crisply: "I certainly would. And must you speak to me like that, as if I were a child?" It would not do, of course: the story must not be allowed to explode into marital argument while murderers are lurking outside among the clues. If Steve becomes difficult, as on occasion she will, her wilfulness must be used to tighten a few more threads, or to precipitate the crisis. Afterwards, when Paul is relaxing before returning to his typewriter, all is sunshine in the happiest of marriages. It is a strange place, this little world of voices and sound effects, where husbands are masterful, and wives are almost always docile. English, too, in an oddly Victorian way.

—M.H.H.

N.Z. LISTENER, MARCH 8, 1957.