

troversty about *Orpheus*. In the main role he used a baritone instead of the customary alto. "I proved that it does work," he said. "Gluck wrote the part for a castrato and then adapted it for a tenor. This adaptation has been lost, but it shows he was happy to have a real man singing the part, and I am quite happy to have a baritone. We found there were certain advantages in using a baritone, for in the trios if we had used three women's voices they would have lacked colour." Behind this production lay eight months of rehearsals, and the performance took place in the local opera house, which is "quite a good opera house, with the right atmosphere—one of the best in New Zealand."

Mr Komlos, a Hungarian by birth, arrived in New Zealand in 1951 from Jakarta, and he is now pleased to be able to say, "I feel that I'm not an outsider any more." In New Plymouth he taught at the Girls' High School, taking over the orchestra, which he gradually built up, using girl trumpet players, oboists, flautists and clarinetists. Like many teachers in this country he has had to turn his hand to everything and teach woodwind and brass as well as his own instrument, the violin. "You have to—that's all there is to it," he said. Apart from his work for school music,



Spencer Digby photograph

#### WILLIAM KOMLOS

*Orpheus caused controversy*

he has built up the New Plymouth Symphony Orchestra to a strength of over 40 players. This orchestra now gives concerts with such visiting artists as Janetta McStay, Alex Lindsay, David Galbraith, James Hopkinson and Laszlo Rogatsy. It's work he described as of "a decent provincial standard." During the last two years Mr Komlos has also conducted the first orchestra at the Cam-

N.Z. LISTENER, APRIL 26, 1957.



Morris Kershaw, photograph

UNDER a battery of lights, a television camera focuses on Morva Jones, who recently conducted part of the 4ZB "Women's Hour" from a television studio in a Dunedin city store. Miss Jones was standing in for Prudence Gregory, who has been in hospital. The session was broadcast live from the television studio and televised to receivers around the store at the same time. Compere at other television demonstrations was Ross Fenton, NZBS Presentation Officer at Dunedin. Like the demonstrations held in NZBS studios in Wellington and Auckland six years ago, the Dunedin demonstrations used a closed circuit between cameras and receivers

bridge Summer School of Music, and he described Cambridge as "a splendid arrangement."

Mr Komlos has a very busy life, and he says that the hard-worked music teacher often wishes there were more teachers. "There is a crying need for them all over New Zealand," he told us. "The material here is up to the standard anywhere in Europe—there is no lack of willing pupils, only a lack of teachers." His only regret about his life in New Plymouth is that of many people who live in provincial towns—it is not on the main route for visiting overseas artists. This, he feels, is a great pity, as "our town has a real appetite for artists." This year he is taking a rest from opera, but it is a rest only in a relative sense, as his other musical activities will still make him a very busy man.

★

NIGEL BALCHIN, heard from YC stations recently in the BBC series *We Write Novels*, is one of the best-known of English novelists. His first book was published in 1933, and since then he has written a great many novels, several of them with an industrial or a professional background. He considers it an advantage

#### NOVELIST

to give his characters a definite setting and to describe their work and the conditions in which they do it rather than to let them float about in a world of unearned or at any rate unexplained income. His best-known books to date are *The Small Back Room*, which dealt with the work of the behind-the-scenes "boffins" during the last war, and *Mine Own Executioner*.

Mr Balchin was educated at Dauntsey's School, and then at Peterhouse

College, Cambridge, where he was an exhibitor and prizeman in natural science. Since then he has combined, in varying proportions, authorship and a business career. Five years at the National Institute of Industrial Psychology gave him the background knowledge for *Mine Own Executioner*, a book dealing largely with psychiatry, his scientific work for the Army during the war supplied the authentic atmosphere for *The Small Back Room*, and his industrial activities have provided invaluable detail for other novels. Both *The Small Back Room* and *Mine Own Executioner* were adapted for the screen, and the first also became a very successful radio play.



BBC photograph

#### NIGEL BALCHIN

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