

trialised world from, no doubt, the frosty Caucasus to greater Auckland. We have almost reached the point where the latest, the newest, is obsolete as soon as it is made. And unlike the junk of former generations, it will not find its way to the second-hand marts of the world nor receive, by the changing of taste, a new value. These reflections are provoked by a fascinating BBC documentary I heard last week called *Any Old Iron*, a survey of London's second-hand goods world. Their trade flourishes, it seems, as never before. Many proprietors of shops and stalls spoke in the programme, and the most remarkable thing about them was the uniformly cultured accent in which they discoursed on their trade. It has become a respectable, almost a dignified occupation. And why not? Because these markets are almost the last refuge of the individual craftsman; where the work of the guiding hand and eye is still treasured. More power to them, and more money to buyers.

—B.E.G.M.

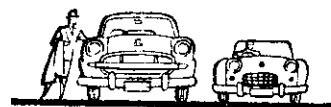
### Waiting for the 12.30

THE BBC production of Samuel Beckett's *All That Fall* brilliantly captures the author's intention. In Maddy Rooney's rustic odyssey to meet her husband on the 12.30 and their journey back again, we have, as in *Waiting for Godot*, Beckett's pre-occupation with the high expectancy of the questing journey that ends with anticipation fallen flat on her face. Carrying an overload of symbolism the play sweeps the listener along, sharing the hugeness of the sardonic joke, to its predestined end of nothingness. As in *Godot*, Beckett employs a constantly changing rhythm of words and mood, here highlighted by a remarkable use of sound effects and silences to punctuate and italicise the script. By turns grim and gay, with deflation countering inflation, it is lively, sentimental, harsh, probing, puzzled and zestful. As she stumbles along the highway to Bog Hill, Maddy Rooney keeps us as mindful of the treachery of words as of the ground beneath her feet. Is there, she asks, something bizarre about her speech? Something very bizarre indeed. Double talk and backchat and the sometimes misleading lucidity of a nightmare. There are moments of vaudeville with the characters turning Irish patter artists, and touches of pantomime as the neighbours ease her in and out of the car (wonderfully conveyed and reminiscent of the wordless hat-changing scene in *Waiting for Godot*). Beckett has caught the Irishman's joy in talk, his delight in word spinning and argument weaving, his relish in sorrowing, ever aware how near lie the slug and worm to the darling corpse in its shroud. The actors beautifully conveyed the apprehension behind the words. "It's suicide to be abroad," says one and draws from Mrs Rooney the self-questioning reply: "What is it like to be at home?" On their return journey from the station the old couple, Maddy and Dan, endlessly debate how the 12.30 came to be 15 minutes late on a 30-minute run. What was the cause of the hitch? Two characters in seeming intimacy probe and puzzle out their private worlds of thought. Expectancy has ridden high on the 12.30, but when it arrives there is only the journey back and no conclusion. Of the cast only Miss Fitt failed to catch the authentic note. Mary O'Farrell as Maddy was a joy, treading the pathos-bathos line with rare skill and relish.

—N.L.M.

N.Z. LISTENER, NOVEMBER 8, 1957.

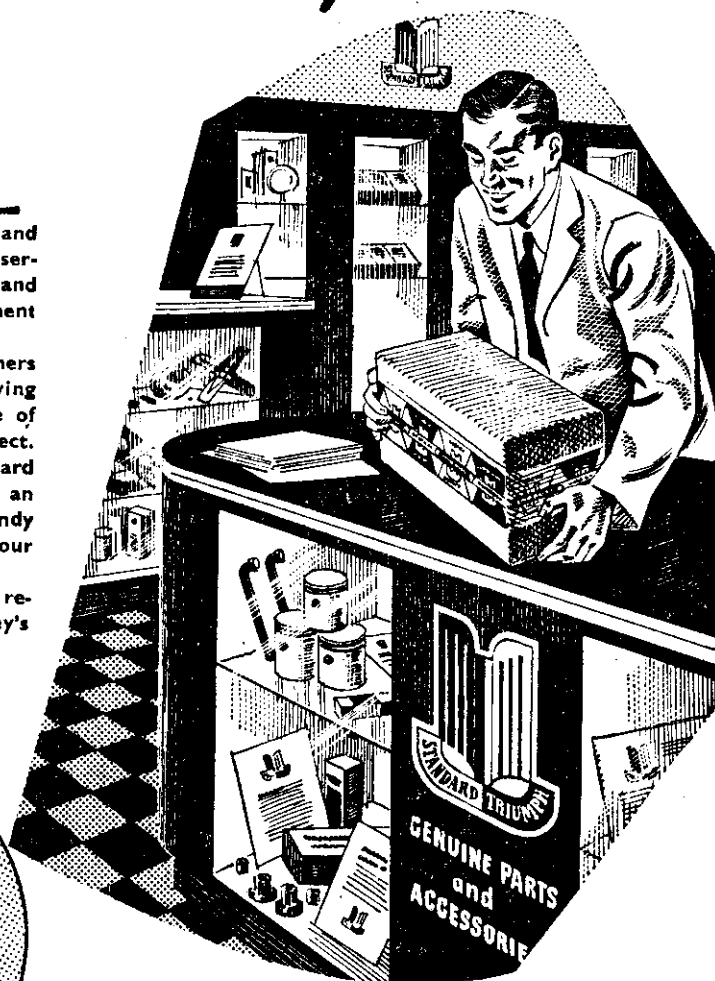
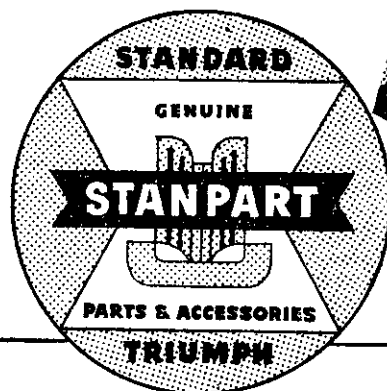
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