

Elizabethan text but I am inclined to give major credit for the success of the radio play to Sir Donald Wolfit's full-throated, full-blooded, full-bodied Simon Eyre, the shoemaker-mayor, as open as the day, as straight as a die and as mellow as pre-chemical British beer. Another fine addition to his formidable list of memorable radio impersonations this broad piece of playing by Sir Donald brought Dekker's tradesman's comedy dazzlingly to life in a way I feel the ordinary joker would be quick to respond to.

—J.C.R.

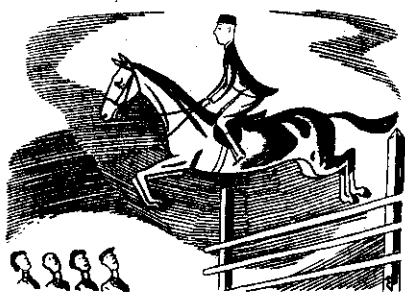
Attending Ears

WITH two appearances behind it, the NZBS musical panel game *Facing the Music* (YAs) seems certain to grow in favour. Naturally enough, so far, the personalities of the panel have not emerged clearly. As they do, we shall find this programme taking on an individuality all its own. By starting with a demand for each of the panel to complete a melody by humming, whistling or singing, Peter Swartz, the question-master, eases the programme in. As executants the members of the panel are neither as good as the best performers in *Number Please* nor as bad as the worst. This reassures us of their fallibility. For later there are some splendid bullseye shots at identifying composer and work with electric speed and precision. I like the leisurely pace at which the game is played so that the listener has plenty of time to cock his ear and even the least musically educated has a chance to nod his head at a piece he knows quite well but just cannot place at the moment. If the whole programme is a little muted, this is a fault which will be remedied as the panel warms to its task. At present the ad-libbing is rather tentative but D. W. McKenzie's "Tin Pan is not my Alley" will do for a start.

Spreading the News

HOWEVER measured a critic might be about its artistic achievement, there is no doubt that the production in Wellington of *Madam Butterfly* was a truly exciting event. We are inclined to take for granted that what happens in Wellington is quickly known throughout the country. But this is not so. Congratulations, then, to the NZBS for

ROYAL SHOW, 1959



FOR farmers, and a good many others besides, the Royal Show is one of the big events of the year, so the special Royal Show broadcasts are always certain to have a big audience. This year's Royal Show will be held at Palmerston North, starting on Thursday, November 5, and that day and on the Friday and Saturday all YA and YZ stations will broadcast reports from the show. These will include results and interviews.

NATIONAL ORCHESTRA'S WEEK

NEXT week the National Orchestra will be heard in recorded programmes on the following dates: November 2, 1YC (soloist, Lili Kraus), 4YA; November 4, 3YC; November 5, 2YC, 4YZ; November 7, 1YC.

spreading the good news that with this smoothly professional presentation the New Zealand Opera Company has settled in and seems set to stay. The form of the programme on making the opera was not always effective: it gave us too long a look behind the scenes

at the problems of stage construction. Although John Duff spoke fluently and well, these are difficult matters for the layman to visualise from the spoken word. Perhaps we should have heard from the creative artist here, the designer. The programme succeeded best when John Hopkins, Vincent Major and John Thompson spoke of the study and complexities in performing an opera and how much the music is the master of all. However the programme left the listener with an impression of quiet pride in achievement in spite of the jarring switch at the end to the superlative clichés from members of the audience. A much better conclusion would have been producer Stefan Haag's "It can be done."

—N.L.M.

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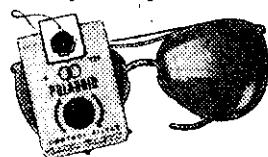
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