

unity. Letters from America had in common only the geographical accident that they were actually written in America. Jenny Lind described her arrival there, Julia Ward Howe defended Oscar Wilde, Dolly Madison wrote of the burning of the White House, and Louisa M. Alcott's letter was personal and domestic. They were thus not letters about America, nor specifically American in any way, and their purely incidental association was a little pointless. This series, because of the skill of the writers, consists of some excellent material. It is a pity that it had not been arranged more intelligently.

—Loquax

Hat Boxes

VERNON BROWN and Peter Middleton, who have been contrapuntally speaking on Houses from 1YC, have provided goads stout enough to prod into life the most sluggish of troglodytes. In their concise treatments of planning, sites, materials and furnishings, they have avoided the two extremes of the neo-Le Corbusier box and the Builder's Stereotype No. 2 and have established a conception of a place to hang your hat which incorporates the best elements in modern functionalism with comfort and individuality. "Suburbia" did keep bobbing in and out of Vernon Brown's talks; but I was especially interested to hear him condemn the fanatical pursuit of "modernity" and bareness for their own sake, and stress the folly of confusing what is actually a new and limiting fashion with individuality of design. Although these talks would have been even better on television, where diagrams and pictures might have reinforced the points, the pair surmounted the lack of props with real skill. The rather racy approach of Peter Middleton balanced Vernon Brown's clipped and more formal style, while both were sufficiently businesslike to sound more like residents of Zenith than denizens of Cool Clary.

—J.C.R.

Time and the Vision

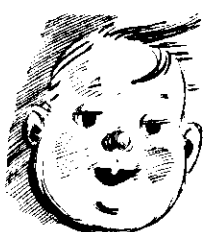
MORE Lives Than One, an NZBS product recently broadcast from 3YA turned out to be a squib. It went on hissing in a very promising way but never soared into the upper air. The story concerns an ex-parson who, having joined the army in order to find a faith that would give him courage to live or die, is chosen as one of a reconnaissance party sent on a very dangerous mission. Faced with almost certain death the padre, by dismissing the past and the future, is able to bear the present with calm. The acting was good and the sound effects, such as the machine-gun fire and .303 shots, were well knit into the play, but the plot lagged. That a brave captain faced with a really dangerous situation should crumple up and that the padre should suddenly become a Daniel merely because he thinks of time in a new way is on the one hand too neat, and on the other unconvincing. Is it trite to think that always the vision which can brace a frightened man is

larger than his ideas on Time? And if this is implied in the play ought it not to have been more strongly emphasised?

—Westcliff

Rosy Fadeout

WHATEVER unfortunate effect Peter Llewellyn's early talks may have had on our notoriously sensitive New Zealand hackles (even I winced a little at his picture of the spoilt New Zealand housewife), his final talk was nicely calculated to get them lying flat again. His idyllic pictures of the New Zealand baby ("Who is this St. Plunket?"), the New Zealand child, and the New Zealand



home ("cream, with a red roof and inside glossy as a magazine illustration") were, however, to my mind products of the deliberately assumed rose-coloured spectacles rather than of the journalist's straight eye; emotional clichés compared with, for example, his portrait of Lennie, the New Zealand soldier. And I am still somewhat puzzled by Mr. Llewellyn's apparent endorsement of "the language of the juke-box." I had throughout his talk a strong feeling that the author was trying a little too hard to be one of the boys.

Of All Things

LAST Thursday proved ideally arranged for that delightful flitting from flower to flower which is the inconstant listener's ideal of home entertainment. I started off at seven listening to book reviews with the devil-may-care insouciance of one unlikely to encounter the reviewed object till its birth notice is forgotten; flapped my ears at Mary Mackenzie's daring exposé of Frederick Farley's *World Theatre* (a real privilege to be present at the ceremonial taking-in of each other's washing by our dramatic pundits, particularly if one has been able to view the linen in question oneself). Then came a pleasant quarter of an hour with *Looking at Life*, a programme whose merits convict me of past neglect. Then on to 2YC for Fred Hoyle's second talk, which left me chastened by the realisation that the sun is such a very minor star, convinced that a Midland accent (or should one say Regional?) carries much more weight over the air than a more scholarly one, possibly because it smacks of factory or pub rather than of ivory tower, and full of womanly sympathy for our poor astrophysicists who must wait another two hundred million years to have their theories proved.

—M.B.

Meaning of Leisure

"If you take 'leisure' to mean 'time off,' or to mean 'having nothing to do,' I do not believe that sort of leisure is of any importance at all; in certain conditions it can become a menace. What I mean by leisure is not doing nothing but doing something different. That, to my mind, is of supreme importance."—Harold Nicolson, author and politician, speaking in a BBC programme.

N.Z. LISTENER, AUGUST 3, 1951.

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