

hopes that the talk may go some way towards unlocking those rich hearts which till now have barrenly shored up their experience.

—Westcliff

## Quietly Perfect

**PHILIP DODDRIDGE, HYMN-WRITER**, proved to be one of those quietly perfect, unexpected programmes that one tunes into sometimes almost by accident. The script, written and spoken by Claude Enright, was comprehensive and sympathetic, yet the merits of Doddridge were kept firmly in perspective, the resultant picture being both credible and attractive. The hymns chosen to illustrate Doddridge's work were sung beautifully by the Durham Street Methodist Choir (Christchurch). This programme, which was produced entirely in New Zealand, was well up to overseas standards, and made me wonder why we do not hear more of our local choirs over the air.

## Taken For a Ride

LET me confess at once that I have an unconquerable aversion to inter-planetary travel for myself, so that I listened to a BBC *Focus* on this subject with an ear that was admittedly jaundiced. I was prepared to be convinced that a visit to the moon is (a) possible (b) valuable and even (c) enjoyable, but it was going to take some reasoning to do the trick, not merely the old argument by analogy — "People said that aeroplanes were impossible," etc. Still, this was labelled a "documentary," so I listened on, hoping for a few of the facts that term usually implies. I climbed aboard the rocket and shot through space, taking an obedient look at the stars—how big they are!—and a backward glance at the earth—it's big, too, and has beautiful colours! — wondering all the while how the script-writer was going to reach a climax, since, as this was supposed to be a documentary, he could hardly give us a minute by minute account of life on the moon and bring us back again. He didn't; and for me, it was just up with the rocket and down with the stick. We chewed once again on the dry bone of analogy—"People used to say no human could stand a speed of 100 miles an hour"—and found we had been taken for a ride in more ways than one.

—Loquax

## Due Reward

PERHAPS I have tagged along too long with Paul Temple and his fast-moving radio-conscious contemporaries to respond with the old abandon to radio versions of Edgar Wallace, but I found the BBC version of *The Ringer* rather slow to get moving, cluttered as it was with heavy-tongued and painstaking policemen being polite and reasonable to their inferiors, the members of the criminal classes, even if they did take the liberty of addressing the Ringer's wife by her christian names. There were some nice ripe (almost over-ripe) character studies, notably Maurice Meister's well-shod heel, but it was perhaps unfortunate that Cora Ann's accent should have reminded me so forcibly of Trudi Barrudi (the siren of *Traveller's Joy*) that I kept waiting for her to climb into a negligee and subvert the ends of justice. (It is obviously a long time since I read my Wallace.) However the denouement, when it came, was thoroughly satisfying, and I felt grateful that there is no radio equivalent of the Johnston Office to rob the criminal of the due reward of his sixty-minutes of conscientious accent-building.

alent of the Johnston Office to rob the criminal of the due reward of his sixty-minutes of conscientious accent-building.

## Happy Talent

HATS off to the instigator of that lively series *What They Said at the Time*, which has the effect of both amusing listeners and inspiring them with a wholesome disrespect for polemics, if only other peoples'. The idea is I suppose scarcely a new one—"Fifty Years Ago In The . . ." is a regular and popular feature in many newspapers—but radio has such facilities for dressing-up the verbal past that it's as good as a conducted tour to the controversy in question. And a tour organised by a most competent tourist bureau. The speakers are all audible, their voices are clearly differentiated (from each other, if not from the ones we heard in the same session last week) and our interpreter has a happy talent for linking his genuine excerpts together with wry comment and almost-genuine bits of dramatic reconstruction. Tragic issues do not, I feel, fit into the pattern.—"War Comes To New Plymouth" brought too close the picture of wrong thinking and mismanagement — but the less fundamental issues (daylight saving, provincial councils, six o'clock closing) are all fair game.

## Gathered Threads

AN amazing lot of tidying up went on in the weeks before Christmas. Dumetrius's dossier was finally filed. Elizabeth Bennett suitably settled. Our Mutual Friend happily vindicated, all of which might have been designed by a benevolent Service to set me free from radio trysting for the holiday period. On the whole my saddest parting was, I think, with that excellent series *The Half-Century*. Not all the programmes lived up to the promise of the first, at any rate from the point of view of entertainment. Rebecca West's programme *The Twenties* was outstanding—the first time I have been given any explanation of what went on behind the facade of Flaming Youth, of the inner glow that animated the Bright Young Things. The last programme *The Closing Years* was scarcely climactic tending to hitch its wagon to windy platitudes of faith in the Humanity of Man. But, on second thoughts, what else could it have done?

—M.B.

## Glyndebourne Concert

THE Opera House at Glyndebourne ranks high in the musical world as the scene of some of England's most perfect operas. For although situated on the Sussex Downs, far from city audiences, Glyndebourne was built by John Christie, the owner of Glyndebourne Manor, for the specific purpose of presenting productions in which the best singers and musicians could do absolute justice to opera. The now world-famous productions of Glyndebourne include an annual Mozart Opera Festival, and two Mozart compositions are among the works presented in the programme of the BBC's *British Concert Hall* which will be heard from 4YC at 8.48 p.m. on Wednesday, January 30. The programme was originally presented in the Glyndebourne Opera House with Boyd Neel conducting his own orchestra. Soloists are Sena Jurinac (soprano) and Kathleen Long (piano).

N.Z. LISTENER, JANUARY 25, 1952.



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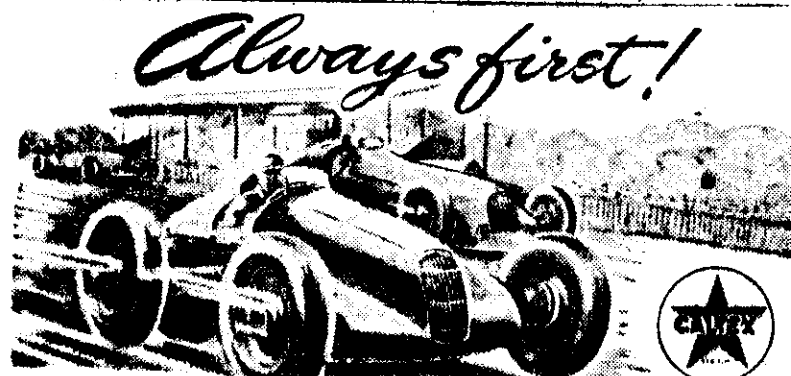
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