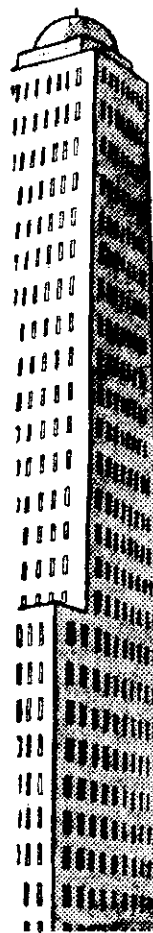


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## RADIO REVIEW

**M**Y main regret on hearing a "free adaptation" of *Alice in Wonderland* from 4YA

recently was not that it had presented so little, but so much. In one hour we were hurtled through episodes from both *Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-glass*. As a result, much had to be cut. The Dormouse hardly began his brief story, the Mock Turtle was cut off after the first of his puns. Yet this production had some good moments — Jabberwocky, for instance, was beautifully done, and the White Knight's scene, delivered in the well-known tones of Jimmy Edwards, was pure Carroll with its delightfully inconsequential logic. (Though I doubt if the Knight would have commented after his song, "A pretty ditty," and suspect that here for a moment, Edwards confused his programmes.) But if this production had good moments, it also had some very bad ones, notably at the beginning and the end, in the syrupy ballad—especially composed for the occasion—which was dreary, sentimental and totally unrelated to Carroll's wit.

### Right Start

**H**ALF past seven on a Sunday morning is not to me the cheeriest time of the day or week, but 4ZB comes to the rescue with a concert entitled *Sacred Half-hour*, a programme consisting of well-known hymns and religious arias, well-recorded, and announced with a fitting decorum. It is not every Sunday we can hear, as recently, Blake's *Jerusalem*, the Twenty-third Psalm, one Gounod and two Handel hymns, but this programme holds out hope for the reluctant early starter who may be strengthened by it sufficiently to "start the day right" in 4ZB's own phrase.

—Loquax

### Unfortunate Coincidences

**T**HE leek waved proudly from 1YA and 1YC on St. David's Day. Rev. S. Bostock-Jones's *Story of St. David's Day* (BBC) brought us some superb examples of Welsh singing; German's *Welsh Rhapsody* was played; and, to crown the evening, *The Rescuers* was presented—that moving story of the Rhondda Valley mining disaster of 1877, which, I believe, is the finest documentary the BBC has ever made. All this was fitting; but, unhappily, some unconsciously ironical contrasts in related programmes rather took the edge off the tributes. A day earlier, the NZBS *What They Said At The Time* session, "When Wales Beat the All Blacks," despite the dispassionate approach, presented the Welsh as anything but thorough sportsmen. And, immediately after Rev. Bostock-Jones's talk an episode of *Lady on the Screen* showed the egregious Philip Odell meeting an unpleasant Welsh "private eye," Harvey O. Jones, the embodiment of crumbly cupidity. As the Welsh seldom figure on the radio, these coincidences were unfortun-

ate, especially since the race appears not to appreciate irony. Certainly, Mr. Bostock-Jones seemed unaware of possible incongruity in praising St. David, an 8th Century Archbishop, for his denunciation of heresy with "triumphant loudness."

### Situations Vacant

**T**HE serious and near-serious music we hear nowadays from 1YC and 1YA is so acceptable and varied that it may seem ungrateful to grumble at one aspect of it. This is the remarkable absence of vocal duets, trios and quartets from both recorded and studio recitals. I have been conscious of this for some time, and a careful search of two months' programmes reveals that from 1YC, apart from occasional moments in longer works, only two sessions, both recorded, contained music in these categories. The Harveys' series from 1YA, *The Melody Lingers On*, has done something to fill the gap there; but from 1YC vocal music of the kind which includes some of the greatest episodes in opera and some of the finest art songs is woefully under-represented. Sopranos and baritones there are to burn, and even an occasional inflammable tenor, but never a combination. Is it a matter of false economy in fees, or a lack of realisation by programme organisers of the resources of such music? As a relief from the solo recital and instrumental works, I believe duets, trios and so forth should be actively encouraged to widen the scope of the studio presentation and rub the dust from some of those discs.

—J.C.R.

### Rattling Good

**B**URSTS of modishly elevated music suggestive of an A-class film epic prepared me to be emotionally nourished and technically edified by the NZBS drama *To Have And To Hold*. I was less prepared, in fact, pleasantly surprised (the music was so very elevating) to find it rattling good entertainment, getting off to a fine start with a ripe portrayal by Frederick Farley and Peggy Walker of Robert and Roberta De Winter, two hard-riding soft-living offshoots of a decayed family tree. The rest of the cast was entirely adequate, and the author, Lionel Brown, showed a gratifying awareness of what the radio public wants — plenty of emotion, plenty of suspense and a happy ending. And I did enjoy the simple Wodehousian humour so aptly delivered by that ageing Wooster, Robert De Winter.

### Between the Ears

**T**HOSE socially-significant broadcast talks which have largely taken the place of the weekly sermon must similarly, I feel sure, often fall upon unretentive ears. The best-intentioned talk, the best-constructed talk, the best-delivered talk is all too likely to glide effortlessly and pleasantly through the space between ear and ear, leaving no fertile sediment behind. Even the best-intentioned listener, though keenly, gratefully aware that here is something real and earnest is often powerless to prevent the relentless seepage out the leeward ear almost as soon as it has been received by the windward... But

N.Z. LISTENER, MARCH 14, 1952.