

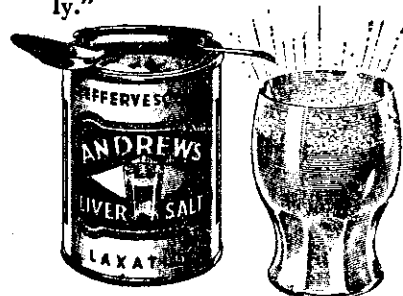
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RADIO REVIEW

The Outside View

THE most striking feature of the BBC documentary programmes is their willingness to see the British from the other side, and this through-the-looking-glass view of ourselves is far more illuminating than mere jingoistic self-approbation could possibly be. Thus the programme on Korea, produced by Peter Duval Smith from René Cutworth's book, *Korean Reporter*, gave us few grounds for complacency as the saviours of Korea and/or the world. *The 38th Parallel* was, like *Window on Czechoslovakia*, *Journey Through Greece*, and other programmes of that nature, beautifully produced, with vivid minor portraits and excellent background. The interwoven tragedies which made up the story are not easily dismissed from the mind—the victim of our napalm bombs, and the bitterness of the Korean Catholic priest, who said: "Your soldiers have not endeared themselves to us. We do not like you." The sad shuffle of the homeless refugees without destination gave added point to Cutworth's closing comment on "the strikingly underprivileged lot of the Korean in this war." While the BBC continues to produce such programmes which attempt to see ourselves as others see us, there is at least some hope for improvement.

Words Not Wasted

I SEEM to have heard so much magazine fiction from 4YA's Short Story Time that only when, like Carlyle in the wilds of Craigenputtock, I am mad for the sound of human speech, do I now tune in to this session: I have had my fill of ghosts, whimsy and romance, historical and sentimental. But the other night we were given a story by J. Jefferson Farjeon, "Murder over Draughts." It was read by two New Zealanders with an absence of fuss and a fine sense of atmosphere. This was, of course, also magazine fiction, but of the good straightforward *roman policier* type, with

no arty pretensions about it. Its brevity ensured that each word carried the story forward, an essential thing in radio, since unnecessary verbal frills cannot be skipped, as in reading, but must be endured. —Loguax

Musical Scholarship

A HALF-HOUR recital by Hubert Milverton-Carta (from 1YC) proved to be one of the listening pleasures of the week, both for material and presentation. Beginning with Caccini's sad and exquisite "Amarilli," it modulated through a well-known piece by Donaudy and two of Reynaldo Hahn's settings of Verlaine, to conclude with four pieces from Osma's *Songs Of My Spanish Soil*. The programme showed that combination of musical scholarship and sensitivity which we have come to expect from Mr. Milverton-Carta, and the sureness with which he enters into the spirit of that which he is singing. The programme was enhanced by his succinct annotations and expressive reading (in English) of the words of each song; and Elizabeth Page accompanied with complete sympathy and tact. The hearing of the songs by Osma made one wish to renew acquaintance with them; but for one listener at least, the high point of the recital consisted in the two songs by Hahn—the setting of "D'une Prison," which some have preferred even to Fauré's, and the wonderful purity and melancholy of "L'heure Exquise."

The Two Gentlemen

TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA must be one of Shakespeare's least-performed plays, and that alone made it an interesting choice for the recent NZBS production (from 1YC). A dead-level production did not allow it to appear a very exciting play; and ruthless cutting left not much more than the bones of the plot, and some, but not all, of the best poetry. I may have nodded at some point, but it seemed to me that even Launce and his dog had disappeared in the general scissoring; and this is surely one of the most endearing pieces of absurdity in all Shakespeare. To treat Shakespeare plays as stories is all very well for *Classic Comics*: the compilers of *Scenes from Shakespeare* were wiser in their generation, knowing that the story is often less important than the situation. It is no reflection on

"I KNOW WHAT I THINK . . ."

THE ECHOING ORGAN

IN presenting the first of a series of recorded organ recitals from British Cathedrals, 1YA recently featured Dr. Dykes Bower, Organist of St. Paul's, London. The opening number was a Voluntary in A Minor by the blind contemporary of Handel, John Stanley. What fascinated me more than the music was the echo as the massive chords floated around the Cathedral dome. Often, after a rest, the subsequent chord had to be superimposed on the echo, half spent. Organ music in the great cathedrals does not die; like traditional old soldiers it simply fades away. Next came a Voluntary in G Major, by Charles Macpherson, a former organist at St. Paul's. It is a charming little thing of such simplicity that many a lesser organist would affect to despise it as a recital piece. At Sir Hubert Parry's funeral in St. Paul's Cathedral in 1918, some friends made a small wreath of melodies which were played. This was one of them. The final item was Parry's spectacular Chorale Prelude on the "Old 104th," but when the organist's foot touched the lowest note (C) of that magnificent instrument in the fortissimo climax, my midget radio set simply packed up.

—Vox Humana