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ONCE I had ideas about learning the 'cello. An instrument in a second-hand dealer's window looked interesting, and I asked a well-known 'cello-playing friend to value it



N.P.S. photograph

for me. He inspected it fore and aft and to port and starboard, gave it a few taps on the belly and said "H-m." He took out his pen-knife, scraped the resin under the bridge, and lo, it had been treated with brown boot polish

Open Microphone

and dust to give the illusion of use and age. Maybe it's been better for a lot of people that my ambition died on the spot. I suppose that old trick, or a variant of it, has been worked on violins, too. Just like a 'cello, a violin is a violin, whichever way you look at it; but some are different from others. The instrument pictured here, for instance, has something about it—a value of £3000—and it belongs to Alan Loveday. Dated 1709, it came from what violinists call the "golden age of Stradivarius." What about its tone? The noted conductor, Basil Cameron, told Alan Loveday that it was the best Stradivarius he had ever heard. The bow is a Peccatte and the ensemble is carried about in a good, solid wooden case.

WHEN I went to see Loveday the other morning I was accompanied by Eric Woollett, a photographer for the National Publicity Studios, who took this picture. Photographer and violinist recognised each other immediately, but for a moment Loveday couldn't remember where they had met. Said Eric Woollett: "Your father taught me the violin in Palmerston North." Said Alan Loveday, "I remember now. He taught me, too." Loveday, Sen., now living in

London, was a versatile man; he also gave instruction on the banjo and guitar. "Being back after 14 years is wonderful," said Loveday (who was practising in shirt sleeves on one of Wellington's near-winter days), "and I've been looking forward to it ever since I left." One place Alan Loveday was booked to play in on his present tour of New Zealand was the Mayfair Theatre, Palmerston North. In that theatre, formerly the Palace, his father played the violin with an orchestra during the old silent picture days.

"WHAT'S on the menu?" members of the audience asked each other at a recent Women's Hour session, conducted in the 12B Radio Theatre by Marina. A new type of stove had been installed on the stage

TUCK SHOP and the onlookers saw two demonstrators preparing and cooking a complete dinner which was served to the announcers. Guy Nixon and Chris Venning. Just before the session ended the audience was asked to sample freshly-cooked cakes and scones, and everybody, particularly the two announcers, left the theatre satisfied, in a practical way, with the demonstration.

LIGHT PROGRAMMES FOR STRINGS

SHOWCASE, a new series of 13 weekly programmes arranged, composed and conducted by Terry Vaughan (below), will start this Saturday, June 6, at the four YA stations. A small group of some of the best-known string players in Wellington, assisted by woodwind from the National Orchestra and two singers, will present what Mr. Vaughan calls "a display of light music which the performers

seem to enjoy as much as I do." He chose the name, he said, because the programmes are "bright and showy, each beginning with something by one of the best of the light melody-makers, George Gershwin." From there on they cover a wide field spanning Leroy Anderson and Romberg. For instance, in one programme listeners will hear "The Irish Washerwoman, Her Husband and Their Little Boy, Danny," in which the violins represent the Irish Washerwoman, the bassoon her husband, and the oboe Danny Boy, all arguing in contrapuntal style. Another example is "Grandfather Does the Mexican Hat Dance," with the bassoon portraying Grandfather trying to keep pace with the spirited caperings of the rest of the orchestra. The vocalists are Ngaire Crawford (soprano) and Jim Greenlees (baritone). They were selected, said Mr. Vaughan, because they represent the "half-way mark between 'straight' and 'popular' singers." Terry Vaughan tells me he has also recorded another series of programmes called *Three Fours*, traversing chronologically the works of the waltz composers from Brahms and Schubert to the modern David Rose and Richard Rogers.



N.P.S. photograph

IMAGINE how extraordinarily difficult it must be if you are a bookseller yourself and have to give a Christmas present to a friend of yours who's also a bookseller. No good

MAKESHIFT sending each other a book—that's obvious: no good at all. You'd just have to fall back on uninspiring, humdrum presents like boxes of cigars and great magnums of Napoleon brandy.—From a NZBS Book Shop talk.

"WONDERFUL, wonderful Gilbert Harding!" sang two little girls in Britain as they played happily with their toys. Their elder sister, who had seen Danny Kaye's latest film, *Hans Christian Andersen*, and readily succumbed to the lift of WONDERFUL! the main tune, said gently, "It's 'Wonderful, wonderful Copenhagen,' not Gilbert Harding!" "It isn't," said the two children vehemently, "we've heard it on the wireless so we know it's right!" Their conviction was unshakable so Harding, who was for 1952-53 acclaimed as the Personality of the Year in both television and sound broadcasting, is still the subject of their song.

WHEN he was only three, Vladimir Horowitz would sit quietly for long periods, listening to his mother playing the piano for her own pleasure. She began to teach him when he was six FIVE PER CENT but there was then no thought of his becoming a famous pianist. At 12 he was sent to the Kiev Conservatory. Horowitz, whose name appears frequently in our radio programmes, feels that had