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W.B. THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA

JOAN WOOD, Wellington soprano, who is just back from England after studying singing under Roy Henderson and Walter Gruner, and also for a few weeks in Paris, met several New Zealand students. She gained the impression that they are doing very well. The other morning she told me of some of the problems students going abroad are likely to meet. One was finding the right



Spencer Highy photograph
JOAN WOOD

teacher for their particular needs; another was discovering accommodation with a landlady who didn't mind a student practising for a considerable time every day. Concert-going, so necessary to a student, took quite an amount of planning because the choice was vast and tickets had to be bought some time ahead. In London and in Paris, said Mrs. Wood, there were singing classes which students could attend either as listeners or performers. In Paris, Marya Freund gave lessons where students could sing anything they liked and the teacher criticised the performance. Each week Madame Freund selected a different composer, lectured about him and

Open Microphone

demonstrated his work. Mrs. Wood added that she had been helped by the soprano Phyllis Mander, and that Isobel Baillie had given her some very unusual music to copy. Mrs. Wood is the wife of Professor F. L. W. Wood, Professor of History at Victoria University College, who was visiting England on refresher leave.

MOST schoolchildren are asked to name the highest mountain in the world, and to give its height. Most of them know the name, Everest, but the accepted height of this Himalayan giant, 29,002 feet above sea level, is now being challenged. Richard Williams, the

MOUNTAIN MADE TO MEASURE

BBC's correspondent in Delhi, reported recently that it is just 100 years since surveyors established that Everest was the highest mountain in the world at 29,002 feet, but since then the accuracy of this measurement has often been disputed. The geodetic system of measuring the height of Himalayan peaks is open to a large margin of error and the first survey was made from six different points, all of them over 100 miles away from the peak. At this distance the effect of refraction can make a difference of over 1000 feet in height, and refraction changes all the time according to the density of the air. Now the Survey of India Department has decided to measure the mountain again to settle the matter for good, and surveyors are taking readings from four or five selected points inside Nepal. This time the points are all within 30 or 40 miles of the peak, which should mean a corresponding gain in accuracy.

YOU must have heard the story about the old professor who said to his students, "Never lend a book. Only fools lend books. You see all those books over there? They once belonged to

fools." In New Zealand the method usually adopted in building up a private library is very much

MAY I BORROW THIS?

like the professor's. It's what's called the "free library system." When it comes to the borrowing and lending of books, New Zealanders are in an advanced state of communism. (I don't suppose it really matters very much, as long as the books are read.) "May I borrow this?" never means just that. It means, "May I unburden your shelves of this book and add it to my collection?"—A. R. D. Fairburn, in a NZBS Book Shop talk.

TERENCE RATTIGAN wrote his two one-act plays *Harlequinade* and *The Browning Version* for performance as a double-bill, and in their London presentation both plays were performed



TERENCE RATTIGAN

by the same group of actors, headed by Eric Portman. *Harlequinade* deals with the idiosyncrasies of a company of touring players, while *The*

SCHOOLMASTER'S PROBLEM

Browning Version is a more serious study—of a schoolmaster's problem. Later Anthony Asquith asked Rattigan to re-write *The Browning Version* for the screen, and laurels fell on Michael Redgrave, who took the leading role. A radio adaptation of *The Browning Version*, by Cynthia Pugh, produced in the Wellington Studios of the NZBS, will be broadcast from Station 2XN, Nelson on Thursday, July 16, at 9.20 p.m. The cast includes Michael Cotterill (now of the New Zealand Players), Frederick Farley and Kenneth Firth.

VALERIE PERRY (née Peppler), soprano, who will present a studio recital of six songs by Hugo Wolf from 3YC at 8.25 p.m. on Sunday, July 12,

MUSIC IN THE SOUTH

flourishing in South Canterbury, and that she is always busy. Mrs. Perry, formerly of Christchurch, but now living in Waimate, where her husband, Dr. A. L. M. Perry, is Rector of the Waimate High School, has been broadcasting in Christchurch for several



SINCE THE SOUTHERN SINGERS were formed as a choral group by 4YZ Invercargill, in May, 1949, they have broadcast regularly and presented more than 40 programmes, including Purcell's only opera, "Dido and Aeneas," and a cantata by John Ritchie, of Christchurch. Recently a small section of the choir recorded Elizabethan madrigals for NZBS Coronation programmes. Listeners to 4YZ at 9.12 p.m. on Sunday, July 12, will hear from the studio the Southern Singers in a bracket of six "Songs of England" by Eric Thiman. The conductor is J. Morris Scobie, and his wife, Lyndall Scobie, is the pianist