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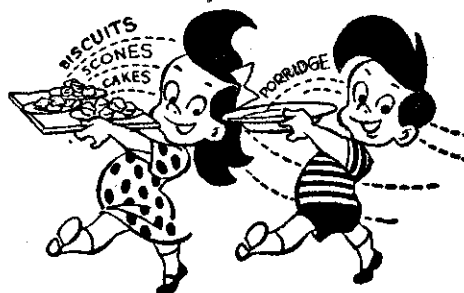
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Radio Review

YEATS AND WARLOCK

THE four poems of Yeats which provide the text for Peter Warlock's song-cycle *The Curlew* (from 1YC) are all early, and the setting shows them off to advantage. The first two are tiny poems, "He Reproves the Curlew" and "The Lover Mourns for the Loss of Love," inset into an elaborate accompaniment, like the text dwarfed by gorgeous borders in a book printed by William Morris. The last is another short poem, "He Hears the Cry of the Sedge," which brings the appropriate and elegiac close. But in the middle is a poem of considerable weight, "The Withering of the Boughs," and here the mood varies dramatically—the serene melancholy of "the honey-pale moon," the threatening witches, and the "sleepy country" of the royal swans, ending with the almost-whispered sadness of "The boughs have withered because I have told them my dreams." With its beautiful matching of voice and woodwind, this is a piece exactly within the range and tone of Warlock's not inconsiderable talent. But who will do it now for the later Yeats, and give us the right music for (say) "Crazy Jane" or "Blood and the Moon"?

Four-footed Friends

ABOUT eight o'clock on a Sunday morning, while the milk bottles clink and the kettle hisses, you can be pretty certain to hear from the speaker the manly tones of Roy Rogers singing about that Wonderful Four-footed Friend. No doubt the faithfulness of the Junior Request Session to this disc is due to the popularity of Mr. Rogers himself. But surely it also appeals to the deep sympathy which the Great Anglo-Saxon Race have always felt for Our Dumb Friends. In confirmation, the other one that comes up with almost equal regularity is the plaintive song about the doggy in the window, which caters for the same sentiment on a more domestic scale. Who can disbelieve that we are still a race of animal lovers? But doubt intrudes. For the third that you are certain to hear on every request session is "It's In the Book," which has (it's true) something to do with sheep, but is mainly in a tone of healthy sadism. It illustrates, I suppose, the Race's other talent for pure and inspired nonsense—a side of its character which I much prefer. Perhaps all Four-footed Friends should be washed with Grandma's Lye-Soap?

—M.K.J.

Film Into Radio

THE title "Gilbert and Sullivan—the Story of the Film" was a modest one; in fact, there was almost a suggestion of All Care but No Responsibility. Those responsible need not have worried: there was nothing in this film biography to jar the sensibilities of listeners reared in the best traditions of BBC documentary. It was, moreover, a splendid programme in its own right. One expected the music to be superb—what was less expected was the satisfactory translation into radio of shots presumably taken direct from the film

(the scene where Sullivan shuts down the window on the German band playing Iolanthe in order to concentrate better on his letter to Gilbert dissolving the partnership; the final scene where Gilbert walks along the corridors of Buckingham Palace to receive his knighthood). I never had the feeling I often get from these film-to-radio programmes of being a patron at a third-sitting of supper for whom the bottom of the trifle bowl has been painstakingly scraped.

Authors Badly Treated

I DOUBT whether the famous authors, even the live ones, have much choice as to which of their short stories is given the works for *Theatre of Famous Authors*, heard from 2YA. The overseas adapters apparently feel they have done the author sufficient honour by including him in their series. They start off with a patronising snippet or two of biography, then justify their patronage by using a story that is neither particularly brilliant nor particularly good dramatic material. Gerald Kersh ("the poor man's Rudyard Kipling") got off comparatively lightly with "Tomorrow in the Morning," warmly sentimental but lacking the characteristic bite. But poor Scott Fitzgerald was most unfairly represented by "The Four Fists." It was handicapped by the fact that it had only two characters, the business man telling his own success story, and the interviewing reporter with no part in the action, confining himself to appreciative comments, increasingly slurred, on his host's whisky. Since the tycoon's story is a highly moral one, the reporter was doubtless retained to illustrate Fitzgerald's jazz age nexus.

—M.B.

Tantalising Facts

WHAT is to be said for *Passing Parade*, *Tapestries of Life* and similar radio features which bring to light odd facts concerning people? About as much, I suppose, as may be said for *The Digest*, which gives with one hand only to take away with the other, giving facts but tending to set up a time-killing craving for information out of proportion to the value of the unrelated knowledge given. Station 3ZB's story on Casanova, told in *Passing Parade*, brought new light on the courage and fortitude of a man who for the most part is dismissed because of our condemnation of his chosen career. How odd to learn that the same civilisation which condemns his life and work is not certain enough of itself to destroy the copy of his memoirs locked in a tower in Leipzig, or on the other hand to publish them freely. More recently the tale of an 80-year-old lawyer who came out of retirement to defend the right of an individual to speak the truth underlined the fact that thousands of times it is not words alone which live on in the life of a nation, but a combination of the man, the word, and the hour.

Discovering Berlioz

BY the mere fact of its existence and our interest in it, the National Orchestra no doubt leads many people out to explore the new musical world of today typified in part by its Glazounovs and Khachaturians. For others like myself it brings closer contact with well established masters like Berlioz, who was little more than a name to me until I heard "Les Francs Juges" broadcast over 3YC during the last visit of the

N.Z. LISTENER, JULY 31, 1953.