

RIDDLE

*T*HERE is a road by trees and down by water
lovers have come as nebulous as stars
through the pale evening and as free as laughter
found the night fruitful there, and waiting, theirs.

Others, by day, have suffered from the dust
and slaked small fevers at the watercourse
finding its taste as bitter as their sweat,
noticing, after, how the road seemed worse.

While some have not seen anything at all
of trees, the lovers, dust, or waterway,
their eyes being upon the distant palace
fading before them with dividing day.

Shall we say which we choose or how we come
since each, making his claim, may prove the lie
spreads black as flies upon his tongue, and none
sure that he is not all—both beast and beauty?

—Louis Johnson

slowing up of the human voice and consequent lowering of pitch to suit the robot was both appropriate and humorous. "Summer Rain," an adaptation of a Spanish play, produced by the BBC and broadcast from 3YA, provided half an hour's amusement over the straits an irritable elderly couple are put to when recognising that they were once sweethearts. One can never be sure that humour will be of the kind we can enjoy, when it comes to a foreign work, but it certainly triumphed here.

—Westcliff

Beethoven Sonatas

*T*HE added interest of a complete musical series is being vividly demonstrated at present with 4YC's complete set of the Beethoven piano-forte sonatas. Although the named varieties—Appassionata, Waldstein, etc.—together with one or two of the unnamed—the Opus 2, No. 2, and the Opus 26, for instance—appear in the normal programmes fairly frequently, others, one finds on hearing the complete series, are very rare indeed. In some cases the reason for their occasional appearance seems obvious, for some of the lesser known sonatas are undoubtedly not to be included among the greatest. In other cases, the lesser popularity of some works can only be described as one of the inexplicable vagaries of taste or fashion. One should like to see this series extended later to include the Beethoven sonatas for piano and cello, or the Mozart sonatas. Whatever this station has in store for us, however, it is to be hoped that the present form of Sonata Hour will be maintained, for at the moment it has the twin virtues of quality and regularity, a programme to set one's watch by, and a fine introduction to the pleasures of the weekend.

Children's Reading

*T*HERE is, I suspect, at times, a new and subtle snobbery developing out of the present interest in children's reading, and the conscientious parent who snatches the latest comic out of his son's grubby fists to replace it with a copy of the work of Enid Blyton is liable to be scorned by others who have discovered children's books by learned gentlemen. An intellectual reputation founded on the "serious" nature of infant reading has its attractions for the lazy-minded adult thus set free to proceed with his diet of thrillers. But J. R. McClure, with his excellent set of talks on children's reading, has effec-

tively blown away the mists of this pipe-dream by setting the responsibility where it belongs, and his clear exposition of what is required of the parent, and what is available in reading material, together with reference works in child psychology and kindred topics gives, in a manner easy to assimilate, much valuable information untainted by any form of snobbery.

—Loquax

Parcels Undelivered

*C*HRISTINE COLE'S documentary on the Returned Letter Office, *Dead Letter*, revealed, I thought, a nice feeling for aural texture. It began arrestingly with the barking of the auctioneer at the Post Office's annual sale of undeliverable parcels. "One butcher's knife and steel, one teddy bear, pairs gents' underpants, upper and lower dentures—" then dropped several decibels to the decorous level of life in the Returned Letter Office. The choice of topic was a good one, since there's satisfaction about getting acquainted with something that has existed, an unknown quantity, on one's very doorstep. And, whether this was a result of good editing, the commère's ease-inducing manner, or proof of the high I.Q.'s of R.L.O. employees, the persons interviewed were more fluent than is often the case; and the less cynical or the more recently hired responded happily to hints for "human interest."

Domestic Comedy

I HAVE nothing but gratitude for 2YC's policy of a nice long play on Sunday night, for without it what would happen to the mending? Nor do I question 2YC's fondness for a nice domestic comedy, since anything that makes you realise the complete insignificance of your own pettifoggery concerns is scarcely conducive to conscientious housewifery. But there's domestic comedy and domestic comedy. Jeannie was pure joy; its old theme of Nice Girl Falls for Wrong Man Marries Right Man was as heartwarming as ever, thanks partly to the warmth and sparkle Olive Lucius brought to the title role. *Fly Away Peter* was one of these multi-strand ultra-domestic comedy dramas, where they don't hesitate to drag in the kitchen sink. This time Olive Lucius had a much harder job linking the nicely-detached Mrs. Hapgood in the early dialogue and the devouring matriarch exposed by her later actions. The other characters, to compensate, perhaps, did not develop at all.

—M.B.

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