

At least half the radio talks I hear please me for this reason only—that they can be switched off, and thus spare me the helpless trapped misery that sometimes sweeps over me quarter way through

THANK YOU,
INDEED,
MR. JOSEPH.

a church sermon.
On the other hand,
there are some few
radio talks which

are as entertaining and satisfying as winning a good argument; and those few compensate for the hours of tedious wordage which rollers and stumbles to night and to morn of them. One of these compensations was Mr. George Joseph's talk on the Oxford-Cambridge boat race, which came over 2YA on Saturday night, crisp, lucid and well-constructed. It was spoken with feeling and enthusiasm. The script was so good that at times it was really stirring and I, sitting dozing in an armchair in the Antipodes, almost imagined myself in faraway England—keyed up and violently partisan over the result of that greatest and cleanest of English sporting events. So thank you very much, Mr. Joseph, for my most enjoyed radio talk this year. True, you had a fruitful subject, but, oh, how many fruitful subjects have I heard in my times of trial go rotten over the air!



But perhaps my highest tribute to Mr. Joseph's talk on the Thames Boat Race was paid at seven o'clock on Sunday morning, when I throttled the shrieking alarm and crawled out of bed to hear the NEW ZEALANDER race itself rebroadcast from 2ZB. WHO CONTRADICTED. And as rebroadcasts go, it was worth the sacrifice of sleep. It came across clearly enough, and the English announcer was very good—well-informed, sharp in intonation and with just the right note of impartial excitement. I liked the sound of Thames water lapping and the way the noise of the crowd was kept sufficiently in the background not to drown the commentary. For those who know the Thames and the course of the race, I should imagine the broadcast must have been fascinating—it was exciting enough even to me who know nothing of the turns and bridges of the river. Only one jarring note, and what a jar! Just after the Englishman had said, "It's over and Oxford wins the boat race by two and a half lengths."

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In playreading and private activity, every Little Theatre society can increase knowledge and appreciation of drama to its heart's content, but in public production it should confine itself strictly to material that can be produced, so that it will provide as much entertainment for a casual patron from a far town as for the mother and cousins of the juvenile lead.

Before much real progress will be made with amateur drama, the amateurs must learn to put the show-business before art.

Came our own New Zealand ZB conversationalist. And he, bless him, told us in his bright morning voice that Cambridge had won! Well, novelty is all very well in its way, but not that way. It is a pity that 2ZB's

enterprise in arranging the rebroadcast should have been marred by so careless a mistake.



Radio plays are like little girls. "When they are good, they are very, very good, but when they are bad they are horrid." Unfortunately for my peace of mind on Wednesday night,

NAPOLEON
WAS A
DULL FELLOW.

Anthony Ellis's historical play about Napoleon and Josephine, from 2YA, was included in the second group. Napoleon, talking public school English, and at least once getting tangled in his script, had neither fire nor variation. Josephine's voice came over very well, but she was inclined to gabble and to elocute. The script was poor in the first place, but poor though it was it could have been handled better. Sometimes, I think I'll have to take to buying plays again and reading them in bed.



"Atmosphere" in a play, by means of sound effects, voice inflections and so on? By all means, but, you amateurs, please don't overdo it, for while it may "look" and sound perfectly satisfactory on the stage, things are

AMATEURS
WILL
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just a bit different when the microphone picks up and magnifies faults as well as virtues. Although the play, "Congo Landing," from 3YA on March 27, by the Avon Players, was quite well done, it was not a really satisfactory performance. Not so much were the players at fault

NEW FEATURE

The "Record" has arranged to publish from next week Seeger's famous cartoon series "Pop-Eye The Sailor Man."

as the play itself. The effects were good and the major characters did nearly as well as they should, but the ending! It was vague, almost unintelligible, and listeners were prone to ask each other at the end, "Well, what is the end?" Maybe it is fashionable to leave the listeners or the audience "up in the air," but it's not pleasing by any means. Then, again, one player who had the role of an American producer, overdid his part so obviously that one could not help wondering if he was playing in a Yankee knock-about farce. One must always admire enthusiasm, but over-working, as the stage folk call it, approaches crime.



2ZB put over a rather sensational April Fool joke last week. About 11 p.m. on the last day of March, Kingi Tahiwai asked listeners to wait up for an important statement that would be broadcast at mid-

A GOOD JOKE
BUT IN
POOR TASTE.

night. If the message did not come to hand by then, the station would not close down till it did, he said. He rubbed this in very thoroughly at frequent intervals, and this listener, at least, was on tenterhooks, especially when Kingi announced that the "important statement" had to do with the international situation. He couldn't divulge it at once, said Kingi. He had to wait till it was officially confirmed.

Heavens, thought I, war's been declared or Hitler's been assassinated, at the very least. I jumped for the shortwave dial when I heard that about the international situation—but could pick up nothing out of the ordinary. So back to 2ZB to hear Kingi telling us that the statement was at last to hand, and that it affected England, France, Russia, Italy and Germany, but China and Japan were not concerned. I thought he was taking rather long to reach the point, and grew a trifle suspicious. And then Kingi told us that New Zealand and Australia were vitally affected, being 12 hours ahead of Europe—and it was, in fact, April the First. I had to laugh. We'd all been properly fooled. It was a good joke, but without wishing to suggest sour grapes, I think it might have been put over a little more tactfully. The world's in too serious a mess these days to give us frights over the radio about the international situation. It might, you see, so easily have not been a joke. Anyway, that's how I felt about it.



The Empire Art Loan Collection at present on view at the Dunedin Art Gallery, and covering the works of British masters from 1700 until the present, was the subject of an interesting and instructive

STIMULATION relay by 4ZB the TO other afternoon. It

PAY A VISIT. took the form of an

interview between announcer Don Donaldson and Mr. Gordon Tovey, lecturer for the Dunedin School of Art. A pleasing facility in the avoidance of technicalities, together with a flair for simple and effective description, made Mr. Tovey's remarks most interesting. The relay was of a nature that should have encouraged many listeners to seek the fuller enjoyment of a personal visit to the Art Gallery.



I know an announcer who was once induced to provide a radio commentary on a chess champion. Unable to "give the listeners the works" he visibly wilted and, at the end of the broadcast de-

ANNOUNCING the way, he did
WAS very well, he moan-

NOT SO GRIM. ed for a couple of

"long ones." He desisted. All sport broadcasting is not like racing or Rugby. Take bowls, for instance. To listeners, who can't see the tense faces of the players and the constant danger of a grievous assault on "kitty," it can be most tiresome. But when the final of the champion of champion rinks competition conducted by the Christchurch Bowling Centre at the Barrington green, and also three rounds of the Maddison trophy, were staged last week, people who didn't know a bowl from one of those things you drink out of, got a pretty good spell of entertainment. Over 3YA the real bowlers—and there are 17,294 of them affiliated to the New Zealand Bowling Association—heard everything they needed about the progress of the important games, while others were treated to various facts about the game, generously interlarded with snippets of true wit concerning green performances. More of this type of thing would be valuable. Too many announcers take their jobs so seriously that they become positively grim.