

MUSIC OF THE WEEK

*There is no art without life,
There is no life without growth,
There is no growth without change,
There is no change without contra-
versy.—Frank Rutter.*

RELAYS from the Empress of Britain were made last week by the Commercial. I heard the ship's string ensemble twice, knowing that the pianist in charge was F. Everard, formerly of the Queen Mary, and, frankly, was a little disappointed. There was a surprisingly unsatisfactory lack of balance, and although the operator and myself apparently do not agree on microphone placings, the musicians could hardly blame this fault for careless ensemble playing. I say careless, because I cannot conceive how a combination which plays together so frequently could lack perfect understanding. The leading violinist sounded a good player and the pianist pleased, but we could not hear the remainder, except in an occasional bar.

FREDERICK ENGLISH, a baritone on the same ship, presented a group of songs from the Wellington main national station, and also from 1YA during the week. Mr. English was not on top form as we heard him. An entertainer on a liner such as the Empress of Britain must find his voice sorely taxed by the time the voyage draws to a close.

THE accompanist was Mr. Everard, and it was a treat to hear him. The accompaniment balanced throughout and Mr. Everard was not afraid to bring out the important notes of a chord. There was a great deal more thought behind the performance than is generally noticeable in the work of most pianists accompanying Schumann songs.

OF vital interest to musicians was a splendid programme of music by Sibelius and Kilpinen broadcast by 2YA last week. Sibelius is probably one of the two most original minds in all music history—Berlioz is the other. As Newman says, "Everything is done off his own bat."

It is gratifying to find the works of a brilliant composer gaining rapid ground in the musical world. Do musicians realise that we have living with us to-day a genius whose originality is far in advance of many of the earlier masters as claimed in their time? His writings are free-patterned after his own school and when we hear his magnificent symphonies and symphonic poems we feel we are being brought into burning contact with things that have lived, things that have been seen and felt.

FROM the same country, Finland, we have Yrjo Kilpinen, who has already written over 500 songs. If Kil-

pinen had not become occasionally academic I would agree with a contemporary of mine in saying "I prefer Kilpinen to Schubert."

It was not until 1933 that the first English performance of Kilpinen's songs was given at a private concert.

In 1935, the first public concert of his songs was given in the same country, and at forty-six we find Kilpinen the most admired and discussed song writer of his time.



MR. ERNEST JENNER.

"I disagreed with his remarks..."

THE Royal Christchurch Musical Society presented a Holst hour last Wednesday evening from 3YA. The hour did not please me for several reasons.—Firstly, the choir did not sound numerically strong enough to give us such a work as "King Estmare." The unison work was satisfactory, even if the male voices were inclined to "open" in the higher notes. If singers would only remember to "cover" properly, the voice quality of any choir would rapidly improve.

Gustav Holst is as the conductor said, "an experimenter."

Holst is also a monotonous composer. "King Estmare" becomes very tiresome as it wanders on, and I always feel the same with many other works of more than moderate length by the same composer. Even the "Planets" take some sitting out. Candidly, I thought the hour did more to display the monotony of Holst than to show

him at his best. It was too much like "a continuous one-course dinner."

CECILY AUDIBERT and Gladys Vincent performed the hymns for voice and violin creditably, but I did not agree with the remarks made by the conductor immediately preceding the songs. Was not the first number, at least, a melody accompanied by two and three-part harmony, and not, as it was claimed to be, a melody for voice and violin? After the narrator's remarks I expected to hear either a more or less unison effort or something in strict contrapuntal form throughout.

Perhaps Mr. Jenner, in endeavouring to make the form clear to his mixed audience, overlooked the fact that there would be some intensely interested musicians listening to his comments.

The hymn "Jesu, Now Will I Sing to Thee" is a song for voice, accompanied by the violin, in which the instrument takes the part of an extraordinarily small orchestra.

FROM one of the Commercial I heard the announcer introduce "Modern Masters of the Keyboard" and play a recording by Bob Howard. Never heard of him. Anyway, Mr. "Bob" Howard is not a "modern master of the keyboard."

I RECEIVED advice from Wellington early in the week that Mr. J. Dearden-Jackson, bassoonist, would be coming to live in New Zealand. From my recent observation wood-wind players must be particularly welcome in New Zealand, as we rarely see solos by this section of an orchestra scheduled on programmes. It is pleasing to note that Mr. Dearden-Jackson is a recent member of one of the BBC orchestras. It so frequently happens that the name of the finest broadcasting service in the world is still being traded on by artists who performed for it in the early days of broadcasting. Mr. Dearden-Jackson must be a splendid player, and I understand is also a competent pianist. He should have some new ideas for New Zealand musicians.

I RECOMMEND listeners to tune in to the recitals by Cara Hall, the fifteen-year-old New Zealand pianist, who plays in the south next week. There is a future for this young artist. She has character in her playing.

AFTER listening to Holst and some not too interesting Beethoven on the same evening, I was pleased to turn to an auxiliary station and hear some Mozart and Schubert recordings.

BY "SCHERZO"