

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 controversy.—Frank Rutter.*

A KREISLER programme from one of the Commercials last week was welcome in a rather unstimulating week. Programmes on eminent living musicians have a double appeal—not only do they present good general entertainment, but they remind us that we have at present with us musicians who are comparable with many outstanding artists of the past. It so frequently happens that we decry the living generation in art—that it is refreshing to find at least



FRITZ KREISLER.

... Had his commercial moments.

some acknowledgment of them. There are more executants and more brilliant composers in the world to-day than there have ever been in the past, and it is pleasing to note how British musicians are coming to the fore.

THE Kreisler programme depicted the commercial Kreisler more than the artistic Kreisler. Would it not have been more honest to speak about the achievements of this great violinist in the field of really important music—Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and Brahms? The lighter compositions created by world-famed artists merely whet one's appetite for something really worth while, and when the worth while composition is left out of a programme there is a lack of substance in that programme. The narration, by the way, sounded to me as if the narrator was "reading" a script prepared by a second party. Bad slip in style. Musical commentary should sound knowledgeable.

ETHEL FRIEND presented a group of songs from one of the southern Nationals last week—all the numbers were by Brahms. Candidly, I did not enjoy the group very much. The singer appeared out of form. It is impossible to stress too greatly the importance of singing lieder with the greatest of care. Personally, I would far rather see a programme cancelled than listen to an artist who is not feeling in good form struggling through a group of songs.

To perform Brahms well, every care should be taken with the vocal line—the phrasing must be carefully treated, and the quality of the voice must be perfectly true—there should be no vibrato effects. I would like to hear Miss Friend treat Brahms with more reverence. Incidentally, the pianist played the accompaniments splendidly.

THE National Wellington station broadcast two pleasing singers during the week. Jean Scott performed a mixed group on Tuesday, and a ballad programme was presented by a Miss Greenwood the previous Sunday. The ballad group was entertaining, and, although the artist sounded a shade nervous, her voice has definite possibilities. It was a pleasant programme, even if the songs were hardly worth-while.

JEAN SCOTT performed the Armstrong Gibbs songs satisfactorily, but the Malashkin number was not correct rhythmically—check up on the final page Miss Scott, please, and you will notice that the vocal line differs rhythmically from the right-hand of the accompaniment.

IT was pleasing to note an improvement in studio orchestras during the week. "Scherzo" is looking forward to the time when orchestral performances will really be entertaining throughout.

FROM 1YA I heard what appeared to be a young baritone singing "To the Forest" (Tchaikowsky). This is a beautiful song, but the artist could not have given of his best. It was "skipped over" like a cheap ballad, and experience will teach Mr. Richards that he cannot treat the standard composers casually, giving the devil his due. The quality of the voice was more than fair and the phrasing good.

BY "SCHERZO"

ON Friday the Max Scherek Trio is scheduled to present the Beethoven Trio in C Minor from the Dunedin National Station. This is a delightful work, and I recommend it to listeners.

I MUST not fail to mention Kipnis again. He is at present broadcasting in Australia. Last week I wrote a few lines about him in this column and since then I have listened



ETHEL FRIEND.

... "vibrato in Brahms?" No!

to his broadcasts. He is a great artist, and his Brahms is superb. Here we have an artist who should be heard by all musicians as I heard him—the man's work is a revelation.

"Highbrow" Plays In Australia.

THE first of a series of special play productions is to be relayed through Australian National stations shortly.

They will be produced by Mr. F. D. Clewlow, the Australian Broadcasting Commission's Federal Controller of Productions, beginning with "The Betrothal," Maurice Maeterlinck's sequel to "The Bluebird." It is scheduled for Sunday night, April 10.

The other plays will be:—

"Cyrano de Bergerac" by Edmund Rostand, which will come from Sydney in June, "The Fall of the City," a play specially written for radio by the American poet, Archibald McLeish, "The Squirrel's Cage," by Tyrone Guthrie, "Hassan," by Elroy Flecker, and "Murder in the Cathedral," by T. S. Elliot.