

I have been doing a little thinking (and survived the ordeal), as a result of listening to studio plays from 4YA, and I have come to the conclusion that there are too many producers being given plays. I am not really thinking of any one particular producer at the moment, and the

PRODUCERS NEED WEEDING OUT?

indifference of "The Legend of the Moonlight," from 4YA last Monday, has not particularly influenced this comment. So far as I can see there are about a dozen producers to-day who put on plays in sequence, so that at least 12 weeks must elapse before a certain producer is heard from again—sometimes much longer, as recorded plays are dropped in from time to time on the nights when studio plays are looked for. Of this small army of producers there are only a few whose finished products show real signs of careful rehearsal, and a true understanding of the author's requirements, plus an equally true understanding of the difficult technique of radio; the remainder convey the impression that a reading before the microphone is all that is required, and obviously no rehearsal has been considered necessary. I do think that those producers who do their best with plays which are often quite unsuitable for radio performances should be given greater consideration than those who accept a play and thrust it through the microphone any old how at all.



Imitating is an art that has been successfully exploited by countless comedians on the stage and over the radio, but used purely in a burlesque sense. When the "Chatterboxes," in two sketches,

IMITATION DOES NOT ALWAYS FLATTER

"That's My Story" and "What's the Idea?" were heard over 3YA last week, I could not help thinking that while the matter could have been worse, there was apparent an almost slavish copying of the kind of turn put over by the inimitable Clapham and Dwyer. The artists took themselves very seriously, and, in the first number, seemed a trifle excited, with the result that occasionally a gag was muffled by a too rapid retort. Let us have snappy turns by all means, but is there any need to steal the thunder of artists who have made that type of work inimitably their own?



To find out what the musical taste of everyman might be, I listened curiously to "Everyman's Music" from 2ZB last week, and on the whole I think the station hit it pretty well. There was a song

MR. EVERYMAN AND HIS MUSIC

by Peter Dawson—how the vigour of him lasts in spite of the years!—two charming little other-worldly pieces of music from Snow-White and the Seven Dwarfs, and a song by a "husky-voiced" woman singing "There are Blossoms on Broadway While I am Walking With You." I was dubious about everyman's reception of the last number, though we know he is a sentimental old gentleman, and further, try as I might I could myself picture no blossoms on Broadway, except perhaps, a few pansies.

I was entertained in the right sense when 4ZB put over a session devoted to gipsy music. It was not so much the music that appealed to me, although that, in itself, had no small appeal. There was

GIPSY MUSIC NO LONGER EASTERN

and their nomadic lives. It appears that they migrated centuries ago from the East and set up their homes, more or less temporarily, in Western Europe. Originally their music was characteristically Eastern, but as their years in Europe grew, the whining melancholy of the East became lost and a more robust, tuneful music took its place. There was certainly nothing whining about the music that was played during this session, although any listener must have sensed the influence of Slav airs. A good show, 4ZB.



Those who listened to the studio presentation of Edward Wooll's play, "Libel," from 1YA on Sunday week last must have enjoyed it. I thought it one of the best plays produced by a National station for a long time.

ONE OF THE BEST 1YA PLAYS

Adapted by J. B. Yaldwyn, a Wellington barrister, "Libel" was produced by Mr. J. M. Clark, who has been responsible for many fine plays from this station. It is an ideal play for broadcasting. There are no irritating effects which sometimes divert one's attention from the subject. The atmosphere of the court scene was splendidly caught. There was no padding, and every line told, and the fact that it was limited to action and change of scene made it all the more easy to appreciate from the entertainment point of view. The acting was uniformly good, too, the cast a strong one. Running smoothly throughout, "Libel" gave evidence of being exceedingly well produced. Let's have more such plays, please.



Not long ago the South African radio newspapers became highly indignant at the chilismeness of certain recorded BBS murder and ghost plays broadcast to budding Springboks. One wonders if the new ZB

NIGHTMARE EGG SERIES.

feature, "The Witch's Tale," will ever get over in the tender-hearted Union. I think not. "The Witch's Hour," if episodes so far are typical, will be the best nightmare egg yet provided by radio in New Zealand. Forget to be reasonable by listening with the light off...



"Would you like to hear a great singer?" I was asked when visiting 1YA last week. I was taken into the small room where they try over recordings. On the turntable was placed two sample discs

I HEARD A GREAT VOICE

made by the young Auckland, Oscar Natzke, who has just completed three years' study under the great teacher, Signor Garcia, at the Trinity College of Music, London. The voice that I

heard—a perfect bass—astounded me, as I'm sure it will astound those who tune into 1YA at 9.35 p.m. on Wednesday, June 15, when these same two recordings will be heard for the first time by listeners. They were lent to 1YA by one of the number of Auckland men who assisted Natzke to go to England to finish his musical studies. With Herbert Greenslade as accompanist, they were made by His Master's Voice and sent to Auckland. In "L'Ebreo," an operatic aria sung in Italian, Oscar Natzke demonstrates a marvellous range. The other song was Tschaikowsky's "Pilgrim's Song," in English.



Who listens to radio amateur trials? Countless thousands, I suppose, and occasionally some real talent is discovered. But as an item for the multitude they can be overdone. However, from 3ZB the

COULD BE QUICKER WITH THE GONG

other night came a fine young con-tralto, who, with more training—a good deal more—may have possibilities. For the rest, the competitors were not outstanding as far as the ordinary listener was concerned. Still, no doubt they gave a tremendous amount of pleasure to their "sisters and their cousins and their aunts." One could wish, however, for a little more discretion on behalf of those in charge of the amateurs, for, when a turn is palpably impossible from the entertainment point of view, it would be kinder to the performer and the listeners alike if the gong spoke a little earlier.



On the whole, the Commercial stations put on satisfactory programmes for the entertainment of Sunday night listeners. There is plenty of variety, and the fare is not heavy or boring.

NOT ENOUGH HUMOUR ON SUNDAY

Yet there is a singular lack of humour, and three or four hours of a programme, however varied in other respects, tends to become monotonous when the necessary variation of humour is conspicuous by its absence. I do not know what is the reason for the Commercial stations' attitude, unless it is based upon the assumption that the main National stations have carried on for years, ignoring humour on a Sunday night and "got away with it"; but, whatever the reason, it is time there was a change in policy. Privately-owned B stations always realised there was a place for humour on the Sunday programmes.



I listened to a fine piece of coloratura work from 1YA one night last week, when Miss Patricia McLeod sang delightfully the seldom-heard aria, "Queen of the Night," from Mozart's opera, "The Magic Flute." She has a

VOLUME IS NOT IMPORTANT

small voice, but it is beautifully true, flexible and flute-like. Miss McLeod is a good example of the truth of the saying that, for radio work, volume means little. After all, it is quality and intonation that count, more than actual volume. She possesses both. In fact, she has a perfect radio voice.