

This Week's Special Article

Listeners Do Not Want Pills Without Sugar Coats

IF anyone asked me in what class of radio entertainment I was most often disappointed, I know how unhesitating would be my answer; "The talks!" Not even the advertisements or the blatancy of the Commercials at their feeblest have caused me more chagrin than the honest and very worthy talks policy of the NBS.

At one time, this service used to give us an interesting and uneven range of subjects and speakers. To tune in at 7.30 or 8.40 o'clock at nights was to take a chance, certainly, but very often you were rewarded.

Now, the "Whirligig of Time" seems to have got the NBS giddy. Its talks policy centres within the narrow orbit of these learned researches into bygone days. Occasionally an S. K. Ratcliffe or a Professor Alexander visits the Dominion, occasionally there is a plum from one of the tried New Zealand speakers. Normally, however, the NBS talks lately have been as dull as their titles.

It is not that I am complaining against the whole idea of the Whirligig series. I listened avidly to the first half-dozen talks and found them extraordinarily interesting, delivered forcefully and neatly showing the impact of history on present-day. Even the speaker on ancient Rome swung his talk right up to 1938 Fascism and thereby changed historical research into a modern problem.

ATTACK is made this week against the NBS talks, L. A. Macintyre taking up the pen to decry them as too worthily educational. He would like to see some of commercialism's enterprise brightening the choice of subjects.

But as Time and the Whirligig went on, this aptness and care became less obvious. Admittedly, I have missed eleven in every dozen of

the latest talks—but only because those which I have heard have been so learnedly tedious.

Am I alone in my distaste? The "talks" following of the NBS is turning in increasing numbers to dramatic serials from the Commercials and the alternatives or, nowadays, to Parliament.

This is unfortunate not only because it shakes goodwill for the NBS, but also because it means that 90 per cent. of the good material that is being prepared and put over the air in the Whirligig series is being wholly wasted. The other 20 per cent. is benefitting only those who are sufficiently learned not to need it.

Although Professor Shelley is self-confessedly intent on raising the cultural level of New Zealanders through the powerful medium which he controls, nevertheless I believe he is unwise to make such an obvious bid for his ideals as he is now doing through the NBS talks. In music, it is another thing altogether. Even lovers of swing, if their love is for the sound rather than the excitement, can appreciate and enjoy operatic and symphonic works in small doses. By the skilful mixing of light jazzy compositions with better things, there no doubt can be an enormous amount accomplished in the field of greater musical appreciation.

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In the Wake of the Week's Broadcasts

WAS Alexander Kipnis tired after his last public recital and broadcast in Christchurch? "Tired?" he repeated, "Not at all—that doesn't make me tired." Nevertheless, I still wondered.

KIPNIS SHOULD HAVE BEEN TIRED!

Christchurch has formed the deplorable habit of victimising every prominent visitor to the city by inviting him to speak at this club, take tea with that group, lecture to the other society. It is a form of conscription against which most visitors are too gracious to protest. Nevertheless, no matter who the notable may be, I defy anyone to talk brightly for even half an hour to a crowd of total, and often uneasy, strangers without feeling some measure of strain. Nothing Mr. Kipnis said or inferred is re-

sponsible for this paragraph. But the fact needed no telling!

Those who have heard Arthur Pywell on Tuesday nights, when he gives a 15-minute relay for 4ZB from the console of the Christie organ at the Empire Theatre, are marvelling at the skill and dexterity with which this young man, still in his 'teens, handles the mighty instrument that has taxed even world-famous players. Mr. Pywell plays all classes of music and is particularly effective in jazz. Some listeners assert his performances are as good as those of Leslie Harvey, but, however that may be, it seems likely, at least, that the young man is destined to go travel

YOUNG ORGANIST SHOULD TRAVEL FAR

in music. His recent appointment as organist and choirmaster to St. Mary's Church, Mornington, is a step along the right road.

Even an old trouper is caught off-guard now and then. Last Wednesday night it was Alec Regan, manager of Wellington's Regent Theatre, who made the slip. For some weeks he has been turning the

ALEC REGAN CAUGHT HIMSELF OUT

"Leaves from the Diary of a Film Fan" from stations 2YD and 4YO—at least his was the name I put to that light, quick voice with the trick of easy laughter and very artful hesitations. Even if I had not guessed his identity must have been revealed on Wednesday at 2YD. For Regan, an-