

The Week's RECORDS

IN THE WAKE OF THE WEEK'S ... BROADCASTS ...

HAD the infant-death rate of Johann Sebastian Bach's day and generation approximated to that of New Zealand in 1938, there would have been a far larger tribe of able descendants. Only one of the seven children of Anna Magdalena (his second wife) lived to be more than three years old; and at Bach's death his surviving children numbered nine, out of the twenty that his two wives bore him.

Even so, the Bach family revelled in grand music-makings together. The domestic circle played Bach's concertos in their own home. Thanks to the gramophone we can now, in another way, do the same. The difference is that our modern method is, in a variety of ways, far more efficient and convenient.

The two violin concertos by Bach are amongst the best things in the whole repertoire of the violin. In these works the orchestra is of great importance, and in the recent recording of the "No. 1 in A Minor," by Yehudi Menuhin, violinist and Symphony Orchestra, under Georges Enesco, no pains have been spared to give a vivid and realistic performance.

This is the kind of concerto which is complete on two records (HMV. DB 2911-12), is by no means hard to follow, and finally, affords easy listening. We may be experiencing a boom in Bach, but whatever it is called, the demand for records of the music of the "Old Father of Fugues" is not likely to slacken while such fine examples of his music are allied to the unmistakably masterly violin playing of Menuhin.

He Fidgets

Listening to a Kreisler record or watching him play is so wholly pleasant that any association of nervousness with him seems just silly. But in the artist's room at a recital he is apparently a bundle of nerves. He moves persistently from one side of the room to the other, picks up his fiddle to fidget with it and then puts it down again, and is as nervous and tense as if he were making a none too confident first appearance before the public.

At last his call comes, and he appears before an audience which wonders if he still remembers what it feels like to be all tense with anxiety. They think he would require to look back years, but in truth he has to recall no more than a few seconds. Yet this remarkable violinist has been playing since he was seven.

Kreisler is a man of many accomplishments—he has undergone a course of training in medicine, he has studied painting in Paris and in Rome, and finally he became a cavalry officer. Beside all this, he has added substantially with his original compositions to the violin repertoire, and as an "arranger" and "transcriber" he has no superior in Europe today.

Kreisler's two latest records indicate the truth of this claim. In the first (HMV. DA 1628) he has recorded with Franz Rupp at the piano, his own "Rondino on a Theme by Beethoven," and his arrangement of the Gavotte from Bach's "Partita No. 3 in E major."

The remaining disc (HMV. DA 1622) contains Kreisler's own versions of Poldini's "Poupee Valante" (Dancing Doll) and "Londonderry Air." Franz Rupp is again at the piano. Kreisler and Rupp are an ideal team and both records are heartily recommended.

AMONG all the trials of endurance to which the saints and martyrs of the early Church were condemned, it is strange that there is no record of enforced residence in "luxury" hotels.—Mr. Fran John.

THOSE who take their cricket seriously, and I like to think there are still a few in New Zealand, in spite of the encroachment of alien games such as softball, must have enjoyed the talks given from 2ZB last week by Norm. Jacobsen, the well-known Wellington sportsman. The night I heard him, Mr. Jacobsen began by describing the run of the day's play in the Plunket Shield match between Wellington and Otago. Soon, though, he digressed to enthusiastic but slightly incoherent anecdotes about cricketers he had met, how to play a rising ball on the leg, and a lot of Neville Cardus-ish philosophy about cricket.

"Cricket is more than a result or a score; it is a manner of playing. . . . A society founded on a good cricket match would solve most of the troubles of the world," he declared. All to the good and all very true, but seeing Mr. Jacobsen was concerned mainly with the progress of a Plunket Shield match, I am inclined to think that he broke an important rule of parliamentary debate by wandering off into the philosophy of cricket. I heard Mr. Jacobsen declare, by the way, that Bill of Wellington is one of the most promising cricketers in New Zealand. Maybe he does show a lot of promise, but he has something to learn yet, including the fact that you can't go for boundaries in Plunket Shield cricket as you can against mediocre bowling in club cricket.

Night before Christmas Eve in Christchurch, a 3ZB executive gave birth to a new idea. Why not take a microphone among the milling crowds in Cathedral Square and ask people at random a series of separate questions? So far, so good. But the traffic department of the Christchurch City Council, after consultation, thought this would cause a traffic jam and make things a trifle awkward, so advised that the relay be confined to a stated part of the Square. That suited perfectly, so Chiv and Jack Bremner took a microphone into that part of the Square fronting the 3ZB temporary premises. In a moment, the crowd scented something unusual, was milling about. First of all, a Sydney resident in New Zealand on holiday, said he would rather spend Christmas in Christchurch than in Sydney. Said the announcer to a young woman with her arms full of parcels: "What's your idea of a real thrill this Christmas?" "Now what do you mean?" she said. The announcer blushed and moved off. "Now," he asked somebody else, "what would you buy mother if you had a million pounds?" and was told that fancies ranged from a palatial house or an aeroplane to a radio set. This, the first *vox populi* broadcast in Christchurch, was a distinct success and, at the time of writing, the intention was to repeat it on New Year's Eve.

In passing, someone was specially on duty to do the "cut-out" in case anybody in the crowd became over-exuberant.

Strange as it may seem, the series of recordings recounting the adventures of the Japanese Houseboy, from 1YA at any rate, is shortly concluding and will be replaced by another weekly recorded feature. Personally, I am tremendously glad, for I must admit I am weary of the Honourable Archie and Frank Watanabe. There must be others who, no doubt, will throw their hats up into the air to show their joy that the last of the series, which has been a weekly feature from this station for four years, is to be heard on January 22. But I must be fair. Others, and there are hundreds, perhaps thousands, will be sorry to miss the weekly entertainment. To prove that listeners miss Archie and Frank when they are not broadcast according to schedule, let me quote an instance that happened not long ago. Owing to a big broadcast sud-

denly intervening, the "Japanese Houseboy" was not given. The phone wires leading to 1YA got hot. Hundreds rang to voice their protest, demanded to know why the sequence was broken.

DECLINE AND FALL OF HOUSEBOY

SALLY HELD A RECEPTION

Sally, of 3ZB, opened a broadcast the other day—unusual in many respects. The idea was a lively one. At 10 o'clock in the morning, Sally had telephoned and telegraphed messages from her home to nine women. Only two knew what she wanted them for, and only two had ever seen a microphone before. Similarly, Sally had never seen most of the ladies. They packed out the temporary studio of 3ZB and, as women will, soon settled down to a natural chat. There was no microphone fright, even though the invitation was sudden. Each took her chosen place and talked on all sorts of subjects from the English holly and Robin redbreasts to how to make a real Yorkshire



—Spencer Digby photo.

VIOLA MORRIS AND VICTORIA ANDERSON.—Apart they are capable; together they are amazing.

I used to make a point of listening-in to 3YA the night the mouth-organ band played in the children's session. Then I discovered Uncle Charlie's mouth-organ band appearing at 4YA every Thursday night, round about 5.30. Good as the Christchurch combination had been, I was soon forced to the conclusion that the 4YA band was even better. They broke up for the year the Thursday before Christmas and gave a recital of carols which was the best of the many carol programmes given by choirs, bands, and so on that I heard. Uncle Charlie has built up a band that will stand comparison with any recorded band of a similar nature, and it is plain from the painstaking nature of performances that the 4YA mouth-organ band takes a pride in its work. Following the presentation the band "went downstairs" for a Christmas celebration. Will next be heard in February.

HARMONICA BOYS FROM 4YA

Good-afternoon, everybody. Today in the studio with me are eight other women—representing Eng-

pudding. This was the best thing of its kind I have heard from 3ZB yet!

Those notable duettists, Viola Morris and Victoria Anderson, sing solos capably, duets amazingly. It is an odd thing that their voices together are so much more than double the value of their voices apart. I heard them from 1YA last week and knew not which one of their duets I liked best. They run through all moods of music with such practised ease and artistry.

TWO VOICES THAT ASTONISH

The microphone, which picks up everything and rejects nothing—just like an ostrich—gave me a good reproduction of Australian baritone Clem Williams clearing his throat after the first phrase in his first song from 2YA on Tuesday night last, but from then on it brought nothing but the ease and naturalness of his singing. Songs were well chosen to illustrate the fluidity of his voice, and really it was all so graceful and light that he made you think singing was the easiest thing in the world. Altogether a delightful programme.

MAKES IT SOUND SO EASY

Good-afternoon, everybody. Today in the studio with me are eight other women—representing Eng-

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