

"The Flowers are not for You to Pick"

Tyrone Guthrie's Radio Drama from 2YA

IT is said that the whole life of a drowning man passes before him, and upon this theme this remarkable play has been developed. It begins with the splash as a young curate, bound for China, falls overboard, and closes with the lapping of the waves as he sinks for the last time. It is a play of many scenes, some short, others longer, with the lapping of the waves to show the passage of time between them. Each scene stood out in the life of the drowning man; some are trivial, some piquant, some dramatic and at least one beautiful.

It is an unusual story that projects the listener into the mind of the subject, an angle of presentation that is entirely new to drama.

In one scene, the young curate faints on learning that the girl he hopelessly loves has been married. The news is quite casually conveyed in the middle of a game of Bridge:

Mrs. Dolan: Ach, to be sure . . . now, then, Mr. Edward.
 . . . Why, look at him.
 Father: Steady, old man.
 Fanny: He's going to faint . . . water, father, get some water.
 Father: Right.
 Fanny: And some brandy.
 Mrs. D.: The poor boy, it's something he must have eaten.
 Fanny: Loosen his collar, quick.
 Mrs. D.: Something he must have eaten.
 Fanny: Loosen his collar, quick.
 Mrs. D.: Something he must have eaten.
 Fanny: Loosen his collar, quick.

Mrs. D.: Something he must have Vanessa (the girl).
 Fanny: Loosen his Birmingham (the girl was married in Birmingham).

Mrs. D.: Birmingham married Vanessa.

Fanny: Loosen his Birmingham, quick.
 Mrs. D.: Edward can't marry Vanessa.
 Fanny: Birmingham, Birmingham, quick.
 Mrs. D.: Edward can't marry Vanessa. Edward can't marry Vanessa. . . .

(Repeated *ad lib* and fade out.)

Such masterful technique which projects the listeners into the mind of the subject could be portrayed only by the microphone.

But this is only one flash that passes before the drowning man. And in all the others is portrayed some phase of his life. Throughout the play one sees his character, feels his weaknesses, and is with him

"The Flowers Are Not for You to Pick," to be produced from 2YA by Victor Lloyd on Thursday, July 21, was specially written for broadcasting by Tyrone-Guthrie. It has been thrice broadcast by the B.B.C., and has since been produced in other countries. The play calls for a high degree of dramatic art, and the producer has no hesitation in saying it is one of the most difficult he has done. He is being assisted by a brilliant cast, including Mary Cooley, who played "Joan" in "Joan of Arc" from 2YA; Ina Allen, who took the same part when "Joan" was broadcast from 1YA; and Elsie Lloyd. There are 11 characters, Mr. Lloyd himself portraying Edward.

as he struggles to overcome the limitations with which Nature has handicapped him. It is learned that he is a squat, ugly boy, who in his early childhood was forced to wear thick spectacles and henceforth was always conscious of them.

Scene XI—Child: Edward, don't be so stupid.

Fanny: Isn't he a little stupid?

Child: It is the way he blinks at one through those thick spectacles.

Scene XIII—Edward: You see, I'd meant to go on for 20 minutes but, unfortunately, my watch stopped and I was wearing my shortsight glasses, and I hardly liked to stop and put on my longsight glasses to look at the clock at the other end of the church.

Scene XV—Edward: Does he wear glasses?

Rector: Oh, dear no.

Final scene—There go my spectacles.

I knew I'd shed them off at last.

ANOTHER side of his character revealed. Scene I—Nurse: Give it up, Edward,

give it up at once.

Edward: No.

Mother: You know quite well that the flowers are not for you to pick. Give it up at once.

Edward: No.

Scene III—Boy: Here, young Goggles, just you give up my bunji.

Edward: No.

Boy: Right. . . . Are you going to give it up now?

Ed.: Ow . . . You are hurting my arm.

Boy: Give it up . . . give it up. . . . give it up.

Ed (loudly, through agonised tears): No.

Scene VIII—Vanessa! The idea . . . of . . .

love for me?

Ed.: Yes. . . . Love for you.

Vanessa: Give it up, Edward. . . . Oh, Edward, give it up.

Ed. (his challenge to the universe): No.

Scene X—Father: But I wish you to take the cheque.

Ed.: N-no, father . . . but . . . thank you.

Scene XV—Vanessa: Would you like me to write?

Ed: No.

And so the scenes follow one another, each a cameo of some characteristic of the man.

The whole play is written almost like a symphony with the waves of emotion rising and falling like the (Continued on page 13.)

The World at Large is blind and deaf. But broadcasting is bigger than the public, bigger than B.B.C. . . . it is a spontaneous expression of present day civilisation that, like Topsy has just grown.

TYRONE GUTHRIE