

STATIC

by
"SPARK"

A SERIES of talks on famous murder trials that will command considerable attention was begun by Mr. C. A. L. Treadwell, from 2YA. Although merely dubbed "counsel" in newspaper reports, it was Mr. Treadwell who defended Coates in the recent Wellington murder case. The first famous trial dealt with was that of the traitor—Sir Roger Casement—whose career in the British Diplomatic Corps was very fully told. Mr. Treadwell is Consul for Brazil, and in mentioning Casement's term of office in that country, I rather expected we would hear that it was Casement who was instrumental in exposing the rubber scandals in Brazil, which followed the horror of the Congo exposition. The Brazilian scandal implicated another Irishman, but Casement was implacable and he earned the commendation of the whole civilised world. While this involved Irishman was not considered actually guilty of murder, but guilty only in omission to observe the method by which rubber was obtained, Limerick, where he resided, ostracised him and virtually compelled him to leave the country. This fact I learned from his nephew, who later lost his life, with a Christchurch boy, in attempting to escape from the German raider "Wolf" to Sunday Island, in the Kermadec Group.

EVERYONE will agree with Mr. R. A. Lippincott (1YA, W.E.A. session), that taste and beauty in architecture need to have semblance to utility, that a power-house should not be designed like a mausoleum, and a theatre should not be constructed like a soft-goods emporium; but one may nevertheless ask if the graduated architect is the proper person to be trusted with designs. The house that Jack built expressed a growing conception, which is beauty in itself, but the architect, often unartistic but with a moiety of knowledge of Grecian expression, occasionally gets his ideas mixed. We have a glaring example of this in one of Wellington's most notable buildings—the Central Police Station, where two columns spring from the first floor to support a portion of the second, over the arch through which we and mercy flee. I have no doubt the epiphytic idea was conceived by a qualified architect who may possibly have contemplated upon the rata tree, and it makes me wonder if a member of the profession conceived that temple of the arts—1YA studios.

IF all the talks by the Town Planning Institute from the YA stations don't result in the creation of a civic consciousness, it will not be due to shadow-sparring, feinting

or lady-like tapping, nor because broadcasting has not given the Institute a fair spin. I did not think it possible for so much scorn to be poured upon the heterogeneous oddments that constituted our early city fathers, without the shade of Bumble, with his bunny skin, rising to smite the Institute. For real hard thumping Mr. J. W. Mawson should be awarded the belt, for daring to decry the efforts of nearly a couple of dozen bodies that seem necessary to control the civic functions of the capital city and its environs. These puny corporations have offices, telephones and typists, and sometimes honoraria and pickings, and it is often the latter which has made the town planning scheme appear superfluous. But what could one expect in olden times when councillors and members of boards had of necessity to be drawn from rich man, poor man, beggar man and thief? To-day, after generations of compulsory education, we elect prohibitionists, trade union officials, and anybody that does not know much about city management and functions, and everyone must admit that the class drawn from now is far superior to the former. If we wait for half a century the truth of this would undoubtedly be apparent. The assertion that not much more than a dozen towns could supply a plan of the services such as water, sewerage, and gas mains, is not surprising, as drawings would only make a litter about the council chamber and permit the butcher member to air his knowledge in proudly questioning the

engineer. We all know, though, that most town councils would be glad of the opportunity to dig up the streets to make a plan, now that some of them are concrete roads. The Institute has a nose that detects all sorts of defects in our established chaotic customs, and Mr. Mawson's detection of a nigger in the woodpile in Wellington's town planning scheme, just shows how nosey a person with ideas can be.

ADVERSITY and undefined interests make strange bed-fellows. Last week we saw a most unusual thing—three Wellington M.P.'s ranged on the side of monopoly—that awful name which we were taught to believe was synonymous with the grinding of the faces of the poor. It is understood that the Postmaster-General has narrowed the interpretation of the regulation governing broadcast advertising, and 2ZW narrowed a deputation to the Minister. Unlike other centres, Wellington is blessed with only one station that derives its income from sponsored programmes and the threat has been renewed that if latitude is not extended, the station may be compelled to close down. No listener sires that to happen, but most approve of the regulation that prohibits advertising on the air. As I read the direction, no advertising whatever is permitted, and when the license was issued, it is presumed that this was understood. The sponsored programme is pretty wide latitude in my opinion, and I think the authorities are to be com-

mended for keeping a tight hold on the rein so long as the regulations stand as they are. The stress laid upon the community service in the cause of charity leaves me cold. 2ZW has a long journey to catch up on the many who have assisted charity's institutions, gratis, and done so without making a fetish of deputations.

I CAN'T say that I like Mr. Voco's innovation from 2ZW. I much preferred his varied bijou concerts which aroused goodwill and his interesting talks on oil, motor-cars and things appertaining to oil. Mr. Voco once stated that he understood a number of listeners switched off when he started to talk, but nevertheless, there were a number that didn't. Some, perhaps, could not be bothered. At the risk of encouraging beliefs that might result in a head-swelling, I am brave enough to suggest that a return be made to former procedure, for the new departure won't keep listeners' attention. Many of the talks were of absorbing interest, although few are as much concerned about what makes a motor-car go as they are about what makes the darn thing stop. If housewives listen to Miss Laurel and apply her recommendations, there will be many husbands leaving home through an all-pervading odour of kerosene.

I DON'T know whether it is the inevitable closing-down announcement or not, but I heard one of the southern "B" stations make a very definite announcement the other evening. It stated: "After our next musical item we shall go right off the air." There wasn't any doubt about it, either. They did!

THE new competition from the "A" stations is excellent entertainment, even for those who do not feel inclined to rack their memories and upset the order of the book-case. Though it seems improbable that there will be as many competitors as in the music-lovers' competition, the entertainment is quite as good as the earlier one.

THE terse but very comprehensive review of the problems confronting the Ottawa Conference by Dr. Guy H. Scholefield, from 2YA, has certainly made the interested listener but casual reader, well informed upon the difficulties. Mention that South Africa was desirous of entering into competition with Argentina in the beef trade, and that South Africa's 11,000,000 head of cattle was an indifferent one in quality, perhaps needs a little amplification. South Africa has had great difficulty with her cattle, due to disease transmitted and

Radio in the Blackblocks.

THIS week's winning par, sent by M. Nelson, is somewhat out of the usual. She styles it "How the Radio Behaves Sometimes in the Blackblocks":

*Oh, the wireless,
How it fades
And jades*

*Our senses
And our fancies
As it prances.*

*Now here
With a blare,
Now there
Nowhere.*

*A tiny wail,
We hail
As a trail,*

*Of return
While we burn
And churn.*

*With a thrill
To hear it trill
Like a rill.*

*Softly coming
Then a booming,
Loud presuming*

*You would dare
To declare
It had gone
Nowhere.*

—M. Nelson.