

STATIC

by
"SPARK"

IT hardly seems right that Miss Dora West should reserve her finest talk for the limited range of a B station, but so it happened, and listeners were fortunate if they tuned to 2ZW last Saturday evening. In this talk, entitled "Great Personalities and Powers," Miss West excelled herself. There was deep significance in the story of her niece who, at Madame Tussaud's waxworks, had her attention drawn to an effigy of the Kaiser, and whose enquiring mind prompted her to ask, "Who was he?" Prior to leaving London one of the leading journals conducted a plebiscite among its readers, in which they were asked to name the six greatest men of the world. Up to the time of her departure the first two places had been filled by Jesus of Nazareth and Buddha, and there was profound import the speaker thought, in such a selection, made by the people of the business capital of the world. In making a list herself Miss West said that she could not disturb the first two, whose religious teachings had established harmony almost universally. In making the next addition Mrs. West considered that Julius Caesar should be given the place. He had given Britain law and this had infiltrated throughout the world. Next in her speculative preference she would place Oliver Cromwell, who had given us the liberty that all the world claims to-day, and after him Miss West would place Lincoln, who also disposed of the tyrant. The speaker was dubious of her selection, following the first two, as so many great names arose in her memory, but what of the last in such a limited number? What of all the great philosophers, Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, the great physicians and the scientists, Darwin who dared to open the book of truth, what of the great litterateurs—could Will Shakespeare not be given a place, or what of Charlie Chaplin, who has made the whole world full of joy? Miss West's speculations in the Pantheon were a few moments that will be long remembered.

IN his lecturette, "Films and the Life of a Nation," Mr. J. J. S. Cornes (3YA) said that while he did not pose as an authority on the subject, everyone would recognise that there was a common-sense attitude that should be taken with regard to the cinema. In his survey he was not concerned with the ethics of members of Parliament owning theatres or whether the commercial or educative interests should predominate. Now and again some placid magistrate was stirred to wrath by a pastor, but generally there was an ironclad morality about pictures that did not reflect actual life. Even

KFI Powder

"BORAX" and "Glycerine," two radio fans in a New Plymouth chemist's shop, send the following, which has been awarded the 5/- prize for the best par:—

For skin troubles, etc., a local doctor is in the habit of prescribing Bismuth Formic Iodide powder, which cumbersome name is always abbreviated to B.F.I. powder. A prescription recently presented at our shop, however, read as follows:—

"K.F.I. powder, send one tin. Directions: To be dusted on affected parts."

On receiving this, "Borax" and "Glycerine," remembering that two aerial masts had recently appeared at the doctor's house, smiled at the slip, dispensed what was really intended, and thought it was an excellent chance to win five shillings.

Tom Mix, the colossal ignoramus with a Croesus income, who felt it a bounden "dooty" to continue operations because he was the idol of the infantile, did not reflect realism. Despite the private lives and the living hypocrisy of Hollywood stars, Hollywood's theme in all productions was the triumph of righteousness over sin. There was a tedious monotony of the wrong-doer ending on the scaffold, and the loose woman's restoration to sanctity at the penitent form, that gives a misshapen outlook upon life. In the Russian picture "The Road to Life" was something real which portrays with dynamic drama the rehabilitation of the unclaimed waifs of tender years, that were born of the revolution. This is an episode of Red Russia that is real Russia, in which pathos and humour are finely handled in expounding Tolstoyan ethics.

All Europe and America has seen this production, but said Mr. Cornes, "while the Government of this benighted country persists in the picture's exclusion from New Zealand, he and others interested must perforce be content with reading of the masterpiece." All reports extol the wonderful photography which discards Hollywood marcelles and rouge, and the utter truth and realism that makes this historical screening something worthwhile in the cinema world.

A timely winner was the production from 2YA, by Mr. Victor Lloyd and Company of the comedy "The Sport of Kings." There wasn't anything royal about the leading character of the play unless he could be dubbed the "King of Wowzers" when he would be easily an odds-on favourite. Many of that ilk are among us, and no doubt a few of the ultra conscientious switched off, very few perhaps, but I'm sure a great number had many hearty laughs. Mr. Lloyd and his talented players have never done anything better. More please!

WHEN speaking from 3YA on "The World Agricultural Crisis," Mr. Norton Francis mentioned that the North Island was agitated by the wheat duties, and in extenuation of the present legislation drew attention to the wheat bounty granted by the British Government. The analogy is not a perfect one by any means. Creditor nations may with a certain amount of impunity over-ride sound economic laws, but New Zealand, being very deep in pawn, cannot afford permanently to bolster up a rickety business that floats largely by voting power. The annual increase in population of the South Island indicates a moribund state, and as stated by Mr. Francis, the peoples with the highest standard of living are gradually but definitely reducing their consumption of wheaten products, it would seem the industry is moribund too. If New Zealand relied on wheat to pay interest on foreign loans, there might be a temporary excuse for the legislative manipulation of economic laws, but seeing that poultry and pigs need the produce, that enlightened people are discarding, and poultry and pigs do help to pay "Uncle," the North Island has ample cause for complaint.

WITH the thrill and excitement of personal exploits, often within the enemy's lines and always in danger of capture and death, I'm sure no series of talks has captured the attention of listeners more than the Secret Service stories of Major John Lewis, from 2YA. Recounted as they were with the modesty that characterises a very gallant gentleman, whose patriotism was a consuming flame that welcomed hardship and ill health in a righteous cause, listeners' appetites have been whetted, and it is to be hoped that Major Lewis will resume the series in the near future.

2YA broke fresh ground last week with two programmes of outstanding merit and originality. The "Evening With Royalty" on Wednesday was one "out of the box" and afforded striking evidence of what can be done with gramophone records when handled by a "producer" who knows his job. It is safe to assume that had these records been merely presented without a theme, or, in other words, as a "miscellaneous programme of recordings," they would probably have fallen flat, but, handled as they were by "Mr. Heigh-ho," they provided a delightful evening's entertainment. At eight o'clock I had no intention of listening to the whole programme, but the method of presentation kept my interest and I would be surprised to learn that it did not do so with many thousand others. Few listen to the full course of a broadcast programme merely because of dull presentation and it will one day be realised by broadcasters that announcers should be encouraged to display originality, personality and versatility and not be restricted to the formal "You are now to hear Peter Dawson—bass-baritone." The redundancy of regular announcements has often made every listener in the land switch off. How many thousand times are we to hear again that Peter Dawson is a bass-baritone?

THE radio journey through southern England accompanied by "Mr. Heigh-ho" on Sunday evening was a highly original programme and refreshing. It must have awakened pleasant memories in the minds of many listeners who know intimately the various spots touched upon by the "courier." More programmes upon these lines, which incidentally cost the board nothing, will go a long way in furthering the popularity of radio with those who find fault with local talent and "miscellaneous programmes," who have no character or sustaining interest. Sooner or later broadcasting authorities both in New Zealand and Australia will realise that radio programmes to achieve a hundred per cent. success, must be regarded as a medium of expression for a fully qualified "producer." In the world of the "movie" entertainment the producer ranks as equally important, if not actually more important, than the performer. This fact is not only recognised, but plays a major part in the marketing of a production. The producer is widely advertised and picture patrons select their entertainment largely from the name of the producer. It is not inconceivable that one day radio programmes will be announced and advertised as "a — production."

THE comments of Dr. Stuckey, of the Mackenzie Memorial Hospital, Tientsin, North China, at the Rotary