

LIGHT MUSIC, VARIETY, AND BANDS

There is a wide demand for this type of entertainment and the Service continued to present the best that was offering in this field. A number of local artists and combinations were used in variety and light music programmes in addition to special weekly sessions of dance music by local dance bands from the four main National stations. The Auckland novelty combination, the Nancy Harrie Quartet, was brought to Wellington for three broadcasts and proved very popular. Other dance programmes were compiled from the best overseas recordings.

B.B.C. programmes such as "Much Binding in the Marsh" and "Heather Mixture" were broadcast and attracted a wide listening audience. Gilbert and Sullivan light operas were again broadcast by arrangement with the copyright holders. Another welcome addition to the Service's library of light recordings were those provided by the American Embassy, particularly the "Voice of America" programmes.

Brass and pipe bands were again featured in the programmes. The 1950 New Zealand Brass Bands Festival was held in Christchurch during February and was fully covered by the Service. The winning bands and soloists were featured in various band programmes. In March the Dominion contest for Highland pipe bands was held in Auckland and the Service broadcast some of the performances.

NEWS, COMMENTARIES, AND SPECIAL SERVICES

The daily overseas and New Zealand news broadcast at 9.04 p.m. was continued throughout the year. The overseas portion of this bulletin is compiled by the Service from various sources, including Press Association cablegrams. The New Zealand news comes mainly from the Information Section of the Prime Minister's Department. The weekly news features which followed the overseas and New Zealand news for the greater part of the year included the news in Maori and "Australian Commentary." The B.B.C. "World Affairs Commentary" was also broadcast each week. News bulletins from the B.B.C. were again a feature of the news service and were broadcast from the Main National stations five times each day.

Special services provided for listeners included Christmas messages from the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, reports on the Australian and British elections, and speeches by candidates prior to the British elections. Another special service of interest to recent arrivals in New Zealand was the broadcasting of "News from Home" each Sunday morning. Complete coverage was given to the referendum on compulsory military training and to the broadcasting of some of the speeches at election meetings and of progress and final returns for the 1949 general election.

TALKS

Excluding overseas programme material, the total of talks and spoken-word periods in all stations since 31st March, 1949, has been over six thousand. A particular feature of the year's work has been the experimentation, especially in the four main centres, with weekly and daily special sessions, such as the "Women's Session," farming programmes, and discussion panels; the serving of local requirements and interests, as far as possible, was watched in the preparation of these sessions. In the same way the Service has been active in bringing to the microphone new speakers whose personalities or knowledge have added to the interest of the programmes. Farm sessions, book reviews, health and home science talks, country sessions, and gardening talks are a regular feature at main National stations. The tendency during the past year has been to allow increasing flexibility by stations in the type of material broadcast and in its presentation. A dossier of farm talks, interviews, and discussions from the main agricultural colleges, District Pig Councils, and the Department of Agriculture,