

TEN ANSWERS TO A QUESTION

Production of Local Features by NBS Commercial Division

WHY can't we hear more of our own people over the air? Why don't our broadcasting stations use more local talent? Why can't we produce our own shows? These are questions which have been asked since broadcasting's first year in New Zealand.

To such inquiries, the ZB's can answer that, at the moment, there are on the air 10 feature programmes which are of New Zealand, by New Zealand, and for New Zealand. Payments to local artists during last year amounted to £8000. And what is more, these programmes are competing with imported features, and competing successfully, if the test is the readiness of sponsors to buy them.

The difficulties of bringing local talent to the microphone in New Zealand are not small. For one thing, there is a war on which means a lack of men to take part. Again, for technical reasons, it is necessary either to use recorded sound effects, like the stopping and starting of a tram, the sound of running water, or of a baby crying; or else to improvise.

Of course we have no Joan Bennetts or Charles Laughtons in New Zealand:

accordingly, when we produce a home-grown artist—a tenor, say, in the session *12B Calling*—listeners compare him with such celebrities as Richard Tauber and Beniamino Gigli. And if New Zealand does give a great singer, musician, or actor to the world, he or she almost certainly goes overseas.

But the biggest handicap of all, in this as in other things, is that our population is only just over one and a-half million.

But in spite of all handicaps, 10 local productions are on the air at present. *Josephine, Empress of France*, and *Dangerous Journey* are the work of an Auckland script-writer, F. W. Kenyon, whose plays have been accepted by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the South African Broadcasting Commission. W. Graeme Holder, of course, is another New Zealand script-writer whose work is in demand all over the world, but is usually sampled first in this Dominion.

Nora Slaney is the author of several radio features for children. The one that is just beginning at the ZB is *The Mystery at Whitley's Head*.

We Are Four and *Bachelor's Children* are stories of family life, produced in the ZB studios. *Long, Long Ago* is a series of adaptations from fairy tales.

There are three musical programmes included in the current 10. The feature *12B Calling*, originating in the 12B Radio Theatre, is heard on a network broadcast in the Sunday Radio Matinee, young artists being brought to the microphone to play or sing.

Two Tunes at a Time is a novel musical feature with Eric Bell at the novachord and Thea Ryan at the piano.

On *Wings of Melody* provides a quiet quarter-hour of music from a piano quartet, with Moya Cooper-Smith and Helen Gray, violinists; June Taylor, 'cellist; and Kathleen O'Leary, pianist.

"We don't claim to show the world," says Bryan O'Brien, a ZB producer. "But the work done is of good standard." Proof of this was a congratulatory cable received from the Musical Director of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, expressing his opinion that the recordings made here of the Royal New Zealand Air Force Band were among the finest he had heard.

A word to those who
suffer with

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Asthma sufferers who will discipline themselves to wise eating, drinking and general hygiene, will find Dr. Hair's Treatment of great benefit in relieving their Asthma attacks. But they must not expect to be relieved by the use of medicine if their food or drink is wrong in quality or quantity, or is taken at improper times.

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