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magnificently done, often with outstanding naturalness, and even when self-consciousness occurs it contrives somehow to heighten sincerity. The only doubtful element is the choice of subject. There is no attempt at prettification—the two numbers dealing with the East End, for instance, did not conceal the facts that street merchants lived too hard a life, that housing conditions were bad, or that bombing involved other things than heroic facetiousness. But the BBC tends to concentrate on those traditional parts of Britain—old-world villages and old-fashioned Cockneyism of the costermonger and music hall sort—to the exclusion of much else. Are we likely to hear about the Black Country, for example, or the new industrial areas?

12M—Some Suggestions

WITH the return of 12M, Auckland has four stations at its service—a luxury unless a careful co-ordination of the programmes is made. There are many directions in which they could now branch out, and it is to be hoped that sugges-



tions will pour in for new projects for drama, music, talks, and readings. Here is one. Many children are learning an instrument, and both they and their teachers would be helped by early evening sessions, two or three times a week, graded for young piano, violin, and singing students, and following a set scheme. The striking popularity of courses of lectures in musical appreciation at the University and the W.E.A. show that many adults, too, are putting their minds to the business of learning how to listen. The radio sometimes gives an hour to one composer, but what of an equally instructive hour given to recordings of one artist, or to consecutive performances of the same work as interpreted by different orchestras or individual artists? There is time on the air now for some of these things, and we hope that we will not find 12M reverting to its series of "lucky dip" hours, known variously as *Instrumental Items*, *Orchestral Selections*, *Miscellaneous Recordings*, *Concert*, etc., which all sounded the same and often overlapped with similar sessions from 1YX.

Sad Week for Children

IT was a sad day for the 10-12-year-olds when *Commando Story* came to an end at 12B, and they spent some miserable hours before the final instalment, lest it should end, as did its forerunner *Coast Patrol*, with the death of a beloved hero. We have enjoyed both these serials, and would have been happy if they could have continued for the duration. They had simple and kindly humour, and hair-raising adventures which cannot in this war be called incredible; if at times we thought them rather overloaded with heroics and "his captain's hand on his shoulder smote" type of talk the children took it all very seriously, and for them, I am sure, it was natural, wholesome food.

Purple Passages

RAYMOND WINDSOR, in a Chopin recital from 4YA, played three Preludes, the Nocturne in F Minor, and the F Major Ballade, in a manner which, on the radio at least, completely hides the

NATIONAL STATIONS

ALTHOUGH some kinds of Christmas fare may be in short supply again this year—particularly on the dinner table—radio programmes from the National stations will be well provided. Since Christmas Day itself falls on a Monday and Christmas Eve is a Sunday, certain secular aspects of the festive season will probably be attended to on the Saturday. Accordingly, the radio programmes, too, indicate that the Christmas spirit may be demonstrated any time from Saturday on.

There are certain staple ingredients of Christmas radio that you are as sure to find in the programmes as you are to see cotton wool greetings in shop windows. For instance, Corelli's "Christmas Concerto," excerpts from Handel's *Messiah*, and the recording (with Ronald Colman as Scrooge) of Dickens' "A Christmas Carol." We leave you to find these for yourself on your own stations, but we draw your attention here to some of the other special features of the programmes on Saturday, Sunday and Monday, December 23-25.

On Saturday evening, for instance, 1YA will broadcast the Christmas play "A Reputation for Benevolence," by Oliver and Matthews, at 9.33 p.m., and 3YL, Christchurch, will present a selection of Christmas pieces from Bach's "Little Organ Book," played by the organist, E. Power Biggs (starting at 8.34 p.m.). Gisborne listeners will hear a Christmas programme from 2ZJ at 8.0 p.m., and at 3YA that well-known comedian, George Titchener, proposes to confess to his listeners "I'm learning a new song for Christmas."

Religious Observance

On Sunday, the ordinary broadcast church services will probably include some carols, and Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch will each broadcast a Midnight Mass. Station 1YA will relay the Mass from St. Patrick's Cathedral, starting at midnight. The Mass from St. Gerard's Church, Wellington, will be heard from 2YA, starting at 11.55 p.m. In Christchurch the Anglican service will be heard from St. Michael's at 12.5 a.m.

Some musical programmes of special interest will be heard on Sunday evening. At 10.25 p.m., 3YA will relay from

fact that he is not in years the mature personality which his playing would suggest. Many young pianists learn to execute brilliant passages and perform technical miracles worthy of much older performers; few also possess, as Raymond Windsor does, the mental and emotional qualities necessary for the satisfying performance of so intimate a composer as Chopin. But surely the Preludes do not require such elaborate literary introduction! Wherever did the announcer find those purple passages describing these exquisite little musical thoughts? Dead monks, children's voices, roses in the snow, all the appurtenances of the Romantic period were added, until it seemed as though Chopin himself were stirring in an uneasy grave—or was it the ghost of George Sand I fancied I saw? Surely, after the lapse of so many years since they were written, these Preludes of Chopin may be allowed to speak for themselves.



CHRISTMAS ON THE AIR

the Durham Street Methodist Church a carol programme called "Music for Christmas," and between 11.0 p.m. and midnight a group called "The Coventry Carolers," conducted by George E. Wilkinson will sing Christmas carols from various nations. From St. John's Church, Invercargill, 4YZ will relay a recital by Charles Martin (organist) and Alfred Walmsley (tenor). Station 3ZR, Grey-mouth, will broadcast a carol service at 5.30 p.m.

Other special features of the Sunday programmes will be the play "The Shadow," from 3YA (3.58 p.m.), Dorothy Sayers' play "He That Should Come" from 4YA (10.11 p.m.), and various recorded programmes of carols and Christmas music from 12M (7.0 p.m.), 2YC (9.0 p.m.), 2YH (10.0 p.m.), 4YZ (9.20 p.m.) and others.

Greetings from Overseas

The main item of the Christmas Day programmes for many listeners will be the Christmas greetings from New Zealand forces overseas, to be heard at 9.0 a.m. General Freyberg will speak, and representatives of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Nursing Service and Maori Forces overseas will all send Christmas greetings home. Carols will be sung from 1YA by the Yugoslav Young People's Choir at 3.30 p.m., and 3YA will relay a carol service from the Christchurch Cathedral at 7.30 p.m. Carols by Joye Taylor will be featured in 2YA's Children's Hour at 5.0 p.m.

As was promised some months ago, when the time of broadcast for the Dorothy Sayers plays *The Man Born to be King* was criticised by some listeners, this series will once again be heard from 2YA, starting on Christmas Day, and thereafter on Sundays at 2.0 p.m.



CHRISTMAS EVE AT MR. WARDLE'S (as drawn by Phiz): "Mr. Pickwick's Christmas" is the title of the BBC programme to be heard from 3YA at 4.30 p.m. on December 25.

COMMERCIAL STATIONS

ALL the Commercial stations have made special arrangements for the Christmas season. At 8 p.m. on Christmas Eve, 3ZB will present in dramatised form the story of how the carol "Silent Night, Holy Night" came to be composed. From the small village of Oberndorf, near Salzburg, this song by Joseph Mohr, parish priest, and Franz Gruber, schoolmaster and organist, has encircled the globe. The local radio production of this special Christmas programme is of a high standard, featuring the Christmas Cathedral Choir under C. Foster Browne, and leading members of the Christchurch Repertory Society.

At 12B and 4ZB the same programme will be heard at 9.30 p.m. on Christmas Day. The Dunedin cast will be headed by the Rev. O. Baragwanath, a chaplain recently returned from overseas. The producer is Jessie McLennan.

Station 3ZB's Children's Christmas session will prove a fitting close for the children's big day, for Santa Claus will be present on Christmas night somewhere in the studio, and Gracie and Jacko have been promised a host of interesting items for the Christmas Tree, items all designed to give real entertainment to the young listener. There will be special Christmas stories, music and competitions, and Santa Claus himself has promised to be at the microphone somehow to say hello and good-bye to young Christchurch before he journeys back to his home.

"Big Ben Looks Down"

For close on 86 years Big Ben has looked down over the Empire's capital—a sentinel of its joys, its sorrows, its pageantry. A few years ago, Les Strachan, now acting programme organiser of 2ZB, broadcast a special programme covering some of the historic events which Big Ben has witnessed or overheard since first he was hoisted up to his eagle's eyrie above the Thames. This programme, which has been revised to cover events up to the present, will be one of the feature programmes from 2ZB on Sunday, December 24, Christmas Eve. In it, Les Strachan will deal with all phases of London life.

In order to present the type of programme that Manawatu listeners are expecting from their Commercial stations on Christmas Day, 2ZA has made arrangements to stay on the air right throughout the day instead of observing the customary break from 9.30 a.m. Beginning at 9.30 with special Christmas recordings, 2ZA will present carefully chosen programmes, covering all listeners' tastes.

CHRISTMAS SPORTS BROADCASTS

AUCKLAND:—Auckland Racing Club meeting, at Ellerslie, 1YA, Tuesday, December 26.

WELLINGTON:—Representative Cricket, Auckland v. Wellington, 2YA, Christmas Day. At 3.0 p.m. and intervals.

CHRISTCHURCH:—Representative Cricket, Canterbury v. Otago, 3YA, December 23, 25 and 26. Ball-to-ball commentaries from time to time.

DUNEDIN:—Dunedin Jockey Club meeting at Wingatui, 4YA, Tuesday, December 26.

INVERCARGILL:—South Island Bowling Championships, 4YZ, starting December 26. Times not yet fixed.

The National stations will broadcast sports results at the usual times on Saturday, December 23. Station 3ZB will have additional sports sessions at 9.0 a.m. and 7.0 p.m. on Boxing Day.