

WHERE ARE THE WHISTLERS?

Decline Of An Ancient Art

WHISTLING, as an art, except for recorded performances by professional siffleurs, went out with the old vaudeville days. Only occasionally do we hear really pleasant whistling, complete with properly-executed cadenzas and a full tone.

The telegraph boy used to dodge in and out of the traffic on his bicycle, with pursed lips and emitting a rippling representation of the latest popular song. Whether the Post and Telegraph Department has placed a ban on juvenile public whistling, I don't know, but certainly the efforts heard to-day are lacking in inspiration and tone.

Robert Burns wrote the words of "O, Whistle and I'll Come to Ye, My Lad" to traditional music, so it may be assumed that the Highland laddie who was an indifferent performer as a whistler was equally unsuccessful with the lassies.

Whistling in dance tempo for public performance is to-day a specialty of such artists as Fred Lowery, of Horace

Heidt's orchestra, and Elmo Tanner, with Ted Weems' band. These two exponents are occasionally heard on the air in New Zealand and, of course, copied by would-be siffleurs.

The gentleman who brings the morning milk used to add a cheery accompaniment to the banging of bottles, or cans, but many present-day performers wander from key to key, or do two lines of a popular chorus only, because they have forgotten the rest. I have often felt an almost irresistible urge to finish it for them.

Melodious Factory Hands

In a North Island printing-house recently the lad about the place annoyed the "boss" intensely with his accidentally chromatic renderings, day after day, of "You Are My Sunshine." The chief stood it for a while. Then in desperation he took the boy aside.

"Look here, lad," he said, "either change the tune or get that one correct!" He proceeded to give the boy a demonstration. But that had no effect on another member of that staff, a young

woman with a sense of humour, who continued through the week such Satirical airs as "Shall We Gather at the River" and "Oh, That Will Be Glory for Me," and on Friday (pay day) became secular, and after the chief had handed her her wages, broke into "Why Don't You Fall in Love with Me?" Other females of the staff took their cue and, while operating their machines, whistled in unison and in parts, "A Soldier Dreams" and "Song of the Islands."



The boss, a trained baritone, made a speech at morning tea. Somewhat nervously, and drawing hard on a cigarette, he addressed the assembled staff.

"Look here," he said, "I don't mind a bit of music. I'm all for it. It shows that you are all happy in your work. But I have a better idea."

Next day a notice appeared: "A radio has been installed, to be operated by the leading hand only. No personal performances, please. The artists don't need help."

The first time the radio was turned on, the melody was a partly-whistled recording of "You Are My Sunshine!"

—E.R.B.

Items From The 'ZB's

A GOOD choir of girls has been organised at the Polish Camp at Pahiatua. Recently 40 girls visited Station 2ZA and heard themselves in a recording of Polish songs. The children were also taken round the station and then on to the roof for a view of the surrounding country. The recording was broadcast later in the children's session. Arrangements are being made by 2ZA for a session of Polish songs by these children, but no definite date has yet been fixed.

VARIETY and change is the aim of the Saturday night special session broadcast from 2ZA at 8.30, and local talent is encouraged to take part. Recent broadcasts included: a sing-song from the A.N.A. Club; a session of station recordings of school choirs; the Queen Alexandra Band of Wanganui; a bamboo pipe band from Feilding; piano and song recitals by local performers. Shakespeare, Chopin, Harry Lauder and various other celebrities and composers have been the subject of special sessions on Saturday and Sunday nights.

FEATURES introduced by 2ZA recently have brought appreciation. "Cappy Ricks" has had many followers and more recently "The Channings" has reached high favour. Following on "Great Expectations" and "Dombey and Son," a third of the adaptations of Dickens' works is "Oliver Twist." Early in February a very different type of feature also had its premiere—"The Green Archer," by Edgar Wallace. Crime and its detection are provided by the "Norwich Victims," and "Prisoner at the Bar" records cases of justice and injus-

tice done and undone inside and outside the law courts. Another sea yarn, "Treasure of the Lorelei," is quite different in theme from "Cappy Ricks" and carries its listeners into deep waters. Last of recent releases for 2ZA listeners are the radio versions of Thackeray's "Vanity Fair" and Wilkie Collins' "The Woman in White." Days and times of these weekly broadcasts will be found in our programme section.

DURING last year 4ZB approached Dunedin primary and intermediate schools possessing choirs, with the idea of presenting Sunday morning programmes during 1945. The schools were very helpful and several recordings were made. These 15-minute presentations are now being broadcast on Sundays at 9.30 a.m.

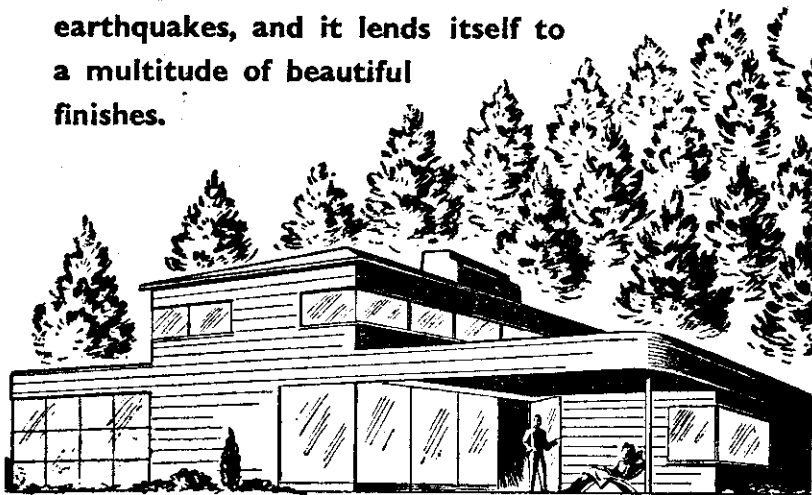
LOU MARTELL, who will be remembered for his role of Fu Manchou, is now the lead in *Dan Dunn, Secret Operative No. 48*, a radio version of a detective cartoon strip. Presented as a half-hour show, Dan Dunn is heard from 4ZB Dunedin on Saturdays at 10.0 p.m.

TWINS can cause endless complications. *Three Generations*, a story of family life, introduces Peter and Paul, twins of a family named Rogers. When Peter becomes ill he arranges for Paul to meet the girl friend and entertain her with money supplied by his brother. When Paul returns and recounts his experiences to his brother the fun begins. This story will be heard from 12B Auckland every morning from Monday to Friday at 10.15 o'clock, starting on March 21.

KNOTTY problems connected with Easter weddings, gifts, and so on, will be dealt with by "Tony," who will present an Easter Bride session from 2ZA, Palmerston North, just before Easter.

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