

PIANOS FOR TWO AT THE TOWN HALL

THE visiting duo-pianists Frank Hutchens and Lindley Evans joined the NBS Orchestra in a concert in the Wellington Town Hall on Saturday, February 23. The programme comprised some items by the orchestra alone (conducted by Leon de Mauny and Lindley Evans), some for two pianos alone, and two works written for two pianos and orchestra, one by Mr. Hutchens and one by Mr. Evans.

The programme was a popular one, with a certain amount of purely light music, and was well received by a big audience. First there was Rossini's overture to *The Barber of Seville*, a sure-fire proposition when it comes to setting the mood for a couple of hours' agreeable entertainment. It went with a dash and sparkle, and the audience found itself hearing some real orchestral sound in those crescendos, always obvious but always fun.

Then the two pianists played a transcription by Bauer of the organ Fantasia and Fugue in A Minor by Bach. In the Wellington Town Hall a great deal of detail in a work of this kind is bound to be lost by all but those in certain acoustically favourable areas, but the audience enjoyed the work immensely. It was followed by *Night and Love*, by Rachmaninoff, which proved more suitable to the place. The third and last of the two-piano works was a piece called "The Whirlwind," by Melan-Guerault; it is not unlike the composition named "The Aeroplane" which one used to hear

at school break-up ceremonies some years ago.

No Nine O'clock Chimes

Then followed an uninterrupted performance of Mozart's *Jupiter Symphony*—uninterrupted, that is, for the audience in the hall; radio listeners were evidently less fortunate. Here was Mr. de Mauny's special skill at its best. He was faced with one of the most exacting of all classical symphonies and an orchestra which by the nature of its sporadic existence can never be entirely at ease with such a work. Yet somehow he modestly proved that he had got from the orchestra as much as he knew he could expect.

After the interval came two pieces for strings by Frank Hutchens, and two pieces for orchestra by Lindley Evans, all conducted by Mr. Evans. These were "The Lotus Eaters" and "Gavotte" (Hutchens) and "Berceuse for a Sleeping Sandbaby" and "Waltz for Orchestra" (Evans). They made agreeable light listening of the Eric Coates-Haydn Wood calibre.

Mr. Evans' "Idyll" and Mr. Hutchens' "Phantasy Concerto" (both for two pianos and orchestra) have been heard fairly frequently on the air in the recordings made by the composers with an Australian orchestra. They proved very popular with the audience.

The concert ended with the three dances from Smetana's *The Bartered Bride*, "Polka," "Furiant," and "Dance of the Comedians," which went off very well indeed and left everyone in a happy mood.

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from enemy action, remained just normal. The medical people were marvelous. There was a leper hospital, for example, right alongside one aerodrome and, because leprosy is so contagious, it could not be shifted. At every siren the whole staff and patients had to retire underground, for hours perhaps, all huddled together. But the staff never wavered."

"As Governor, I take it, you would have all these civilian problems to attend to as well as the military ones?"

"Yes, and they sometimes did not go well together. I remember one afternoon, for example, when I was chairing a meeting of the Council—the Big Five it called itself, like some other people since. The illustrious was in dock at the time and the Germans had succeeded in keeping her there a long time by inflicting new damage on her where she lay. If they did not attack that afternoon, repair work would probably be advanced enough to leave by night. If they did she might be immobilised for weeks longer. With my eyes on my watch and my ears straining for the sirens, you can imagine how long that afternoon took to pass and how much I understood of the business we were transacting . . . Modern war raises curious problems too. For example, we never could keep enough coinage circulating—the Maltese kept stowing it into socks for safety. So we had to get banknotes printed in England and flown out. There was no danger of inflation, of course, because we had the bullion to back it."

"And what are your plans now, General—your own and Malta's?"

"Malta will doubtless return to self-government as soon as she is again paying her way—and will get more of it. There is an enormous amount of war damage to be made good, of course. But the big problem is to get places—places under the flag I mean—where the Maltese can settle. They are far too many for Malta, and such excellent, simple, hard-working farming folk will be a benefit to any country they go to . . . As for myself, I am here mainly to tell you what God did for us in Malta, and what Christ has done for me my whole life through. In big things as in little I have found that along with all the wisdom one can bring to bear one needs also His help. That is a personal message. It is also a national one in that He seems to have found it possible to use our Empire, and I am anxious that we should become a far fitter tool to carry out His purposes—which are not necessarily our own . . . And now, young man, whatever you do, make this my chance to thank the Government and people of New Zealand for the quite extraordinary kindness they are showering on Lady Dobbie and myself."

Competent in his own field, unspectacular yet impressive in his personality, and warmly attractive in his humble sincerity, General Dobbie demonstrates why history may remember British rule among alien peoples as something a little more useful and attractive than merely an imperialism.

—A.M.R.

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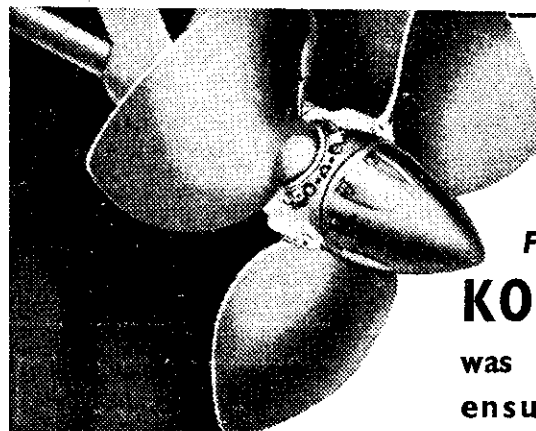
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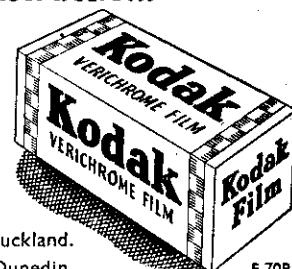
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