

THE NEW DIRECTOR

Long Experience in Administrative and Entertainment Fields

WILLIAM YATES, the newly-appointed Director of Broadcasting, has been associated with radio in New Zealand for the past 20 years. He first began to broadcast in 1929 as an amateur entertainer, and in 1934 he joined the Broadcasting Board as Supervisor of Plays. In 1940 he was appointed Secretary to the National Broadcasting Service, and four years later he became Assistant Director of Broadcasting. In January of this year he visited Britain, Canada, and the United States in a three months' tour of the broadcasting services of other countries, and while in England he held discussions with senior officers of the BBC on administration, broadcasting techniques, and recent trends in radio.

Mr. Yates was born in England, and came to New Zealand in 1912. In 1914 he joined the Education Department in Wellington, and while serving there he became a member of the New Zealand Society of Accountants. In 1930 he was appointed accountant to the first Unemployment Board, where he had the task of establishing and controlling an accounting system which expended four or five million pounds a year through hundreds of local agencies.

His appointment in 1934 as Supervisor of Plays realised an old ambition, for the study of entertainment had always been one of his most absorbing interests, and for some years before this he had been active as an amateur entertainer. During New Zealand's early broadcasting days he was responsible for many of the first feature productions to be put on the air, and he had in addition a wide practical experience of other branches of radio work. He became well-known to listeners through his work as a producer, script-writer, and actor in concert parties, plays, and revues. One of the first radio serials heard here, *The Higgins Family*, was written and produced by him—and he acted in it as well—while he also played a prominent part in other early productions, such as *Mutiny on the Bounty*, *Khyber*, and *The Strange Adventures of Mr. Penny*.

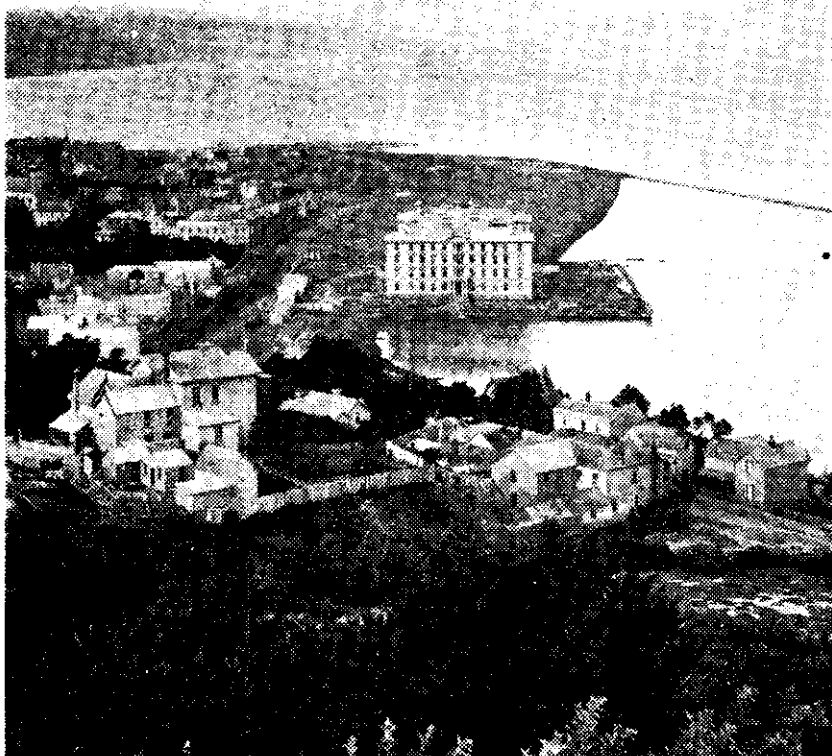
When 2YA's powerful 60 k.w. transmitter went into operation for the first time in 1937, he wrote, produced, and acted in a feature programme presenting the story of broadcasting in New Zealand, which was used in the first broadcasts. A *New Zealand Panorama*, the programme recorded in New Zealand for the BBC's Empire Day broadcasts in 1938, was also his work, and a year later 1939-40, he took charge of the *Stop, Look and Listen* programmes broadcast every week by local artists from the Centennial Exhibition studios in Wellington. During the war he was responsible for the general direction of the 2YA Camp Entertainers, a group of talented amateurs who paid regular visits to the troops in camps throughout Northern and Central Military Districts. The singers, musicians, actors, and variety artists in the group, working almost entirely in their spare time, averaged 150 performances a year from 1942 until the end of hostilities. While engaged on this type of work Mr. Yates became personally acquainted with many of New Zealand's best amateur performers.

In 1947 while in charge of the New Zealand Concert Party which visited the troops in Japan, Mr. Yates spent some time in Australia, where he obtained first-hand knowledge of broadcasting conditions in that country, under both the State-controlled Australian Broadcasting Commission and the privately-owned commercial stations. During 1948 he again visited Australia, to negotiate the visit of the International Opera Company which is at present touring New Zealand.

Mr. Yates has had long administrative experience in broadcasting, and during the 1930's he was one of a small group, including E. C. Hands, the General Manager, and J. R. Smith, the Chief Engineer, which carried out the policy of the Broadcasting Board. His appointment as Secretary in 1940, and Assistant Director in 1944, led to his time becoming more and more predominantly occupied with administration problems, and it is as an administrator that he is best known within the Service.



THE ORGANISATION of entertainment for the Armed Forces was one of the duties undertaken by Mr. Yates during the war years. Last assignment of this kind was the tour of the New Zealand Concert Party to Japan in 1947. This photograph shows Mr. Yates with members of that party. They are (from left) Henry Rudolph, Sylvia Devenie, Joyce Izett, Margaret Richmond, and Zita Outtrim



THIS PHOTOGRAPH, taken in 1876, shows the extent of reclamation work done around the Government Building completed in that year

sides, and going through to Featherston Street in the rear. But now buildings began to spring up round it. The First World War was responsible for those temporary structures, the "Tomato House" and the similar building at the back, part of which has now become the bus terminal. In 1925 an annexe, four storeys high, was built between the wings at the back of the building, a permanent addition this, having "rimu studs and joists, jarrah posts and beams, totara piles, matai flooring and external facings, sheathed with asbestos-cement sheets and lined with fibre board."

After the 1931 Napier earthquake it was decided to remove the chimneys, which were accordingly demolished to

second-floor level, and a central heating plant was installed. By this time space in the building was again at a premium, and that formerly occupied by brick-work was quickly put to good use. The building itself has proved earthquake-resistant, and though in the 1942 shake filing cabinets were wrenched from their moorings there was no structural damage.

As can be seen from photographs the classic facade of the building has, apart from the removal of the chimneys, changed very little in its 70 years. But the inside is a different story. Twelve hundred people now work in a building intended for 600, and plywood partitions break the goodly proportions of the original rooms. The original strongrooms proved strong, but not rat-proof, and have been replaced. Owing to the subsidence of the piles the main corridor goes down hill, but the timbers of the building have long adjusted themselves to the status quo and would not take kindly to a realignment of levels. Yet in spite of the inexorable overflow of personnel and paraphernalia into corridors once widely spacious, in spite of the incongruous modernity of fluorescent lighting shining bluely from ceilings designed for the gas mantle or the chandelier the interior of the building still retains a certain aggressiveness. The large windows let in the same amount of light as ever. The staircases, with their unusual angle of entry to the floors, still have the nobility that was built into them in 1876, enough even to counteract the ugliness of the grilled lifts that shamble up beside them.

No, unlike the corridors, the building hasn't started to go downhill yet. In an "excellent 'state of preservation,'" says the Government Architect. And well worth 485 gallons of paint.

GOOSSENS FOR EDINBURGH

EUGENE GOOSSENS, who has been conductor of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra for the past 18 months, and who conducted our own National Orchestra when on his way to take up that appointment in 1947, has announced that he will attend the Third Edinburgh Festival in August. He has accepted an invitation to conduct three concerts there with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, and has been released from his duties as conductor of the Sydney Symphony and director of the New South Wales Conservatorium during that time. Charles Moses, general manager of the ABC, said he thought the invitation was a great honour and a tribute to the international prestige of Mr. Goossens, and was bound to draw attention to the high standards of the Sydney Symphony and the development of musical culture in Australia. Rafael Kubelik and Otto Klemperer will be guest conductors of the Sydney Symphony during his absence.