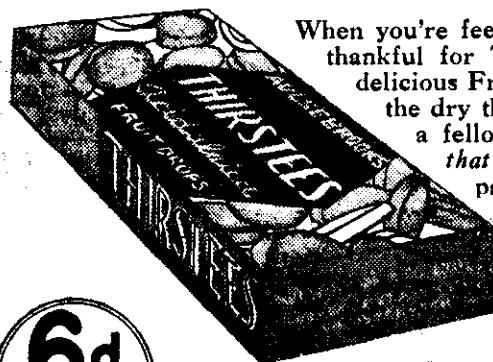




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# Report on the Orchestra

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the orchestra. Probably a blending of the two has been followed with great success. Pioneer work means hard work as well as farsightedness. It is not only the mental, but also the physical, endurance which we admire in the early settlers. Really hard work has characterised the early years of the orchestra's existence. For the players they may have been "years of endurance"—for the concert-goers years of unalloyed pleasure.

## WHERE NOW?

Where is the orchestra to go from here? What of the future? No threat of "recessions" should be allowed to carry with it the corollary of throwing overboard "an unnecessary expense." There must be good music in this country whether it pays for itself or not. Sincere musicians have as much right to demand security as sincere public servants.

More disturbing is the question of the future orchestral players. The late musical editor of *The Times*, in a leading article on a visit to the Dunedin Technical High School, wrote, "New Zealand has not yet established a national orchestra, but it is acquiring the stuff from which to make one." Dr. H. C. Colles was not given to exaggeration, and his statement has had enlightening fulfilment. The lesson to be learnt is that the recruitment of players from a narrow field will not always make for the present high standard. Widen the field of selection and the standard will rise.

Therefore we should have more schools following along the lines of the Dunedin school, where every student has the option to play any orchestral instrument. Where should the impetus come from? Surely not from a pioneer in every case. Vernon Griffithses are not born every year. It is up to the authorities of education to accept this proven scheme and provide Mr. Tyrer's successors with a broad field for selection.

A shorter-term policy in the nature of apprenticeships may be workable. New Zealand is perhaps not geographically suitable for the establishment of a centralised conservatorium of music. But it may be possible—and I can imagine consternation written over the faces of the orchestra at the thought of it—for selected young players to "sit in," or even "play in," at certain rehearsals, in order to gain experience before being called upon to participate in the itinerant orchestral activity. The conductor could sum up the trainees much better than he can under the present audition system. Difficulties spring to mind, but the solving of them may establish a scheme whose value to the orchestra may be no less than the good bestowed upon the apprentices.

The future calls for vigour and vision. J. B. Priestley has written: "A great symphony orchestra must be counted among a country's capital achievements." New Zealand has qualified for the compliment by dint of hard work under sound guidance.

## SPOT THE LADY

WHEN Lester Powell wrote the BBC mystery serial *Lady in a Fog*, he created one of radio's most popular detectives, Philip Odell, a wise-cracking, drawling young man with no great talent as a detective except the ability always to get his man in the end. The part was played by a Canadian actor named Robert Beatty, and he has returned to the chase for wrongdoers in another exciting and amusing serial—*Spot the Lady*. In this case Philip Odell, aided by his fiancée, Heather McMara, is called



**BRENDA BRUCE** who again plays Heather McMara, fiancée of Philip Odell, in the new BBC mystery serial, "Spot the Lady"

in to solve the mystery of the murder of one Marguerite, a newspaper columnist with a reputation that doesn't bear looking into too closely. To complicate matters Odell is called in separately by three men, each of whom claims to be her fiancée, and that sets the stage for a snappy little piece of detection on Odell's part. The strong sup-

porting cast and excellent production make this one of the best serials of its type to be broadcast for quite a while, and it starts from 2YA at 8.0 p.m. on Wednesday, December 7. The part of Heather McMara is played by Brenda Bruce, a Manchester girl who began as a ballet dancer before turning to radio acting.

N.Z. LISTENER, DECEMBER 2, 1949.