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SOME of them have drawn caustic comment, and some have been damned with faint praise, but most of the 37 programmes in the series *History and Harmony in Otago* have been received with considerable interest. At 9.30 p.m. on Monday, January 2, 4YA will broadcast the last in this series, dealing with the Strath Taieri district. The programmes were all compiled by the Mobile Unit of the NZBS, which toured Otago during its centennial year after successful visits to the Taranaki, Waikato, and Thames districts. By interviewing descendants of the pioneers and visiting places of historical interest, the Unit uncovered many stories that have not appeared in books, and rescued many personal anecdotes from oblivion. Since the director of the Unit, Leo Fowler, went to Samoa, no further journeys have been entered upon, but what was done was not unappreciated by listeners. Once when a scheduled programme was inadvertently not broadcast, the flood of telephone enquiries showed just what an audience the sessions had.

"The Geisha"

GEISHA, we are told, is a Sino-Japanese word meaning "person of pleasing accomplishments," and is used to describe the professional dancing and singing girls of Japan, who, like the Nautch girls of India, are specially set aside for their profession at an early age. Sidney Jones's light opera *The Geisha* is an amusing musical comedy about the customs of old Japan and the geisha girls in particular. Although he composed other operettas, among them *A Gaiety Girl* and *Persian Princess*, this is his best work, approaching the operas of Sullivan in style and in the quality of its workmanship. Songs and dances from *The Geisha* will be heard from 4YZ at 8.0 p.m. on Monday, January 2, played and sung by the BBC Midland Chorus and Light Orchestra, conducted by Gilbert Vinter. Our illustration shows the Pigtail Dance being performed by Wunki and Juliette.



New Zealand Day

POKING about in the neighbourhood of Manners and Bond Streets, the Wellingtonian comes close to his origins. The old cannon embedded in the pavement at the corner of an ancient wooden building will perhaps be mentioned by Charles Freeman in his talk *Early Manners Street* from 2YA at 11.0 a.m. on Tuesday, January 3. On the same programme, which is a special one for New Zealand Day, Mrs. J. Cocker will recall some of the experiences of a lighthouse-keeper's wife on Stephen's Island and Farewell Spit, at the northern extremity of the South Island.

Greater Force Than Gravity

ACCORDING to *Time*, who did a cover story on him a few years ago, Harry Lillis Crosby is clever at falling uphill. He doesn't like to work, his life

THINGS TO COME

has been haphazard, but his income has mounted steadily. Too relaxed to join the Millionaires' Ulcer Club, he nevertheless has his million or so, which he secured mainly by singing with half his natural voice. "That's a great saving," he said. "I don't like to work." The story of this fabulous character is now to be told in three episodes from 2YA. *Crosby Chronicle: A Survey of the Life of Bing Crosby*, starts on Wednesday, January 4, at 7.30 p.m. The second and third of the series may be heard at the same time on the two succeeding Wednesdays.

The Man in Black Again

THE *Man in Black*, in the person of Valentine Dyall (no relation to the *Woman in White*) has come back in some BBC transcriptions with a special appeal for listeners who appreciate gooseflesh this warm weather. In the past he has introduced full length thrillers—*Appointment with Fear*, for instance—but now he is to be heard more in the role of storyteller. Most of the partly dramatised tales of mystery and fear he recounts have been adapted from stories by famous authors and all the adaptations for radio have been made by John Keir Cross. Dyall has a substantial reputation as a narrator and actor in radio plays and has also made successful excursions into the legitimate stage and films. Cross specialises in tales of the uncanny, and during the war published a book of them called *The Other Passenger*. Twenty years ago he threw up his job as an insurance clerk in Perth and, being something of a ventriloquist, set off with two dolls for London. He couldn't have chosen a more awkward time, for two days earlier there had been a murder in Perth and his sudden disappearance set the police on his track. He was locked up for a night before he could prove his innocence. The new series concerning *The Man in Black* will start at 2YA on Wednesday, January 4, at 9.30 p.m., with Robert Louis Stevenson's tale, "Markheim." (See photograph on page 17.)

New Year Resolution

WHAT is it going to be this New Year? In 1946 did you set out to be a modern Pepys, and did you keep your new diary for nearly two weeks? In 1947, did you spend half an hour after lunch on New Year's Day making a book list of all those works which every cultured individual should read, absorb and make a part of him? And did you read any of them in the ensuing year? And in 1948, did you resolve to stop smoking, and of the money not spent thus, put five pounds in the Savings Bank every month? And wasn't it difficult to get cigarettes that year, especially in the week ends? In 1950, make a musical resolve. Say "This year I shall listen to Bach," and then, on Thursday, January 5 at 3.0 p.m., dial 3YA and listen to the Brandenburg Concerto No. 4

in G, the Prelude and Fugue in B Minor, the Suite No. 1 in C Major, and to Bach songs by Isobel Baillie.

Stogies for Jean

THE creative mind in action, like a humming dynamo, needs to be kept going by some stimulant or other. When nervous energy showed signs of flagging Edgar Wallace, writing a novel in a 48 hour stretch, was fortified by endless cups of weak tea; Cezanne, painting frenziedly at the end of his life in his home at Aix, was helped by cups of coffee; and today Sibelius, living on at 84, but composing little, is still notorious for his consumption of cigars. Recently when his supplies threatened to be cut off because of dollar shortages, the National Arts Foundation of America promised to keep the Finnish composer in stogies for the rest of his life, and for his 84th birthday this month the Foundation expressed 84 boxes of cigars to his forest cottage near Helsinki. Listeners who want to know what kind of music the divine afflatus assisted by cigar smoke can bring forth will be able to hear his Symphony No. 2 played from 1YA at 7.30 p.m. on Friday, January 6.

Madame Hilda Yen Male

ONE World, or None—the series of four talks by Hilda Yen Male to be broadcast by 1YA could scarcely be more aptly titled, for that is precisely the lesson the speaker endeavours to drive home. "We must realise that we are living in one world; if we do not realise it, there won't be any world to live in." Hilda Yen Male is the wife of a former New Zealand journalist, John Gifford Male, now a member of UN Secretariat, and is on a holiday visit to this country with her husband. She gained her B.A. at a Chinese University, and her M.A. (in political Science) in the United States, and as a member of the Chinese Diplomatic Corps has served in many of the capitals of Europe. She has also been a delegate to the League of Nations, and has held professorial posts in two Chinese colleges. The talks will be heard at 9.30 p.m. on consecutive Wednesdays, the first being on January 4 when Mrs. Male will discuss UN as a whole, and some of the things necessary to make it efficient in the task of preserving world peace. She contends that with all its faults UN is as good a machine as can be made by men, that we cannot afford the luxury of not supporting it, and that it is the peoples of the member nations who must be blamed for the failures rather than the machine itself. On January 11 and 18 Mrs. Male will speak about problems associated with the control of atomic energy, and on January 25 will discuss the role New Zealand should play in the conflict between East and West. This country, she says, might well be the peace-maker of the world.

N.Z. LISTENER, DECEMBER 30, 1949.