

# TALENT QUEST AMONG ORPHANS

## 2ZB Artists Visit Children's Homes In Wellington

THE Orphans' "Talent Quest" conducted by Reg. Morgan, and ably assisted by Bryan O'Brien of 2ZB, may be fun for the orphans, but it is just as much fun for the radio artists. Reg. and Bryan have thoroughly enjoyed their trips to the Homes they have visited so far. They are sure of a hearty welcome from the children.

It is not so much the monetary prize attached to the venture which attracts the children (each child selected is to receive a Post Office Savings Account with half a guinea deposited, and the winning child to receive five guineas) but rather is it the excitement of having the 2ZB Sound Truck, with its 2ZB artists, and all the recording apparatus arrive at their Home.

Originated by the Commercial Broadcasting Service to encourage and develop talent among the orphans of Wellington, who have never before received encouragement from the radio, this search is proving of keen interest to listeners. The children selected have sung over the air during the Children's session from 2ZB.

The first Home to be visited was the Karori Home and the children selected for items were actually recorded in the Home. Bryan relates that the expression of wonderment on the faces of the children when they hear their recordings played back to them had to be seen to be realised. In each case the reaction seems to be exactly the same. At the Karori Home, where there are children up to fifteen years of age, the two little girls selected were: Eileen Start, 14 years, who sang "The Homeland"; and Nola Bignall, 13 years, "O Silent Night." The latter song was chosen as the better of the two.

### Florence Was Insistent

It was noticeable how attracted the children were to Reg. One little girl with a big name—Florence, sat on his knee, and asked to sit there even when Reg. played the accompaniments! Florence was a rosy checked little girl of three.

At the Anglican Boys' Home at Lower Hutt, thirty little boys ranging from five to fifteen greeted the sound truck and its occupants from the verandah. After the Matron had greeted the visitors, the children came into the Common Room and watched the recording set being placed in position. Soon the boys were chatting to Bryan and Reg.

Alan Hall, aged 13, proved to have a very clear voice. The song he selected was "She Would Know the Reason Why."

Next came Noel Daley, who sang a humorous item, "Paddy McGinty's Goat." Noel is fifteen.

### A Confession About Milk

Then little Bruce Kernahan, who gave a rendering (his own!) of "Pop-eye." Little Bruce is the pet of the orphanage, five years old, fair-haired and brown-eyed. He confided to Bryan, that he "didn't like milk on his rice, but did like raisins in it!" This seemed to worry Bruce quite a lot. Bryan told him what a big man he would grow if he drank plenty of milk, and this, coming from Bryan, seemed to reassure him.

As soon as everything was in order, Reg. Morgan explained that no one could make a

sound while the recording was in progress; not even cough. The Matron, Miss Menzies, thereupon told the boys they would have to be as still as mice, and the first one to make a sound would have to go out of the room. Everything went splendidly. Bruce sang "Pop-eye," and the matron, forgetting all about her admonition, the microphone, and everything else, burst into a hearty laugh at the conclusion. The record was played back—plus the laugh of the Matron.

### Sixty Little Girls

The next Home visited was the Salvation Army Home in Owen Street.

Here the ZB people were ushered into a large playroom, where there were some 60 little girls from 3 years to 10 years of age.

One little girl of seven sang "Podgy Wodgy." Her name was Ray Jones. The other selected was Dorothy Olsen, aged nine, who sang "The Little Girl's Lament."

### Polish Refugees

From there, the 2ZB folk proceeded to "The Deckster Home," in Rintoul Street. This is a home for Polish Refugees. There are some 18 children here.

The children are all very gifted, and can speak three to five languages. One little boy named "Jzzy" had mastered Polish, German, Yiddish, Hebrew, and English; he is only nine years of age. David Bengie, who is studying art at the Technical School, rendered, in Yiddish, a song which is entitled in Eng-



Reg. Morgan and Bryan O'Brien are entertained! It seems as if, judging by the smiles on their faces, the 2ZB artists are having as much fun, or more, as the children at the Salvation Army Home. Mr. Bingham, engineer of the CBS Head Office staff, is seated near the recording set.

lish, "Paper Children." A doleful but fascinating melody, it told the story of a mother who was writing to her children in a distant land. She asked why she didn't receive any word from them, and said they were her paper children now. As all she had was some photographs hanging on the wall.

Next, came Rene Resneck, a 13-year-old girl, who is studying chemistry at Wellington College. The Matron told Reg. that the children had learned the Maori language.

Next week details of visits to the other orphanages will be given.

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