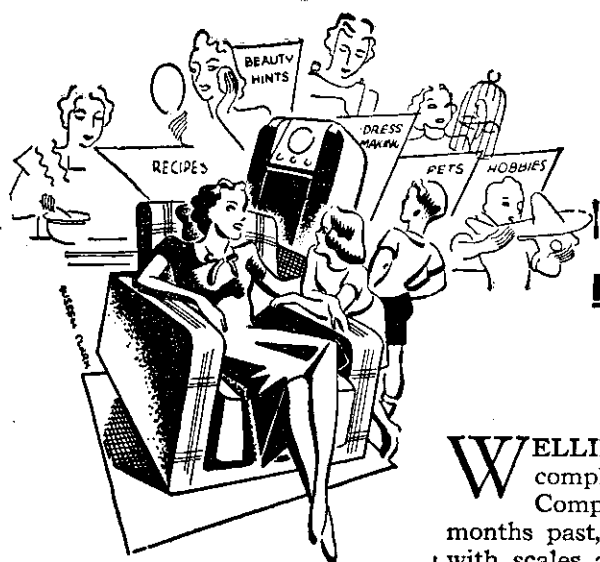


Women and the Home

Radio is the slender wire that brings the world and its affairs into the tiny kitchens and living rooms which hitherto had isolated so many housekeepers in the performance of their duties
—Margaret Bondfield

INTERVIEW

AT THE COMPETITIONS



These Should Interest You:

Talks prepared by the A.C.E., Home Science Tutorial Section, University of Otago:

"Plans for Spring and Summer Clothing." Monday, September 16, 1YA 3.30 p.m.; 2YA 3 p.m.; 3YA 2.30 p.m.

"Rolls and Fancy Yeast Breads." Wednesday, September 18, 4YA 3.15 p.m.

"Fundamentals of Yeast Bread Making." Thursday, September 19, 1YA 3.30 p.m.; 3YA 2.30 p.m.; Friday, September 20, 2YA 3 p.m.

"Spring Treatments for the Home." Friday, September 20, 4YA 3.15 p.m.

From The ZB Stations

"The Melody Storyteller": All ZB stations at 7.30 on Thursdays and 8.0 p.m. on Saturdays.

"Filmland" (John Batten): Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday at 1.0 p.m. from Station 12B.

"Keyboard Kapers": At 4.15 p.m. on Mondays from station 22B.

"Luncheon Music": 12 noon, Sunday, from station 32B.

"The Young Marrieds' Circle" (Breta): Monday to Friday, 4.30 p.m. from Station 42B.

"First Aid Accidents and Emergencies." Representative of St. John Ambulance. Tuesday, September 17, 2YA 11.30 a.m.

"Fashions." Ethel Early. Tuesday, September 17, 3YA 11.15 a.m.

"Speaking Personally: Mending Broken Hearts (4)." Phyllis Anchor. Thursday, September 19, 2YA 10.45 a.m.

"Pioneer Schools in New Zealand." Dr. Helen Simpson. Thursday, September 19, 3YA 11.15 a.m.

"Help for the Home Cook." Miss M. A. Blackmore. Friday, September 20, 3YA 11.15 a.m.

"What Shall We Eat? Food and the Family." Dr. Elizabeth Bryson. Friday, September 20, 4YA 7.30 p.m.

"The Morning Spell: Manners, Good and Bad." Mrs. Mary Scott. Saturday, September 21, 2YA 10.45 a.m.

WELLINGTON has just completed its 23rd Annual Competitions Festival. For months past, studios have echoed with scales and arpeggios, boards have resounded to the tap of dancing feet. Hopes and fears, ambitions and longings, went into the making of this 1940 Festival—and for a lucky number of them their dreams came true.

I joined the crowd of children trooping into the Town Hall one night during the Festival. There were tiny tots—and larger ones; boys and girls with excited shining eyes. Their mothers looked bright and hopeful, too, as they shepherded their charges into the dressing rooms behind the stage.

I sought the Committee Room and found the Secretary, S. G. Cresswell, with his coat off, elbow-deep in a pile of papers. He has been doing the same job for six years—so he looked perfectly at home amid it all.

He found time to have a few words with me and to present Barton Ginger, President of the Festival. To the President a Festival is all in the day's work. Mr. Ginger has been associated with musical Festivals for years past, first as a competitor, and of later years in the role of judge. In this Festival he was acting as judge of the Elocution section.

The concert had already begun, and an education piece was about to be heard.

At the Judge's Table

The President hurried off to the main hall and took me along to share his judicial table.

It was an imposing board, set in the middle of the hall, with comfortable arm-chairs drawn up and a little green light above a stack of clean paper.

A number was put up on the board, the competitor's name was announced, and the piece began.

The President-Judge made a few swift notes on the pad in front of him. Then thoughtfully he handed me a pencil. The atmosphere was contagious. I found myself adopting a judicial attitude of mind. I stole a glance at the President's face. It showed nothing. Other people; mothers, sisters, relatives, perhaps, turned their heads his way. The piece went on and concluded in a burst of applause.

The President gathered up his papers and excused himself, leaving me in possession. The lights flickered out again—and I settled back to enjoy the programme.

An Animated Scene

The stage was an animated scene with a dozen little milkmaids in pink gingham and sun-bonnets. They danced as though they enjoyed it, and the audience shared their enthusiasm.

The curtains back stage parted, and a tiny figure in a brief silver frock and a mass of bronze curls beneath a shining top hat began an intricate tap dance. In the programme she was marked down as aged six years. I watched, fascinated. Here was a future Delysia. Already she had the technique and the finish of an adult artist. She danced with her eyes, her lips, her curls, and her small expressive hands. Her feet were a joy to watch. The audience gave a thunderous applause as the tiny silver figure danced off stage.

A boy soprano followed. He looked like a promising footballer—and sang like an angel.

The swiftness, the colour, and the continuity of it was bewildering. Each competitor was quickly replaced by the next—a Picture Story Ballet of "The Wizard of Oz," with the Lion and the Scarecrow and the Tin Man, brought delighted applause. A character dance followed. A slim girl in a white tulle frock and pink

roses in her hair, dipping, swaying and fluttering about a glittering Xmas tree.

I Agree With the Judges

Three boys, identical in dress suits and top hats, were being finally judged in an eccentric tap dance. One, who danced again later, was a youthful Anton Dolin. I selected them in their order of merit, and when the winner was announced a few minutes later I was delighted to find that my judging had been correct.

Two other men now joined me at the judge's table. They had impresario written all over them. Music, I thought—or singing? I looked at the programme. . . . It was singing.

They eyed me in a friendly fashion. I felt impelled to explain my presence—not a judge, merely a reporter. They received the information with smiling nods, and we discussed the Festival till the competitors began their numbers.

The programme continued. Child elocutionists, their chief charm, their complete unself-consciousness. A small Chinese boy, bowing gravely, one hand behind his back, to the supreme delight of the crowd. A pocket-edition lass in a white satin suit and a swinging blue cape, executing expertly a military dance. A like edition of a small boy, dressed in a scarlet tunic and performing a spirited Cossack dance. A tall slender girl arrayed in a green raincoat and with a green umbrella, singing a song of rain, and blown lightly, as before a breeze, about the stage. The Girl in the Alice Blue Gown, singing highly and sweetly. Colourful Picture Story Ballets, depicting scenes of fantasy.

Two Complaints

I have only two complaints to voice. Why don't elocution teachers consider types when allotting a student a particular piece to recite? Correct "typing" is half the battle, but a few of the competitors I heard were definitely not of type with the work selected. That puts a mark against them before they begin.

Secondly, the ballets would have been vastly improved if all the performers had been instructed to smile throughout their dance. On the professional stage an unsmiling face can lose a girl her job.

In one of the ballets, one small girl, the tiniest performer, smiled warmly and radiantly throughout. One's eyes followed her alone, not because she was a better dancer but because her smile drew and held one.

All the hopes and dreams and aspirations of the 1940 Festival are now past—and at least two important "discoveries" have been made. Their talent may yet be shared with an applauding world.

LOVE IN THE 'EIGHTIES

Mrs. George Black, Member for the Yukon in the Canadian Parliament, has written an autobiography titled "My Seventy Years," and published by Thomas Nelson. One of her tales casts an interesting light on the love psychology of the 80's. It is worth quoting:

"My maiden Aunt Sarah and I were sleeping in a bedroom opening on to the verandah of our summer cottage.

"We were awakened by this conversation:

'Darling, let me bite you.'

'Oh, no, you mustn't.'

'But darling, do let me bite you.'

'Oh, no, I just couldn't.'

'But I won't hurt you a bit—I just want to bite you.'

"By this time we were thoroughly awake—and knew the voices. Aunt Sarah could stand it no longer.

"Sitting bolt upright in bed, she called out:

"Ethel, for heaven's sake let him bite you, and be done with it!"