

BIG YEAR AHEAD FOR THE ZB's

THE year 1941 promises to be the most successful in the history of the Commercial Broadcasting Service, reports the deputy-controller, B. T. Sheil, who recently returned from a three weeks' business visit to Australia. Not only did Mr. Sheil bring back a record amount of business with him, but he also took the opportunity of studying recent developments in Australian radio. He has returned more satisfied than ever with the standard of radio in New Zealand.

New Zealanders Make Good

A remarkable feature of Australian radio, according to B. T. Sheil, is the success of New Zealand trained announcers. Hardly a New Zealand announcer has failed to make good, and many of them have gone right to the top. Among the most successful is Harry Withers, formerly of Station 1ZB, who is now attached to 2UE Sydney, and conducts the most original breakfast session in Australia. One morning Mr. Sheil found him holding a quiz session in the 2UE studio at 7.30 in the morning. He had attracted an audience of over 70 people, some of them stopping in on their way to work, many having got up early just to be present at the broadcast.

Benno, who was also with the ZB's, is now attached to a Brisbane station, and Peter Bathurst is free-lancing. Bathurst does regular commentaries for Australian newsreels.

It is only in big network flesh-and-blood shows that Australia is ahead, and this is only because of greater population and many more big centres. A sponsor may spend as much as £250 in programme costs for a single show, and by means of a network broadcast, reach a large proportion of listeners in the Commonwealth.

This is a development of radio that is not possible in New Zealand even on a minor scale, for the simple reason that

musical items cannot be transmitted over land line for a hook-up of two or more stations.

Quiz Programmes

Quiz programmes are still the rage in Australia, according to Mr. Sheil. Big quizzes, little quizzes, all sorts of quizzes, even quizzes in breakfast programmes.

For the Commercial Broadcasting Service the coming year will be notable both for extensive use of local talent and a large number of new programmes, some of them imported, some of them produced in New Zealand.

Although precluded from using land lines for hooking up musical shows, the CBS has installed up-to-date recording equipment at the head office studio, and in the near future all stations will be fitted with similar equipment. This will enable the cream of local talent all over the Dominion to be recorded for presentation in big national programmes. The CBS production department's work has already been heard over the air, and several shows, including a series of "Real Life Stories" and a musical production "Radio Rotogravure" will be released early in the year.

"Real Life Stories"

"Real Life Stories," which is based on a programme of proved popularity in America, is the first straight dramatic production the CBS has undertaken. Production is in the hands of Bryan O'Brien, known for his children's hour broadcasts, and a number of talented repertory players are in the cast.

Commencing early in February will be a comedy serial "To-day's Children" another family story which is described as being "about children, for grown-up consumption." The script is an American one, while the feature itself was produced in Australia.

"It's a Great Life," another new Australian programme which starts early in January (replacing "The In-Laws") is a human appeal story about the ups and downs of a young family. It has a fair slice of comedy running through it, and stars James Raglan, who has been heard in some excellent serials and has also starred in Australian films.

Still another Australian programme is "Green Meadows," which is claimed to present the first undistorted pictures of true Australian rural types.

You be the Detective

The feature "You be the Detective" is further proof of the universality of the detective thriller. Most listeners are already familiar with the idea—a bird's eye view of a crime, a couple of minutes of quiet music to help one think it out, and then the correct solution. It is an amusing idea, and gives amateur detectives any number of knots to unravel.

"Secret Diary" combines crime thriller with personal revelation. It is the intimate diary of a woman who is tried for the murder of her husband, and whose daughter is the chief witness against her.

"Silver King" is a radio dramatisation of a play which old time theatre-goers will remember well. It is the story of Wilfrid Denver, called the Silver King because of the fortune he won from the



B. T. SHEIL
A record amount of business

silver mines of Nevada, and who for many years believed himself to be a murderer.

Besides these new programmes, and others which are in preparation by the production department of the CBS, the year 1941 will see an even greater variety of quiz programmes.

"FAMOUS DANCE BANDS" AT 2ZB

"FAMOUS Dance Bands," a new session which will be starting at station 2ZB early in January, contains some highly coloured dance music, and should appeal to all rhythm fans. Each session a new dance band is featured, a representative selection of records being played.

One of them, for instance, features "Fats" Waller, the American Negro pianist, composer, comedian and arranger. "Fats" Waller, of course, leads

one of the swiftest dance bands in America, but his chief claim to fame rests on his unusual piano style, and a whole session is devoted to numbers demonstrating his technique. Among the numbers played are "Handful of Keys," "You Can't Have Your Cake," and "That Old Feeling."

"Famous Dance Bands" will be heard at 2ZB at 10.0 p.m. on Wednesdays and Saturdays as from January 15.



"FATS" WALLER,
Negro pianist and band
leader, who will be heard
in a session of "Famous
Dance Bands," from 2ZB

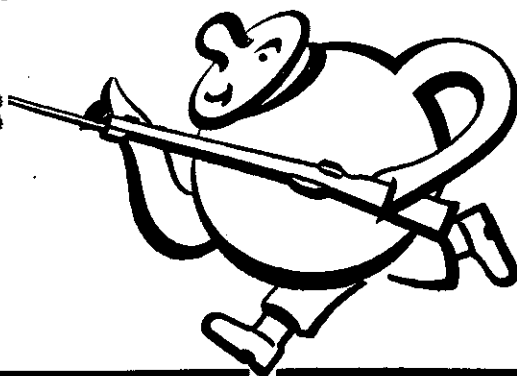
The best 'HOME DEFENCE'

against WAR NERVES

and weariness

is a cup of

high-grade tea



BELL TEA

—the highest grade
obtainable, definitely
soothes the nerves