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REG WILLIAMS, of Napier (below), wanted to be a zoologist; his father favoured the law. But instead of swinging juries Reg took to swinging from a trapeze with his own professional troupe, calling his act "The Aerial Delgado." The high life came



N.P.S. photograph

to an end when he slipped, landed heavily, and spent some time in plaster. Now, among other activities, he busies himself making on-the-spot Nature notes with a tape recorder. For the last two years Reg Williams has been giving talks under the title "The World of Nature" once a month over the YA and YZ stations, and a series of weekly talks over Radio New Zealand.

"I've always wanted to be a naturalist," Reg told me the other day. "Before I could walk I chased bugs." He had just returned from the Aldermen Islands off the east coast of Coromandel Peninsula. There he did some underwater recording through a microphone in his diving helmet. "A tape recorder gives a word picture of what I see, but there are no under-water sounds—only the bubbling of the escape water. And I can tell you that this sort of research is a far bigger thrill than my trapeze act ever was."

Mr. Williams contributes articles to several publications, illustrating them with photographs and pen and ink sketches. "In my opinion New Zealand is an outstanding country from the naturalist's point of view," he said.

"I VENTURE to ask you for a few lines on Ljuba Welitsch, and Victoria de los Angeles, and perhaps their photographs," writes Ailsa Bayes (Mount Eden, Auckland).

Ljuba Welitsch (pronounced Liewba Vellitch) was born in 1913 near Varna in Bulgaria.

VOCAL PHILOSOPHER Her real name is Welitschkova.

Her interest in music started when she was still a small girl, and her sister gave her a violin. In the opinion of Plato, music should be studied in conjunction with philosophy, and such was the system of education adopted by Ljuba at Sofia University. She made her debut at Graz, later appearing as prima donna in Munich, Hamburg and Dresden. Frank Granville Barker says that her ability to see the amusing side of all situations makes her a most entertaining hostess. She loves to recall her performance in *Salome* at Covent Garden when, as she lifted from a silver

Open Microphone

charger the head of the prophet to imprint a last kiss on its lifeless lips, a member of the audience gave one scream of horror before fainting outright. Some years ago, obliged to travel from Vienna to Dresden immediately after a performance, she revelled in the alarm created as she casually pulled from her head a mass of false curls, with which she proceeded to remove her grease-paint. She deliberately caused misunderstandings by speaking of her "children"—the name by which she referred to her black miniature poodles, Ali and Scheherazade, famous for their appearances on stage and screen.



Victoria de los Angeles

Victoria de los Angeles was born in 1925 in Barcelona and after only a few years of study the musical world heard a new and remarkable soprano (NZBS programmes feature her recordings frequently). After a tour of Spain she accepted an invitation to London, where she was recognised as a singer of international standing.

THE General Service of the BBC is broadcasting a series of programmes designed to illustrate Britain's influence on European music during the last 500 years. Some critics have dismissed Britain's contribution to European music as negligible, but in reality it

BRITAIN'S CONTRIBUTION

had a notable influence in Europe and could be compared with a wheel which in the last 100 years has come full circle, says a BBC London Letter. It began with "Sumer Is Icomen In," that astonishing six-part canon written by some anonymous genius in the first quarter of the 14th Century. This was so advanced in concept and construction that its composition in c. 1310 was as astonishing as it would be if a modern car were discovered today in a prehistoric excavation. The next great figure in British music was John Dunstable, the 500th anniversary of whose death fell last Christmas Eve, and whose sacred music is so enduring that it is

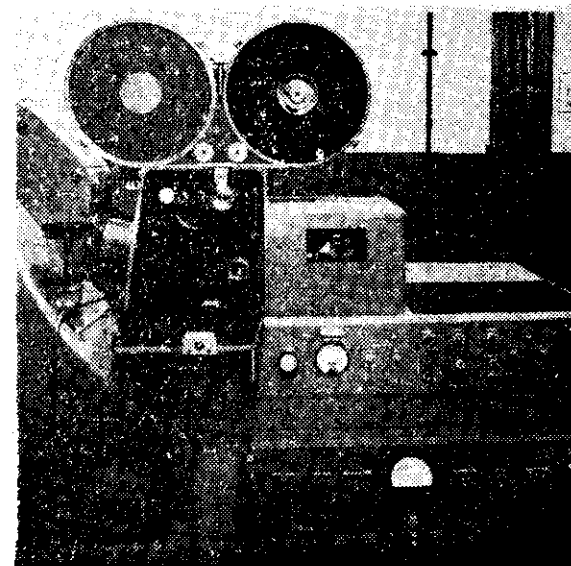
still sung in British cathedrals today. Dunstable's work had a great influence on the Franco-Flemish school of Dufay, Binchois, Okeghem and others during the 16th Century, and this in turn influenced the Italian composers of the 16th and 17th Centuries. The Italians in their turn influenced the Germans until towards the close of the 19th Century the circle was completed with the rise in Britain of Elgar and Vaughan Williams, followed by Britten, Walton and many other noted composers of today. It may not be too fanciful to presume that the wheel is now beginning its second circle, as the influence of modern British composers stretches out once more towards Europe.

A GIRL rang me up the other day and asked for the name of a song which she proceeded to croon. As it's not the custom to answer "HAVE A HEART!" said, "Who's calling?" "Does that really matter?" she asked, adding, "Have a heart; I do so want to know the name." "All right," I said, "let's hear the melody again." It turned out to be *The Song from the Moulin Rouge* ("Where Is Your Heart?")

ONE of the most active amateur choirs in the Nelson province is in the fruit country, from Appleby to Mapua. Twenty-five people make up the Hills Choir, which was first heard in 1951 when a few orchardists and their workers got together to sing carols at Christmas. This choir has made a number of local appearances between

FRUITY VOICES

Richmond and Motueka, and has performed annually at Nelson in the Adult Education Country Choirs' Festival, broadcast by 2XN. A good deal of the credit goes to the conductor, R. A. Lawson, a still youngish man, whose career has included much military activity. He is a Liverpudlian who joined the Cheshire Regiment as a lad to play in its band. He was at Kneller Hall for some years and in 1939 he was appointed bandmaster of the Royal Ulster Rifles. But on the outbreak of World War II he gave up music for soldiering overseas. He was on active service with the Baluch Regiment (Indian Army) and also in New Guinea and Burma; he was discharged



BBC photograph

A CLOSE-UP of one of the 35 mm. inverted Mechau continuous motion tele-recording assemblies installed at the BBC's Lime Grove studios. The case containing the mirror, drum is on the left and above that is the housing of the taking lens. The upper panel controls the sound exciter lamp and driving motor, and above that is the sound recorder optical unit. The lower panel controls the sound amplifier. In non-technical language this machine records television pictures on ordinary cinematograph film.