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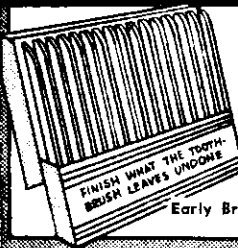
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W.F.

FREDERICK FARLEY, actor, producer and broadcaster, told me just before he left New Zealand for Australia a couple of years ago that he expected to put in about six months there, after which he would probably return to England. I saw in Australia's *The Listener*



FREDERICK FARLEY
"Producer takes the blame"

In the other day that Mr. Farley would be leaving for England shortly. He had some tart things to say about the Australian stage.

Discipline on the stage, he is reported to have said, was poor and there was an inclination to let players go their own way and hope for the best. He found that more in the professional theatre than in repertory. His two experiences as a commercial theatre producer had not been happy. In neither case had he been given a free hand in the selection of casts, with the result that there were many misfits. "As usual it was the producer and neither the players nor the management who had to take the blame from the critics."

Farley continued that the social side of the movement—always one of the worst aspects of the purely amateur theatre — was allowed to exercise too much influence. Until it was eliminated the theatre must inevitably suffer. Much potential talent was being wasted with too many companies operating separately, each jealous of prestige. Competition was a good thing, but could be overdone, he added.

Frederick Farley came to New Zealand six years ago as producer for the Canterbury Repertory Society and then joined the Community Arts Service, touring the North Island. Later he made his headquarters in Wellington, producing for the Wellington Repertory Society and The Thespians.

AT a St. Patrick's Night concert in Christchurch some years ago a well-known local singer was on the programme for a bracket of songs. An entertainer who liked to give his audience a surprise now and

SINGER'S DEATH then, he chose as his first number "Hail Caledonia." Englishmen blanched, but felt easier when Irishmen let go with the applause. He followed this with "The Border Ballad"—"bloody fray" and all. Again the Irish roared their delight and the singer had to produce several other

Open Microphone

songs before the audience let him go. (The concert was held, by the way, in the Caledonian Hall.)

The entertainer was Arthur Macdonald, who died in Dunedin last month at the age of 64. Born in Arbroath, Scotland, he came to New Zealand before the First World War, settling first in Christchurch and then moving to Dunedin. He was particularly well known for his interest in Scottish organisations.

★

EMPHASIS is on comedy in a new *Dad and Dave* series now being recorded in Sydney, according to *The Broadcaster*. Although NEW LIFE FOR the form of the show DAD AND DAVE has been radically changed, the old cast remains intact and the script writer is still Lorna Bingham. The new version is in complete half-hour editions.

★

LESLIE M. CAMPBELL (Christchurch): Mark Hambourg—he toured New Zealand in 1903, and again in 1931 when he and Peter Dawson teamed up—was one of the earliest pianists to make gramophone records. He boasts

IT WASN'T LEMONADE

that his name has been given to an orchid and a cocktail. In an article which he wrote in the form of his own "obituary" he said: "It could certainly be said of Mark Hambourg that he took music all over the world, wherever there was a piano to be found, and he never deviated from his principle that, no matter what the surroundings, he played only the very best music."

Hambourg was born in the Russian village of Bogutchar in 1879 and his first teacher was a devoted aunt. Lots of stories are told about him. One concerns a concert with the Moscow Conservatoire Orchestra before the Grand Duke Constantine. The pianist was plied beforehand with champagne which he

thought was lemonade. Nothing happened until he neared the end of a concerto, when he had a complete lapse of memory but was able to improvise 48 bars until he found the way back. On a



MARK HAMBOURG
An orchid and a cocktail

visit to Australia he met Mark Twain who arrived one evening at a concert as Hambourg stepped on the platform. Taking the applause as a personal compliment, the American humorist bowed right and left, then spotted Hambourg, promptly dived into his seat and buried his face in his programme. Having a simple nature, Hambourg likes nothing better than getting small boys to blow on the front of his gold watch which immediately snaps open. But when twinges of rheumatism come along or something upsets his schedules, his broken-English expressions would do credit to an R.S.M.

In his *Masters of the Keyboard*, Donald Brook says that Hambourg is inclined to deprecate the modern practice



A NEW WOMEN'S HOUR, conducted by Cherry Raymond, began at 1XH Hamilton last month. The opening was attended by the Mayoress (Mrs. R. A. Braithwaite) and two women city councillors. The photograph (above) shows from left to right, Miss D. Menzies, Mrs. Braithwaite, Cherry Raymond and Mrs. N. E. Blomfield. Women's Hour is broadcast from Mondays to Fridays inclusive at 2.0 p.m.

N.Z. LISTENER, APRIL 2, 1954.