

# GOODWILL THROUGH MUSIC

IN planning for his ideal republic Plato held music in high esteem. It was the backbone of education, a force for good, and the universal language of the soul or spirit of men. The idea that music could be a handy means of stimulating international goodwill, because of its universal character, led the American State Department some time ago to start a series of musical exchanges between American cities and those of other countries. One of these exchanges has just taken place between the city of Wellington, N.Z., and the city of Birmingham, U.S.A. Listeners who are interested to find out what it was all about should tune in to two broadcasts which will be given next week from 2YC, at 8.30 p.m., on Monday, April 26, and at the same time on Wednesday, April 28.

They should find their listening rewarding, especially if they are interested in contemporary American and New Zealand compositions, which are featured in these two programmes. Of particular interest are Aaron Copland's *Quiet City*, David Diamond's *Rounds for String Orchestra*, Kent Kennan's *Night Soliloquy*, and Douglas Lilburn's

Wellington, N.Z., and Birmingham, Alabama, recently exchanged recorded programmes of orchestral music and civic greetings.

*Landfall in Unknown Seas: Music to the Poem by Allen Curnow.* The orchestras which play these works are the Birmingham Symphony, conducted by Arthur Bennett Lipkin, and the Alex Lindsay String Orchestra. The Lilburn work, which is written for orchestra and narrator, is of further interest since the verses of the poem, which alternate with sections of the music, are spoken by the author himself.

The musical exchange came about in this way. Last February the Birmingham Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of Alabama, U.S.A., gave one of its subscription concerts in a vast amphitheatre seating 6000 people. The concert was designed as a musical salute to the people of New Zealand and dedicated to the city of Wellington. Tape recordings of the concert were immediately flown to this country, together with greetings from the Mayor of Birmingham to the Mayor of Wellington. The Mayor of Wellington, R. L. Macalister, had been kept in touch with progress in the scheme, and his plans for a reciprocal concert by the Alex Lindsay String Orchestra were already well

under way. This concert was given last month in the Wellington Town Hall, and was the first of the Lindsay Orchestra subscription series. Speeches were made by the American Ambassador, Robert M. Scotten, by Mr. Macalister, and by the Rev. E. O. Blamires, a vice-president of the British-American Co-operation Movement. A recording of the evening on tapes was in its turn flown back to Birmingham.

The last stage in the exchange is the broadcasts, which will take place next week in this country, and presumably also in Alabama. Excerpts from both concerts have already been broadcast here, and the American concert was broadcast on the spot by WAFM, the frequency modulation station of the Birmingham News Company, and fed into a network of Alabama radio stations. This concert contains speeches by the Mayor of Birmingham, J. W. ("Jimmy") Morgan, and George Laking, representing the New Zealand Ambassador in America. Next week's broadcasts will give the full concerts on both sides. The Birmingham concert will be heard first, from 8.30 to 10.30 p.m. on Monday, April 26 (from 2YC), and the Wellington concert at the same time on the Wednesday.

Other items of special interest in these two concerts are Beethoven's Symphony No. 8, Handel's Concerto Grosso in G Minor, Op. 6, No. 6, and excerpts from *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Boris Godounov*, sung by the New York Metropolitan Opera bass-baritone George London. Grieg's "Holberg" Suite, Op. 40, Benjamin Frankel's *Youth Music*, Op. 12, Brahms's "Academic Festival" Overture, Op. 80, and the Prelude to Wagner's *Die Meistersinger* complete the two programmes.

In a letter to the Mayor of Wellington setting out the ideas behind the exchange, Mayor Morgan said: "My fellow-citizens and I have long shared the belief that the language of diplomacy alone cannot achieve the kind of mutual understanding and respect among the peoples of the world which seems so necessary in these critical times. . . It is our modest hope that through the medium of our music we may take a step in the direction of closer understanding between our people and yours."

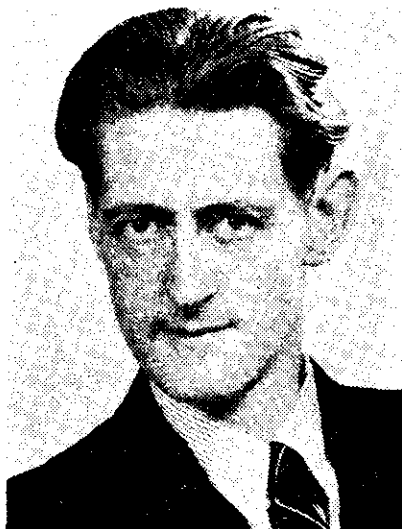
To this the Mayor of Wellington replied in words that will be heard in the recordings of the concert next week: "It is ever necessary that the closest understanding, good will and friendship should exist between your people and ours. These two concerts in a small measure help to achieve this."

Douglas Lilburn's *Tasman* music, as it is commonly known, is one of his best compositions. It was commissioned by the New Zealand Government to commemorate the discovery of New Zealand, and was first performed on the Tercentenary of Tasman's New Zealand landfall on December 13, 1942. A second performance was given at Canterbury University College in the following year, and this is only the third performance of the work. The music and the poetry alternate, each strengthening the effect of the other and forming a work of strongly New Zealand character.



Spencer Digby photograph

ALLEN CURNOW



N.P.S. photograph

ALEX. LINDSAY

## Fireside Talks for Gardeners

SIX gardening talks of particular interest will be broadcast from 2YA on Sunday afternoons during the early winter by George Phillips (right). The first will be heard at 1.45 p.m. on Sunday, May 2, the subject being *Plant Propagation: Seeds*. The best way of sowing, whether in seed-boxes or earthenware jars, the different kinds of compost, pricking out problems and the possibilities of cross-pollination are some of the problems he discusses. In his later talks Mr. Phillips discusses propagation from cuttings, and the problems of layering, budding and grafting. Under the heading of *Plant Novelties Worth Growing* he goes into the advantages of such flowers as michaelmas daisies, coreopsis, some new varieties of delphiniums (on which Mr. Phillips is an authority), luculia, flowering manuka, and so on. In his last two talks he discusses the different kinds of climbing plants and the best plants for dry, sun-baked gardens.



N.P.S. photograph

N.Z. LISTENER, APRIL 23, 1954.



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