

BROADCASTS FOR CHRISTMAS

A YEAR ago, on December 23, the signal flashed throughout New Zealand: "Gothic has been sighted." The Queen was with us last Christmas, at home among us. Now a year has slipped by. But to bring back memories of a great occasion the NZBS has produced a reminiscence in sound. *When the Queen Came to New Zealand*, which will be broadcast from all YA stations at 8.0 p.m. on Thursday, December 23. This programme will serve to introduce another season of Christmas listening from NZBS stations. The Queen's voice will also be heard at the end of the BBC Christmas programme, *The Good Neighbour*, which will link the peoples of Australia, Britain, Canada, India, Japan, Korea, Luxemburg and Nigeria. The narrator of the programme will be René Cutforth. In her traditional message to the Commonwealth Her Majesty will speak this Christmas from Sandringham, her country home in Norfolk. The broadcast times of *The Good Neighbour* will be:

2YA, at 2.0 a.m. on Boxing Day; repeated by YA and YZ stations at 9.4 a.m. The Queen's Message only from YA, YZ and ZB stations, at 7.15 a.m.; repeated by YA, YZ stations, 2ZA and 1XH at 12.33 p.m., and by YA, YZ and X stations (excluding 4YA and 4YZ) at 6.45 p.m., all on Boxing Day.

MUSIC FOR CHRISTMAS

THE bells will ring out joyously in homes up and down New Zealand on Christmas Morning. The BBC has recorded a programme of bell-ringing from various parts of the British Isles and from the Church of the Nativity at

Bethlehem, which will be broadcast from all YA stations, 3YZ and 4YZ, at 8.30 a.m. on Christmas morning. Musically it will be a most interesting Christmas, with first broadcasts of two new operas—Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* (see page 17), and Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. Amahl was the first opera commissioned especially for television, and had its world premiere on Christmas Eve, 1951. Menotti wrote it, remembering his own childhood in Italy, where there is no Father Christmas, but where the Three Kings come instead. A painting by Hieronymus Bosch of the Adoration of the Magi gave him his direct inspiration.



Amahl and the Night Visitors, all ZBs at 9.30 p.m. on Christmas Day. *The Rake's Progress*, all YCs at 6.50 p.m. on Boxing Day.

The National Orchestra will bring listeners a Christmas concert on Thursday, December 23, with the Wellington Baroque Chorus. The chorus will sing Vaughan Williams's *Fantasy on Christmas Carols*, *Five Australian Carols*, by W. G. James, and three carols by Peter Warlock. The Orchestra will also play the *Christmas Concerto* of Manfredini, a first performance in New Zealand of a work which has been reconstructed by the German musicologist, Arnold Schering. The *Fantasia Chorale Prelude*, by Bach, has been transcribed for the Orchestra by Thomas Gray from Bach's harmonisation of the Chorale, his Organ Choral Prelude and his Organ Fantasy.

From Radio Canada comes a French-Canadian carol programme, *Christmas Music*, by Les Disciples de Massenet, of Montreal. The soloist is Dosithee Boisvert. As well as the traditional carols, the choir will sing a setting of the 117th Psalm, by Henri Bibelle.

National Orchestra, all YCs, at 9.15 p.m. on Thursday, December 23. *Christmas Music*, all YCs, at 9.0 p.m. on Monday, December 20.

From ancient and sonorous King's College Chapel, Cambridge, the BBC have recorded *A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols*, with the choir conducted by Boris Ord and Hugh McLean at the organ. Since a shortened version of the *Nine Lessons* was first broadcast, many requests for its repetition have been received. This playing will be in a full-length new recording.

The last of the Alex Lindsay's String Orchestra's *Music for a While* programmes makes pleasant listening from YA stations on Christmas Night. The Leighton Lucas Orchestra, recording for the BBC in *Music by Candlelight*, features Leon Goossens, the master of all oboists, playing *A Cotswold Pastoral* by the New Zealand composer Max Saunders. Other items in *Music by Candlelight* are the Sinfonia from Bach's Christmas Oratorio; the Prayer Duet from *Hansel and Gretel*; *To the Children*, by Rachmaninoff; and Bach's *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*.

The Nine Lessons and Carols, all YCs, at 9.15 p.m. on Christmas Eve. *Music for a While*, all YAs, at 7.30 p.m. on Christmas Day. *Music by Candlelight*, all YAs and 4YZ, at 10.30 p.m. on Christmas Day.

COMEDY AND DRAMA

ON Christmas Eve, late-night listeners should have a comfortably relaxed time listening to a BBC programme, *Dickens by the Fire*, a programme of readings from the works of the man who is perhaps the creator of the "traditional" English Christmas. Then the famous English stage and screen stars Celia Johnson and Robert Speaight will give readings from Nativity literature with songs for the Infant Christ.

If it's laughter you're after the *TIFH* gang, purveyors of fun to half the world, can supply it with their Glum Family's Christmas Party, and the fairy tale ("Fags out, kiddies!") that would make however Grimm a brother grimace ("And why wasn't the water cold when Peter the Woodchopper fell in? There was a water-otter in it.")

Dickens by the Fire, YC stations, at 10.30 p.m. on Christmas Eve; *Madonna and Child*, YA stations and 3 and 4YZ at 11.15 p.m. on Christmas Eve; *Take It From Here*, ZB stations, at 8.0 p.m. on Christmas Day.

Americans are generally thought by their more reserved Anglo-Saxon cousins to be a gregarious race, but Christmas for some Americans means spending the festive season in a lonely place. The programme *A Lonely Christmas*, from the Pan American Broadcasting Service describes some Americans—farmers, engine-drivers, cowboys—who are "isolationist" at Christmas.

In 1894 the ascent of Mt. Cook was made for the first time on Christmas Day by Tom Fyfe, George Graham and Jack Clark. It was a triumph of mountaineering skill on a peak that shows no favour to those who misjudge its dangers. A feature programme commemorating this



BBC photograph.

RENE CUTFORTH, who will be the narrator of this year's BBC Christmas Day programme

first ascent, *Aorangi Climbed*, will recreate for listeners that historic occasion 60 years ago.

A Lonely Christmas, all YAs, 3YZ and 4YZ, at 9.30 a.m. on Christmas Day; *Aorangi Climbed*, 3YZ, 11.30 a.m. on Christmas Day; 2XP, 8.0 p.m. on Christmas Day; 3YA, 5.30 p.m. on Boxing Day; 2YC, 9.35 p.m. on Boxing Day.

That relentless tracker of elusive criminals, Joe Friday, might seem to be out of his element on a Christmas Day programme, but ZB stations have come up with an edition of *Dragnet*, actually recorded in the United States, which tells the story of the missing statue of the Christ Child, and how a little Mexican boy got his Christmas wish.

One of the best-loved mediaeval legends is the story of *The Juggler of Our Lady*, which tells of the monks of a certain monastery who gave of their finest handiwork to the honour of the Blessed Virgin. They placed their gifts before her image in the church. All one monk could offer was his skill in juggling. The other monks, astounded, came upon him, but as they watched they saw a miracle.

Dragnet, all ZBs, at 7.0 p.m. on Christmas Day; *The Juggler of Our Lady*, all ZBs, at 3.0 p.m. on Christmas Day.

FOR THE CHILDREN

CHRISTMAS is also the children's festival. For them the BBC have produced *The Hallowed Manger*, by Thomas Pitfield. Here the story of the Babe in the Manger is told by the animals of the Nativity, "in crude and rustic rhyme"—the style in which the story of Our Saviour's birth was brought

to the country-folk of mediaeval England.

In *Christmas with the Children of New York*, children of all the little New Yorks, the Porto Rican Quarter, the Italian, the Russian, Chinese, Negro, the German, sing carols of Christ's happy birthday, "each in his own tongue."



CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

THE Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. S. G. Holland, and the Leader of the Opposition, the Rt. Hon. Walter Nash, will give their Christmas messages to the Nation at 12.33 p.m. on Christmas Day from all National and Commercial Stations.

The Hallowed Manger, all YA and YZ stations, at 5.15 p.m. on Christmas Day; and all ZB stations at 4.30 p.m. on Christmas Day. *Christmas with the Children of New York*, all ZBs, at 5.30 p.m. on Christmas Day.



THE QUEEN IN NEW ZEALAND
Radio will bring back memories of a great occasion