



YOU can always tell when Spring has arrived in England by watching the correspondence columns of *The Times*. One bright morning there will be a letter to the Editor announcing the fact that at three o'clock a.m. at Multum-in-Parvo, or some such place, a cuckoo has been heard. Is this a record? the writer may ask. Here in New Zealand we have no birds to tell us that spring is under way—our cuckoos arrive too late and make the wrong kind of noise when they get here, so we are forced to mark the occasion in our own way. This year the NZBS has arranged a

from all songs about the seasons may enjoy *Spring, 1600*, a play not about spring, but about an exciting period in the English Theatre.

There is then a very wide choice. The week opens with an NZBS production of Emlyn Williams's *Spring, 1600* (YAs, Monday, September 10, 7.28 p.m.) This tells the story of the great actor-manager of the Elizabethan Theatre, Richard Burbage (Roy Leywood), at the time he and his players were building the Globe Theatre. Many well-known characters appear in it, including a young man with a manuscript who

because "spring has awakened in the valley" (YCs, Thursday, September 13, 7.30).

On Wednesday *Radio Roadhouse* will have some new spring twists, and on the same evening there is an American group, the Ray Charles Singers, who sing lyrics gathered over the last few years on the topic of spring, including a kind of weather forecast "Spring Will be a Little Late This Year." The orchestration includes guitar and accordion (YAs, Wednesday, 8.18 p.m.).

On Saturday the YAs *Theatre of Music* is an NZBS production of *Blossom Time* (September 15, 7.30 p.m.). Many older listeners will have pleasant memories of Richard Tauber in the film of the same name, and this version has been arranged from the film by Sydney Box. It is a musical play based on the life of Franz Schubert, the leading characters being Schubert himself, and Vicki, the young daughter of a dancing teacher with whom Schubert falls in love. The play starts with Schubert trying to arrange a concert at which his songs can be sung, numerous entanglements intervene before Schubert, failing to win the heart of Vicki, finds instead some recognition as a composer. The Musical Director is Harry Brusey and the play is produced by Bernard Beeby. The principal roles are sung by Robin Gordon, Peter Nisbet, and Daphne Ellwood, and the spoken cast includes William Austin, Selwyn Toogood, Tim Elliott, and Wendy Gibb.

Sunday's programmes start with "It's Spring Again," a feature by Oliver A. Gillespie, which comments on and illustrates many of the things that happen in Spring, from spring cleaning to spring clothes. The ancient fertility rites with the Corn King and the Spring Queen, the rites of Osiris, the Corn King of the ancient Egyptians and other interesting customs also come into the programme. In Japan, for instance, tiny temple bells are rung to announce the arrival of spring and a heavy gong is beaten to propitiate the gods. The programme ends as it starts with reflections on our New Zealand spring (National Programme, 9.30 a.m.).



N.P.S. photograph



WENDY GIBB has the speaking role of Vicki in "Blossom Time," and the part of Schubert is sung by Robin Gordon

Spring on the Air

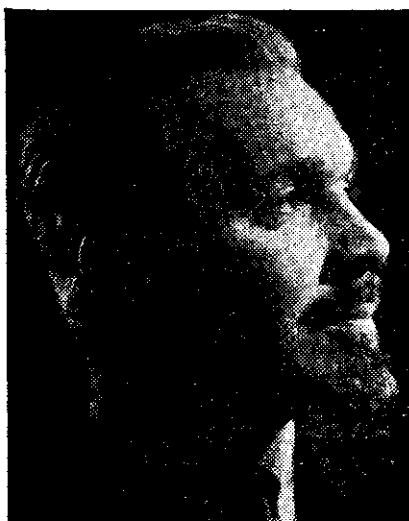
week of special spring programmes, and in celebrating the event something is offered for nearly everyone. The gentleman who writes annoyed letters to the paper about the National Orchestra may feel perturbed when he discovers there is a special "Spring" programme, but instead of writing another letter he can tune instead to "Blossom Time"—a popular musical. Those who rush away

turns out to be Shakespeare. Emlyn Williams, who in recent years scored a great success with his Dickens readings, has written many successful plays. Among them are the thriller *Night Must Fall*, the partly-autobiographical *The Corn in Green*, *The Light of Heart*, *Wind of Heaven* and *Trespass*. He is also a fine actor and a familiar figure to filmgoers, who saw him recently in the screen version of *The Deep Blue Sea*. On Monday evening William Austin's *Won't You Come In?* will also be a special spring edition, and on Tuesday (10.30 p.m.) 4YA will present "Spring Assignment"—impressions of Spring in New Zealand, mainly rural. This will also be heard from 3YA (8.15 p.m., September 14).

On Tuesday the National Orchestra plays a programme of Spring music. This programme contains Karl Goldmark's *Spring Overture*, "On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring" (Deliuss), Strauss's "Voices of Spring," and has Schumann's *Symphony No. 1* ("Spring") as the main work. This symphony was sketched out in four days soon after Schumann was married to Clara Wieck, and its first performance under Mendelssohn followed shortly afterwards. A work of freshness and beauty, it was inspired by a poem in which the poet calls on the spirit of the cloud to turn away,



NOELINE PRITCHARD
Spring comes to Radio Roadhouse



Spencer Digby photograph
ROY LEYWOOD plays Richard Burbage in "Spring, 1600"

OH BOK WHERE IS THY SPRING?

OH time of cakes and ale and pots of flesh and balm in Gilead!
Come let us write a sonnet, ode, or better still an Iliad.
When all the parks are blazing with narcissus and anemone,
And window boxes looking like the Garden of Gethsemane,
You can't deny it makes you want to sing.
When all around the countryside the sheep are getting motherly,
When people in the cities feel more sisterly and brotherly,
When Wellington experiences yet another southerly—
Sing loud hey nonny nonnies for the spring.

The heart leaps up in springtime like a rocket out of Woomera,
We wait for new potatoes and acquire a taste for kumara,
And down in the Antarctic doughty deeds are being done again,
As husky dogs and Englishmen go out in the midnight sun again,
Full of the hope that nature will be kind.
In every quarter acre rows of seeds are neatly sown again,
And radishes and silver beet and lettuce can be grown again,
And then I am reminded when the grass has to be mown again—
If spring comes is hay fever far behind?

—R.G.P.



In the afternoon a BBC programme "Songs of the Countryside" presents old ballads and ditties about Spring that were sung long ago in the towns and villages of the English West Country. Many of them are still remembered today, and they have been collected and arranged by Francis Collinson, who is well known for his work in tracing folk tunes. The producer of this programme, Desmond Hawkins, also a West Country man, provides a spoken introduction. Besides solo singers there are the voices of the men's section of the BBC West of England Singers, and the accompanying instruments include guitar, harp, oboe and percussion. Familiar songs will be "Foggy, Foggy Dew," "Waly, Waly," and there are others less well known, such as "The Vly be on the Turmut" and the "Horn Song of Weyhill Fair," an old drinking song (National Programme, 4.30 p.m.). To end the week's programmes there is "On Budding Boughs Come Birds," a studio programme of songs from Auckland (1YA, 9.15 p.m.).

And so the NZBS salutes Spring—and wishes all its listeners pleasant, lighthearted listening.