

SPRING OFFERING

NOW that the "year's pleasant king" (as Thomas Nashe once called the springtime) is returning to his throne, the NZBS is willingly offering such acclamation and rejoicing as befits a festival. Even if the rites of winter are still being performed on the now well-muddled fields, in other less trampled grounds the bulbs are flowing round the newly-calloused gardeners; and in the suburbs houseproud wives are beginning to push furniture and husbands around in the annual outbreak of spring-cleaning.

However, when the victims of spring's feverish activity collapse to rest or seek shelter from the not-yet-balmy breezes and the not-quite-departed showers, they need not lose Spring's cheerful atmosphere. The programmes for the next week, September 9-15, are positively blossoming with spring sessions in almost all departments, as well as a few extra-ordinary efforts for the occasion.

One of these is by that man of all trades, Bruce Mason. On the Wednesday night from the YAs, 3YZ and 4YZ, he will present his own seasonal salute with another intimate revue, *Rights of Spring*. The friends of Herr Professor Eusebius Apfel-Strudel will be pleased to hear that the on-the-spot diagnosis at his last lecture proved premature, and that the Professor recovered some 20 minutes later and is now in excellent health. Although he is extremely busy with his plans for the opening of his Academy of Phonetics, he was delighted to be asked to take part in the revue and has promised to deliver his "Ode to Spring." Mr Mason informs us that Brumasson, the French singer, has had to return to Paris, where he has a very full round of engagements. However, another distinguished visitor has arrived, the American musicologist Duke J. Mangel-Wurzell, who will give his musical impressions of spring. The official view will be taken by the Hon. Mark Hanniford, Minister of Weather and Seasonal Changes, who will tell listeners what changes may be expected to eventuate in the forthcoming months. One person who has already been affected by the season is Noddy, who has felt the sap rising even to his little wooden head, causing all sorts of complications. Several typical New Zealanders are also interviewed, and finally—so that everyone may have a fair go, Mr Mason introduces to the microphone a misanthropist who prefers to remain anonymous, and who tells us just what he thinks about the whole paraphernalia of the seasons.

Fortunately misanthropists do not write all the verse on spring, and from poems written in several centuries and countries a New Zealand poet has chosen a garland for spring for the YC link and the blossoms change with the hemispheres, but the poems all show the response to the changing seasons.

Poetry also forms the basis for the first serious spring music, when the YCs on Monday night will broadcast (at 7.30 p.m.) a recording of the Wellington Schola Cantorum, conducted by Stanley Oliver, singing *Songs of Springtime*, a

Next week Spring will be on as well as in the air. September 9-15 is this year's Spring Week in broadcasting and numerous programmes appropriate to the season have been prepared.

setting by the English composer E. J. Moeran of some Elizabethan poems. These are to be followed by the National Orchestra's own Spring Music programme conducted by James Robertson. The soloist here will be the Australian violinist Ronald Woodcock, in the Spring Concerto from the Four Seasons Concerti by Vivaldi. Other works to be heard are by Butterworth, Delius and Dvorak.

On Tuesday the YCs will present a recital of songs of spring sung by the soprano Anita Ritchie, with Margaret Nielsen at the piano, while in a lighter vein are the piano pieces and ballads about spring which the YA and 4YZ stations will play on Sunday at 8.15 p.m. On Sunday afternoon at 2.0 p.m. the YAs, 3YZ and 4YZ will present Schumann's Spring Symphony.

Two talks this week with a seasonal bias are *Festival of Spring*, a CBC programme on the history and folklore of the sugar maple (YAs, 3YZ and 4YZ, at 4.30 p.m. on Sunday afternoon). In this Asquith Thomson presents a picture of a country town in spring, and the comments of some of the inhabitants—a farmer, a crusty Scotsman, an old lady and a schoolteacher.

Since spring traditionally has a strong effect on the fancies of young men, it is not surprising that the week's new drama has romance as its theme, with comedy and intrigue in the develop-



N.P.S. photograph
E. J. MOERAN
Elizabethan spring songs



ment. On Monday night the YAs and 4YZ bring *Spring Meeting*, a gay comedy about a mad Irish family who breed racehorses and live in shabby splendour, with eccentric servants and antiquated plumbing. The eldest daughter succeeds in marrying a young vet. and the youngest captures a most presentable young man in spite of their irascible father. The YC play for the week is another tale of wealth and wiving, *The*

Beaux' Stratagem. In this Restoration comedy by George Farquhar, two impoverished gentlemen set out to snare wealthy wives, while two suitably endowed young ladies find country life and husbands exceedingly dull. Complications set in with the roguish activities of the innkeeper, but with the help of his fair daughter love conquers again. Roy Leywood produced both these plays for the NZBS.

Novello Musical from Auckland

SPRING fever and Asian 'flu have been competing on almost equal terms in the Auckland studios of the NZBS. These have been crowded by actors and actresses, the Auckland Radio Orchestra, the Minstrels' Choir, producers, soloists, technicians and programme officers, all of whom have been engaged on the large-scale production of the Ivor Novello musical play, *Glamorous Night*. Although there was some sickness in the cast, the production was finished on schedule. Adapted for radio and produced by Bernard Beeby, of Wellington, *Glamorous Night* will be broadcast by all YA stations at 7.30 p.m. on Saturday, September 14.

This is the fourth musical play produced by the NZBS in recent years, Mr Beeby told *The Listener*. The others were *Merrie England*, produced in Auckland in 1953, and *The Dark-Eyed Sailor* and *Blossom Time*, which were produced in Wellington. Like its fore-runners *Glamorous Night* differs from the original score because there are parts of the stage presentation which are

almost entirely visual. But Mr Beeby pointed out that the radio version does not lose as much impact on this account as one would imagine. In some ways radio offers more opportunities for effective presentation than the confined area of the stage. Changes of scene, for example, may be accomplished without pause, sound effects are often more realistic, and movement, in so far as it is represented by sounds, is almost unlimited.

In producing *Glamorous Night* Mr Beeby did not need to call upon his cast for a complete performance, or even a "dress" rehearsal, and the production of the play was spread over a week. The actors and actresses recorded their passages of dialogue in the daytime, and the orchestra, choir and soloists performed in the evening. The whole play was further subdivided into six sections to make the organisation of the large cast easier. Perhaps the trickiest part of the production rested with Mr Beeby's assistants, Roy Melford and Earle Rowell, who edited the tape recordings and pieced them together.

N.Z. LISTENER, SEPTEMBER 6, 1957.