

JUDGE'S COMMENTS

WHEN the final notes of Eric Coates's ballet suite, *The Jester at the Wedding*,

faded off the air at half-past eight one recent Wednesday evening, Will Hutchens, well-known music teacher and Festival judge, laid down his baton after nearly fifteen years as conductor of the 3YA Studio Orchestra.

"There have, of course, been many changes in that time," Mr. Hutchens told *The Listener* before he left for Australia a fortnight ago. "Over the years players have gone on to the ABC, the BBC and the Boyd Neel Orchestra, and about a dozen are members of the National Orchestra."

Twenty-five years as a judge at the annual Competitions Festivals in towns of the North and South Islands have given Will Hutchens many opportunities of comparing musical tastes and tendencies in the different centres. "The average competitor," he said, "is much the same, but certain characteristics of the individual places become apparent over the years—Dunedin's vocal talent is paralleled by the pianistic leadership of Christchurch, and both must bow to Napier when it comes to violin-playing."

Festival judging has taken Will Hutchens across the Tasman a number of times, and twice in recent years he

was chief choral and vocal judge at the City of Sydney Eisteddfod, where as many as 15,000 candidates from all over Australia compete.

The National Festivals, such as the Eisteddfod of Australia at Ballarat in 1947, with its recognised standing and big prize money—400 guineas for the Vocal Award, have always attracted the cream of Australian and New Zealand singers. From the Ballarat Festival many have sung their way to fame—in the early days Peter Dawson and Amy Castles, and more recently John Brownlee and New Zealand's Denis Dowling. The latter, Will Hutchens remembers, made his first competition appearance at an Oamaru Festival. "Incidentally," Mr. Hutchens added, "the number of fine singers that Australia produces is no accident—it is due to a climatic factor."

The Commonwealth has special claims on Will Hutchens. His wife, herself a church organist of note, is the daughter of a well-known organ-builder in Australia. His brother Frank (who, with Lindley Evans, presented a series of two-piano recitals here in 1946) is a senior professor at the Sydney Conservatorium.

For the next twelve months Will Hutchens is to conduct the Sydney North Shore Choral Society and Sym-



WILL HUTCHENS

AN EXTRA CONCERT

IT has now been found possible to arrange for the National Orchestra of the NZBS to appear publicly in Wellington during its tour with the guest conductor, Sir Bernard Heinze. The orchestra, under Sir Bernard, will give a concert in the Wellington Town Hall on Wednesday, June 6. This will follow a heavy week in Christchurch, and precede an even heavier programme—seven concerts in six days, six of them in Auckland and one in Cambridge—the week after.

An added attraction for concert-goers will be the appearance at this extra Wellington concert of the Christchurch pianist, Ernest Jenner. He will play the Bach Concerto in D Minor. The major work on the programme will be Symphony No. 1 in C Minor, by Brahms. The orchestra will also play the *Carneval Romain* Overture of Berlioz (as the opening item), and Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*.

This concert is additional to the series planned for Wellington this year on a subscription basis, but season ticket holders were given an opportunity of booking at subscription rates for a week before the opening of ordinary bookings. The concert will be broadcast by 2YC.

phony Orchestra. This is a joint organisation, but both sections—the choir of 60 and the orchestra of 40-50 members—operate separately as well as together.

Will Hutchens has studied the classics and loves them, but, he told *The Listener*, he is no musical snob. He realises there is much enjoyment to be had out of lighter works, and that a big part of the listening public look to such music for entertainment and relaxation. "Bach is, of course, part of every musician's Bible," he said, "but it is only one book—there are others."



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