

A Holiday Frolic from the ZBs

THERE will be plenty of fun this Christmas for ZB listeners, but pride of place in the programmes has been kept for "You're Welcome," an hour-long variety show written, produced and recorded in Auckland.

OVER the past few years it has been the cheerful custom of the Commercial stations to liven up their Christmas Day broadcasts with the best home-grown entertainment. Last year they provided a pantomime, *Dick Whittington*, peopled with frolicking announcers, clowning scriptwriters, and an orchestra that did unaccountable things—and *Whittington* will be returning again this holiday season to some of the YZ stations.

But for Christmas, 1951—and for the sake of variety—the ZBs have turned their hand to a fast-moving Variety Show. *You're Welcome*, as this year's frolic has been called, will last for a full hour and will be heard from the four ZB stations and 2ZA at 9.0 p.m. on December 25.

Like *Dick Whittington*, it is an entirely New Zealand-made production; written by Arthur E. Jones, produced by William Austin, with music under the direction of Oswald Cheesman, and recorded in 1ZB's Radio Theatre. But though it is a local show, it will be surprising if listeners do not catch echoes of other and older radio favourites. One echo seems to come all the way from the dear old *ITMA* days, and you can take it from somewhere else in the script that the good example set for radio writers by Messrs. Muir and Norden has been followed to advantage. New Zealand radio, too, doesn't escape burlesquing—one of the interludes will be about *Meeting Places* and *Going People*—films and film-stars take a pummelling, and even Mr. Coward does not escape parody.

To give the funny men time to regain breath, and to provide the variety that

is the spice of a good show there will be Oswald Cheesman and his Orchestra, the George Hopkins Clarinet Quartet, the Duplicats, Pat McMinn, Stewart Harvey, and John Thomson and Nancy Harrie at the piano. The comedy team contains equally familiar names—Bill Austin, Fred Pollitt (who was the Dame in last year's pantomime), Valerie Spencer, Peter Gwynne, and Pat Smyth. *You're Welcome* should, in fact, make welcome and relaxing listening on Christmas Day.

CARTOONS AND PANTOMIMES

THOUGH the Variety Revue is the ZB set-piece for Christmas Day, the Commercial stations have planned programmes that should help to keep everyone happy from breakfast to bedtime. Carols and Christmas parties for young and old who are unlucky enough to be in hospital will be heard from all ZB stations and 2ZA in the forenoon or early afternoon, with a variety of other special features. When the Children's Hour comes round, each station will present one of the new BBC radio cartoons. The story of Sammy, the lonely (and lazy) grey squirrel who stored no nuts but managed to survive, will be told to young 4ZB and 2ZA listeners, while Wellington children will hear *The Operatic Cat*, which explains why all kittens are warned not to sing in tune. More for adolescents is *The Pied Piper* (from 3ZB). This is a version of the old German legend, with a happy ending in which little Hans is cured of his lameness and leads the other children home again. From 1ZB there will be the story of that little spiv, *The Ant Who Didn't Like Work*.

Grown-ups will have a turn again at 6.30 p.m. with the new *Christmas Carol*



SPEAKING OF MR. COWARD, any connection between Noel and Christmas may be purely coincidental; but it's a good enough excuse for fun. Here William Austin and Valerie Spencer burlesque a scene from "Private Lives" for the ZB Christmas Variety Show

(see opposite page), and this will be followed at 7.15 with *Cinderella*, a pantomime for the family. This will be a BBC show from all but 4ZB, where the station is producing its own show, from its own script, with its own players.

A special Christmas edition of *Take It From Here*—a must session for

grown-ups—follows the pantomime at the four ZB stations, and at 8.45 there's a quarter-hour with Murdoch and Horne, who exchange presents, go caroling and meet a number of people, all of whom turn out to be Maurice Denham. Then comes *You're Welcome*, and to close the day each station has a BBC drama. And so, at 10.30, to bed!

Davis Cup Tennis, Cricket and League Tests

ALTHOUGH Test cricket, the Melbourne Cup, and other big sporting events take place within range of New Zealand fairly frequently, international tennis is one of those things that comes near only once—or at most, twice—in a blue moon. The last Davis Cup match to take place in New Zealand was played at Christmas, 1920, and the last to take place in Australia, in 1946. This year, though, the finals will again be held in Australia, when the U.S. challenges the Australian squad, the present holders, on December 26, 27 and 28.

Arrangements have been made for the ZB stations and 2ZA to broadcast a preview of

the contest at 9.30 p.m. on December 24. On December 26, 27 and 28, at the same time, the same stations will broadcast recorded excerpts from commentaries by the Australian Ted Harris (whose portrait appears at left), taken direct from the courts, together with reviews of plays. This will be in addition to the usual link summaries and reviews noted on the programme pages. Station 2YA will broadcast excerpts from the ABC's Davis Cup commentaries throughout each day, and other YA and YZ stations will give progress reports. Results will be broadcast in the 7.0 p.m. Sports summaries.

The first Davis Cup contest was played in August of 1900, between England and the U.S., at Longwood. The United States won 3—0. Dwight F. Davis himself played in both singles and doubles, and made a considerable contribution to the American victory. From then on the Davis Cup contests were something established in tennis. The only years when there were no contests were 1901, when the U.S. held the cup unchallenged, 1910, when there was no team willing to challenge Australasia, and the war years 1915-18 and

1940-45. Each year that the contest has been held has seen a progressively increasing international interest in the game.

Although tennis will bulk larger than usual in holiday sports broadcasts (the N.Z. championships start at Wellington on January 5), it will face strong competition from racing, with holiday meetings all over the place (Cup Day at Ellerslie is December 27), and cricket. Australia will meet West Indies at Adelaide on December 22 for the Third Test, which on present form may well decide the rubber; the Fourth Test begins at Melbourne on December 31, and there will be Plunket Shield games throughout the holidays. Score-boards, highlights and summaries will be heard from National and Commercial stations on each day of play. There will be news of the Rugby League team's games against France at Paris and Bordeaux (December 24, 31), and the Springboks' match against England (January 6). Nor will the sporting minorities be forgotten. There will be results of the Dominion chess championships at Napier (beginning December 27), North and South Island croquet championships (January 3), and of the North v. South Island softball game (January 5).

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