

For Children at Home and at School

THE process of educating a nation is carried on at many levels and by many means. Radio has always functioned as an educational device for adults as well as an entertainment medium, but its role as a strictly practical tool in the education of children is relatively new. *Broadcasts to Schools* is a programme that has been successfully conducted by the NZBS for some years, but this year marks the opening of a new venture—*Kindergarten of the Air*.

Every Monday morning throughout the school year *Kindergarten of the Air* will be broadcast by YA and YZ stations from 9.4 to 9.30 a.m. to children under five years of age who cannot attend kindergarten. Jean Combs, Supervisor of Schools Broadcasts and Children's Programmes, pointed out that although attendance at kindergarten was desirable, there were many children barred from doing so by the fact that they lived too far from such schools. These are the youngsters whom the new programme hopes to attract. Miss Combs, and Loma Jones, who will run the kindergarten, both emphasised that the feature is intended also for the mothers of such children. It has, for this reason, been carefully arranged to include activities in which the mother can help the child, and, in fact, this

side of the radio kindergarten is essential since, as Mrs. Jones explained, children rely strongly on observation of others for their knowledge of how to do something. Instruction by voice is often not enough. What the programme will offer is musical accompaniment to activities for the youngsters, stories to entertain them and lead them on to work of their own, as well as advice to the mothers from an experienced kindergarten supervisor. In Australia, where some of the earliest work in this field was done, Mrs. Jones watched their *Kindergarten of the Air* in progress and gained valuable knowledge to be applied to the venture in this country. An advisory council (comprising J. H. E. Schroder,

Assistant Director of the NZBS, as chairman; Miss I. Jamieson, executive representative of the Free Kindergarten Association of N.Z.; Miss M. Gallagher, Education Department Representative and Supervisor of

Pre-School Services; and Miss Combs) will direct the efforts of those responsible for the new educational programme. The variety of activities included in this feature is designed to overcome the difficulty of keeping small listeners interested for twenty-six minutes at a time. Mrs. Jones explained that she would be satisfied if each child found for itself some one thing in the programme at least which it wanted to hear. Although broadcast only once a week, much of the work of the radio kindergarten will, it is hoped, be carried on by the mothers during the remainder of the week, and for this reason suggestions of books, games and activities for the children are passed on.

Care has been taken in selection of songs and stories to incorporate seasonal and environmental features likely to attract the children's interest; about the time lambs are appearing on the farms, for instance, a story featuring lambs would probably be used and appropriate nursery rhymes taught. But the difficulties are numerous and those that have not yet been overcome will be met as they come up in this experimental venture by radio—*Kindergarten of the Air*, due for inauguration on Monday, March 10.



N.P.S. photographs

ABOVE: Rehearsing a programme in the new series, with (left to right), Loma Jones, Noel Keen (recording engineer), Iris Brown, and Jean Combs (Supervisor of Schools Broadcasts)

RIGHT: Loma Jones, in charge of the new "Kindergarten of the Air."



ceived by the students is an important one for the School Broadcasts staff and it affects their year-by-year schedule considerably. Requests for a nature study programme have resulted in the plan for a series of six talks on this subject. Student and teacher reaction to programmes is gathered by department officers who visit Wellington and Hutt Valley schools, and listen in with the class, later joining in discussion on the feature. Also, certain teachers throughout the country send in regular reports on the broadcasts. The publication of booklets to accompany the different series is an important part of *Broadcasts to Schools*, and the work done in this direction last year has been continued and expanded for the 1952 programmes. Films, too, play an important subsidiary role in the scheme, and co-operation between the Education Department, with its School Journals, and the NZBS, strengthen the effectiveness of this modern educational development.



N.P.S. photograph

"The publication of booklets has been continued and expanded for 1952"

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of the town; a precipice rises on one side, the Kawarau meets the Clutha on the other. This is the heart of Otago, its geographic centre.

"Central by train!" my friends had said, hands up in horror. "Don't do it."

But I did, and I enjoyed it. Tell the travel agent who tries to book you first-class that there isn't any: then pick a fine day and wear your old clothes, and if you're susceptible to landscape, you'll enjoy it, too.