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WELLINGTON, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1929.

Broadcast of Shakespearean Performance

YET another historic broadcast event by 2YA, Wellington, is announced to take place. On the evening of Friday, February 8, for the first time in New Zealand, scenes from Shakespeare, performed by a professional theatrical company, will be broadcast direct from the stage during the actual enactment before an audience. The broadcast by 2YA, Wellington, will be picked up by 3YA, Christchurch, which station will re-broadcast the performance. It is estimated that, making a reasonable allowance for the number of people listening in at each licensee's home, more than 80,000 people will hear this historical broadcast.

MANY thousand listeners throughout New Zealand will be interested in the news that the Radio Broadcasting Company have made arrangements with Mr. Allan Wilkie, C.B.E., the eminent actor-manager of the Allan Wilkie Shakespearean Company, to broadcast three scenes from the public performance of "The Merry Wives of Windsor," one of the most popular of Shakespeare's 37 plays. The programme of 2YA, Wellington, which has already been compiled for this evening, will be interrupted twice to cross over to the stage of the Grand Opera House, Wellington, where "The Merry Wives of Windsor" will be in progress of enactment by the Allan Wilkie Shakespearean Company.

At 8.35 p.m. (approximately) the delightful "letter-reading scene" by the "merry wives" will be picked up by the microphone and put on the air by 2YA, Wellington. Again at 9.50 p.m. (approximately) the microphone will lend its ear to the Garter Inn scene in which the roguish old Sir John Falstaff describes to Ford (disguised as one, Brook) his first experience when he was carried away in the buck-basket after wooing Mistress Ford. This will be followed immediately by the second adventure of Falstaff in his wooing of Mistress Ford.

THE three scenes to the broadcast are self-contained in a sense that they involve episodes which, though detached from the play for the purpose of broadcasting, are, nevertheless, sufficiently complete in themselves as to be readily understood and enjoyed.

Mr. Allan Wilkie will play the part of Sir John Falstaff—a role which he has so successfully interpreted as to be widely acclaimed by Press and public throughout



Mr. Allan Wilkie, whose Shakespearean performances are the first to be broadcast in the Dominion.

Australia and New Zealand. Miss Hunter-Watts, Mr. Wilkie's talented leading lady, will appear as Mistress Ford, a part she graces with inimitable skill. Miss Lorna Forbes will impersonate Mistress Page.

As Ford himself, and also disguised as Brook, Mr. Alexander Marsh, the gifted English actor who has lately joined Mr. Wilkie's company, gives a particularly fine performance.

"The Merry Wives of Windsor," which Warton describes as "the most complete specimen of Shakespeare's comic power," possesses the distinction of having been written by desire of a monarch, for it is stated that Queen Elizabeth expressly requested Shakespeare to write a play portraying Falstaff in love. Falstaff, it must be remembered, had been previously witnessed as a character in Shakespeare's "Henry the Fourth" where the old knight is represented as the boon-companion of Henry, Prince of Wales; a soldier, fat, witty, boastful, mendacious and sensual to a degree. The Falstaff of "Henry the Fourth" was, therefore, a fit subject for mirth when engaged in love with two ladies whose sole object in pretending to encourage his advances was to punish him for his insolent assurance. This is the Falstaff we laugh at in "The Merry Wives of Windsor." He is in love with both Mistress Ford and Mistress Page ("the merry wives") to each of whom he sends a letter with the same wording. The ladies pretend to encourage his suit only to submit him to most unenviable ordeals. Mrs. Ford's husband becomes needlessly and very furiously jealous of Falstaff, with whom he suspects his wife is seriously intriguing. It is in the Garter Inn scene that Ford appears in disguise as one, Master Brook, and in order to discover Falstaff's mendacity proposes a scheme to the old knight to test

—Continued on p. 2.