

The New Zealand Radio Record

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WELLINGTON, FRIDAY, AUGUST 23, 1929.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

LISTENERS throughout the Dominion are aware that various movements have been on foot in a number of centres for the provision of wireless in public institutions such as hospitals. Great credit is due to those residents in the various centres for the large amount of voluntary organisation that has been carried out to effect this purpose. In the case of Wellington Hospital, an ambitious scheme was formulated, which has had the effect of providing the greater part of the inmates of the institution with wireless equipment. A recent donation of £150 from the T. G. Macarthy Trust will carry that equipment on a further stage to perfection.

IN our last week's issue a brief account was given of the pleasure afforded by the installation of a wireless set in one of the orphanages in Dunedin. This was specially opened, as it were, by Big Brother Bill in a happy and bright ceremony. Stirred by this account Cousin George, who is associated with 2YA, and is keenly interested in the benefits of radio, particularly in so far as they relate to children, has written making the suggestion that the good example of Dunedin should be followed in Wellington, and an effort made to equip those orphanages of this city with wireless that are not so far provided for. This object commends itself to us, and we are prepared to give it not only some financial support, but to endorse it for the consideration of our readers and listeners. The recent exhibition in Wellington showed the hold that radio has upon the individual listener and the community in general. The 7000 people who visited that Radio Exhibition were in themselves an indication of the pleasure afforded by the radio service to the community. We have no doubt that amongst that large number, and also amongst those who were unable to attend, there are sufficient kind hearts who are able to spare such a donation that collectively will make it possible to equip one or more of the orphanages in the Wellington area. We, therefore, commend the appeal made by Cousin George to our readers, and invite contributions towards that object. These contributions may be forwarded in the first instance to ourselves. In determining which of the institutions requiring attention shall be first equipped, we propose to seek the guidance of the 2YA Children's Committee, provided that body will accept the responsibility. For the small sum of £15 it is possible, as Cousin George says, to install a crystal set with a one valve amplifier. Thanks to the proximity of 2YA and its high power this modest equipment could give satisfactory reception in any of the orphanages in the Wellington City and suburbs area. We feel sure that this movement with its modest aim will commend itself to our readers, and that very speedily at least some of the remaining orphanages will be equipped in the fashion desired.

DEFINITE pleasure will be afforded listeners in Christchurch in particular, and throughout the country in general, by the announcement that we make this week that, as from August 26, a dinner session will be introduced at 3YA. An announcement as to a like innovation at 1YA will follow next week, and it is also stated that a din-

ner session will be introduced at 4YA as from the opening of the new station. This prompt fulfilment of the promise made by Mr. Harris at the dinner to radio interests given by ourselves a fortnight ago will please all listeners and radio dealers. The innovation at 2YA proved wholly popular, and we believe contributed largely to the steady and satisfactory volume of trade which has been experienced in the Wellington centre over recent months. Other centres have done good business as well, but we feel sure that the expansion in service now promised will give just that extra fillip which will lead on to steady growth in the number of listeners. We congratulate the Company upon their enterprise, and listeners upon that reward to their patience which has at last come.

"Tales of Hoffmann"

Studio Production of Famous Opera

LISTENERS will no doubt have pleasant recollections of the last performance of the Wellington Orpheus Society, and will be pleased to hear that this talented combination will be heard again on Monday evening. The Society on this occasion will present Offenbach's masterpiece, "The Tales of Hoffmann." The opera is full of charming melody. The famous and ever-haunting "Barcarolle" is well known, as also is the "Doll Song" in a lesser degree, but apart from these numbers, there is the "Mirror Song," sung by Dapertutto; "Dove that I Cherish," sung by Antonia in the third tale; the "Buffo" aria, sung by Coppellius; and a host of their always popular songs and concerted pieces.

"The Doll Song" is a beautiful waltz air. Alas, suddenly the spring runs down and the automaton has to be wound up. (One hears the mechanical noise.) At once the voice is again brilliant, with delightful vocal gymnastics. Little wonder the susceptible poet falls in love.

"Th. Barcarolle," as its title indicates, is a boating song, and the rhythm lends itself to the movement of a swaying gondola. Dreamy and melancholy, the music suggests the still canals of Venice on a moonlight night when lovers drift over those romantic waters.

The Orpheus Society has been fortunate in its choice of soloists, among whom are:—

Mr. Claude Batten
Mr. J. B. Pearson.
Mrs. Amy Woodward
Miss Jeanette Briggs
Miss Gretta Stark

Miss Eileen Higgins
Mr. Charles Edwards
Mr. Ray Kemp
Mr. Dan Foley

The conductor is Mr. Harrison Cook. The Society's very efficient chorus can be expected to give a good account of itself. Miss Hazel Rowe and Mr. H. Brusey will accompany at separate pianos.

Synopsis of the Opera.

JACQUES OFFENBACH was the son of a German-Jewish cantor. He began his career as a violoncello player, and in 1833 came to Paris when seventeen years of age. In time he became the proprietor of a theatre of his own, which he named "Les Bouffes Parisiens." All Europe came to laugh and have their ears tickled by the one and only Offenbach.

Hoffmann is a poet who has been unfortunate in his loves. In turn he has given his heart to a pink and white doll, a courtesan, and a silver-voiced singer. The first comes to pieces, the second laughs and leaves him, the third sings herself to death to please him.

The scene of the prologue is a students' tavern in Nuremberg, where the poet is pleased to boast of these affairs, and the three incidents are pictured in the following three acts, an epilogue ending the play. The evil genius who appears in three different guises, as Coppellius, Dapertutto, and Miracle, is the cause of Hoffmann's disappointment in each case.

Act I introduces us to Olympia, a life-sized and wonderful mechanical doll. She talks and walks and sings. A magic pair of spectacles is given to Hoffmann by Coppellius in order to deepen the illusion. Hoffmann loses his heart, and will not believe that she is not flesh and blood, until the deception is exposed by the doll being broken.

Act II carries us to Venice and the Grand Canal in moonlight. The Lady Giulietta carelessly casts her eyes on the poet. He boasts that he is proof against her wiles, and promptly loses his heart and head. So much so that, thinking to win the lady for himself, he challenges her elderly protector, Schlemil, and kills him, only to find that this suited Giulietta well, as she had another lover waiting for her. Hoffmann sees them floating away in a gondola, while Dapertutto gloats over the situation.

Act III.—Living quietly in the country, trying to recover from a long-lingering complaint, we find the beautiful Antonia of the silver voice. At the risk of death she has been forbidden to sing. To her comes Hoffmann, and as usual falls in love. Urged on by the evil Miracle, she sings. It is a dove, not a swan song, but it is her last. She dies in Hoffmann's arms.

The epilogue tells us that Hoffmann will in future confine himself to wine and song. The students fill their goblets to the brim. The curtain falls upon an uproarious carousal.