

Radio Plays

A New Feature

DESPITE the tremendous difficulties that beset the paths of both producer and actors, the radio play is one of the most entertaining and attractive items of present-day wireless programmes.

It has for its prototype the initial efforts of the Middle Ages to produce a "story of life." Performances took place in broad daylight in an open-air theatre, and the audiences were called upon to use their imaginative powers to the fullest extent, for the only means to create atmosphere in those days were by the use of placards and descriptive prologues.

Likewise with the wireless play of to-day. When one considers the numerous and overwhelming advantages possessed by a theatre play or musical comedy over the radio play, one is astounded at the fascinating appeal that the latter makes to the listener. Setting, atmosphere, personality of actors and actresses, facial expression, all these are totally lacking "over the air," and yet, with the sole aid of voice and voice inflection, a few sound effects, and perhaps a background of music, the broadcast play is certainly a great success. Although critics have claimed that the radio play is a poor substitute for the theatre, the two are really not comparable, as the former has now definitely produced its own art form, and is in effect a separate entity.

The most important qualities that constitute a good radio play are three in number, i.e., witty or forceful dialogue, strong and well-defined characterisations, and what is known as good "voice personality." Of these, dialogue plays the most important part, as, unlike the theatre, no other compensations are present to conceal bad writing.

All the peculiar conditions of studio plays are being gradually overcome and a wider and more ambitious prospect presents itself to the radio dramatist. Radio plays are now not only adapted from stage plays, but very frequently are written specially for broadcasting, and the new avenues opened up in the realms of drama by the development of this fascinating departure should engage the attentions of all playwrights.

Among those plays recently presented by New Zealand stations, "Galapagos," as one of the finest entertainments ever broadcast, was a complete success. It is based on a story similar to Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner," and was so popular that numerous requests were received for its repetition. These were acceded to, and ultimately all the YA stations presented it. A more frequent presentation of similar radio plays would undoubtedly be universally appreciated.

Have you procured your copy of

"N.Z. Radio Listener's Guide?"

Dealers and Booksellers 2/6; Posted 2/9—P.O. Box 1032, Wellington.

Available Everywhere.



MRS. J. PARRY,
mezzo-soprano, popular at 1YA.
—S. P. Andrew, photo.



MRS. NELLIE WHITWORTH,
a mezzo-contralto soloist from 3YA.
—Steffano Webb, photo.



An interesting photograph taken at Eden Park on the occasion of the Hockey Test Match for the Manning Cup between Australia and New Zealand. On the left is Mr. W. J. Meredith, the regular football announcer at 1YA, and on the right is Mr. Arthur Playle, Chairman of the Auckland Hockey Association, who described the hockey match on that date.



MR. CLARENCE PAINE,
Elocutionist, formerly a 4YA performer, but who now appears at 1YA.
—S. P. Andrew, photo.



MR. ERIC MAXWELL,
A young and brilliant solo pianist, who has delighted Auckland listeners.
—S. P. Andrew, photo.

An Appeal from Australia

A REQUEST has been read from New South Wales by 2YA for a supply of a new species of potatoe which was described in a recent talk by Mr. Nicholls, of the Hutt Valley Horticultural Society. The Australian writer adds: "I must congratulate you on the good programmes we get regularly from Wellington."

To Increase Production

Impressive Facts About Topdressing

ONE of the most valuable of the lectures given from 3YA for primary producers was that on "The Case for Topdressing in Canterbury," by Mr. A. Y. Montgomery, broadcast last week. This lecture went right to the heart of the subject, and emphatically proved to all primary producers the desirability, in their own and the national interest, of adequately topdressing their pasture land, to replace the mineral content removed by steady grazing. Mr. Montgomery quoted these figures, which should remain fixed in the memory of every farmer as invaluable proof of the need for adequate pasture treatment. There has been removed from the pasture lands of New Zealand in the last 20 years, in the aggregates of beef, lamb, and sheep exported from the country, phosphate equal to 536,440 tons of 44/46 per cent. superphosphate. In recent years the rate of topdressing has steadily increased, and now replacement is taking the place to some extent of the original fertility so removed. Last year, however, 211,000 tons of superphosphate only were used, so that much remains yet to be done, particularly in relation to sheep country, as the bulk of the phosphate now used is applied to dairy lands. In Canterbury only 3710 tons of superphosphate were used in that season. Although two and a quarter million acres are now topdressed annually in New Zealand, this represents only 13 per cent. of the sown grasslands of the Dominion. Much remains, therefore, to be done to increase the carrying capacity of the country.

Every farmer who consistently applies topdressing finds that it pays, and pays handsomely. The reason is that it encourages adequate growth of the grass and clover, improves the feeding quality of pasture, and so maintains stock in health and vigour. The recommendations made by Mr. Montgomery for detailed use of farmers in Canterbury (and with adaptations elsewhere), are as follows:—

"One ton of lime every four years, and 2-3 cwt. of super per year, applied in April-May, are suitable quantities to try out.

One cwt. sulphate of ammonia applied in July of this year has given splendid August-September feeding on good rye pastures.

Nitrogenous topdressing is particularly valuable in extending the grazing period, and in giving early spring feed.