

Some Lit'ry Gents Discuss a Christmas Annual

Ideas that were Born on a Winter's Evening

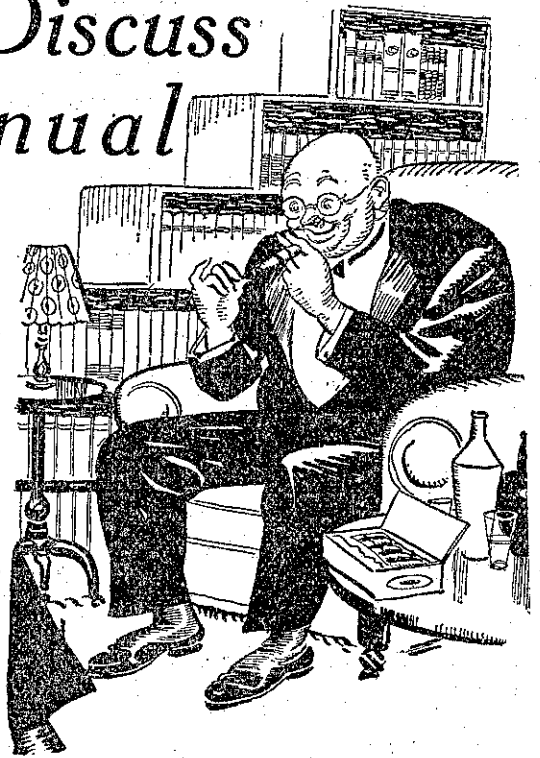
By the Editor of the "Radio Record Annual."

IT really began last May, when some "lit'ry gents" gathered round a cheerful fire and, over their pipes and occasional glasses of toddy, discussed the hows and whyfors of this year's "Radio Record Annual." At that time, with a southerly wind singing its song of winter in the eaves, the season of Christmas annuals seemed very remote. However, we pushed ahead with our plans and by the time we were ready to bid our host good night the keel of this year's annual had been well and truly laid.

The next morning, in the less companionable atmosphere of clicking typewriters and filing cabinets, the plan was advanced a step farther, and letters were dispatched in all directions—letters asking for literary contributions, letters suggesting photographs and illustrations. By the beginning of June the plan of the paper was almost complete, and assistance had been promised from many of New Zealand's leading writers. The next question was one of paper and printing, and it was decided to put it on the best paper that could be procured in New Zealand—the sort of paper on which the "Bystander" and "The Tatler," England's finest periodicals, are printed. The finished product has demonstrated the undoubted wisdom of this move.

In photographs we decided to give our readers something new in the way of illustrations—something that would make them turn back the page for a second admiring glance. And the photographers got the idea and some really excellent photographs started to flow in. Two pages were given over to photographs of girls who are typical New Zealand beauties—the sort of photos that will convince overseas readers that we're a little beyond the whare-and-Maori-mat stage. Some excellent night scenes were secured—pictures which showed how really attractive our cities can be after dark. One in particular took our eye, Lambton Quay, Wellington, with the big bulk of the Quay's baby skyscrapers looming up out of the darkness. We used it along with several others.

The cover design made us think hard. Idea after idea was rejected. There didn't seem to be a photographer or an artist who could interpret quite what we were looking for—a design that would symbolise radio to-day, reaching upward, outward—a thing of tremendous power and vitality. And then a Wellington photographer brought us the very thing. Just a picture of one of the 2YA masts on Mount Victoria, but it stretched upward into the sky like a symbol. It was



a beautiful piece of photography. And so the problem of the cover design was solved.

As to radio interest, the men who "know things" at the New Zealand Broadcasting Board were approached for articles. They demurred a little (told the editor he was a pesky nuisance, in fact), but one and all did his duty like a man. The result was that we were able to add a further collection of fine stories—stories that were informative on radio matters, but in light and cheerful vein—to those we already had in hand.

Then developed the central idea. Why not a series of chatty sketches on various radio personalities—men who are well known over the air? Appointments were made for interviews in various parts of the country, and very soon a set of biographies on such men as Dr. Guy Scholefield, Professor Maxwell Walker, Professor James Shelley, Mr. Leicester Webb, Mr. J. T. Paul, "Uncle Scrim" and Major-General Merlin were ready for the printer. Professor G. W. von Zedlitz agreed to write an article, so did Lady Statham and Major-General Sir George Richardson. Stories from such well-known people as Mona Tracy, Robin Hyde, Marten Stuart (which is the nom de plume of a writer who has just had a novel published in London), Margaret Macpherson and Karl Atkinson were already in type.

One of our bright young men hied himself off to Hawke's Bay in a motor truck, which was travelling through the night from Wellington to Napier. He went on to Taupo, Rotorua and Auckland, collecting stories en route, and the results of his "bag" went into the Annual, too. The "Radio Record's" social reporter dug out some extra special beauty hints, and another member of the staff, who knows something about interior decorating, came to light with an interesting yarn.

To-day a finished copy of the "Radio Record Annual" lies on my desk. "There's nothing to do now but to sell it," says the publisher, "and that's going to be easy. She's a really good job—all the agents I've shown it to like it. It's full of 'meat' and the public will like it." (Will you let me know what you think?)