

Hot Shots

THE Broadcasting Board is considering the purchase of several excellently-recorded fairy tales for the children's sessions.

AN announcer at a YA station was heard to remark the other night that "wet rain would be experienced."

THE Italian cruiser arrived in Wellington on a day that rivalled Italy for warmth. Saturday was the hottest day this season.

WORK on Dunedin's new Post Office is progressing, and the final shipment of structural steel from England is expected at the end of this month.

"TANNHAUSER" is to be broadcast from the Apollo Theatre, Melbourne, by 3LO at 10 p.m. (New Zealand time) on Thursday of this week.

A SOUTHERN paper generously suggested the other week that "some of the programmes have been so good lately that the Broadcasting Board must have turned over a new leaf!"

BICYCLE thieving is rampant in Auckland at present. A man who left his machine outside 1YA last week and was inside only two minutes returned to find it had disappeared.

THEY are certainly "matey" up Auckland way. An hour or so after the new navy sloop Leith arrived from England, one or two bluejackets from the ship were seen arm-in-arm with Auckland girls.

A DRAMA that might have ended in tragedy was enacted on top of the 150ft. sheerlegs at the Auckland Navy Base last week, when Captain C. Madigan fainted and was saved by two companions.

HILDA KIRKLEY, well known in repertory and art circles in Wellington, has announced her engagement to a London barrister. Miss Kirkley is a step-daughter of Mr. W. S. Wauchop, for some time producer for the Wellington Repertory Theatre.

A WELLINGTON woman golfer recently attempted to drive through some men playing a few yards ahead, and her ball caught one of the men in the eye, so severely injuring that organ that it had to be removed. The woman continued her game.

Editorial Notes

Wellington, Friday, November 23, 1934.

BALANCED PROGRAMMES

IT is not generally known how much care goes into the purely mechanical task of balancing wireless programmes. There are so many sections of the public, each of which wants something different, and has the right to be satisfied each night, that it would be futile to take anything like a broad basis of distinction. It would not do, for example, to relay only news on Monday, only chamber music on Tuesday, gramophone records on Wednesday, wireless plays on Thursday, Jazz on Friday and a children's session on Saturday, reserving Sunday for devotional exercises. It is all very well to feature one aspect each night, just as the newspaper often does, but it must not be to the exclusion of the rights of listeners whose tastes lie in other directions. For that reason a schematic programme plan for New Zealand National Stations is prepared every year by the Broadcasting Board. It is the result of a good deal of thought, and the ingredients are adjusted as nicely as those which go to make up a doctor's prescription. Criticism of the balance is frequent, and is welcomed as an indication of the trend of popular taste—although frequently individual criticisms cancel out. When, in the early stages of broadcasting, criticism was infrequent and the public attitude was simply one of wonder at the technical side of wireless, the Board deliberately invited comment, and sent questionnaires to listeners. Happily that is no longer necessary; letters of condemnation and letters of appreciation are received by every mail, and there is no need to call for either. But the programmes are what the public demands. An individual can size up his taste as a listener against that of the average New Zealander simply by listening to the week's programmes and deciding how far he would alter the balance to make it accord with his own ideas.

Now that New Zealand is equipped with stations which have been constructed to last some years, the Board is looking forward to being able to release funds accruing in the future in order to better the quality of the programmes. It remains to be seen how far this alteration in quality will affect the proportions of each ingredient demanded by the public.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

IN the editorial note above we refer to the time when the Broadcasting Board was new in office and criticism of programmes was invited. The "Radio Times" (London) comments on this necessity for keeping listeners in touch with the broadcasting authorities. The article says:

The fact is that this lack of direct response from the audience is a disadvantage shared by nearly all those who are appealing to large masses of people in the modern world. The box-office is no sure criterion, otherwise every film and every play produced by commercial managements would be a financial success. One play succeeds, but it gives no recipe for success; the next, cut to the same model, may as easily fail. The box-office registers results; it cannot explain how they are obtained.

With 6,000,000 license-holders, British broadcasting is appealing to a public far greater than that of a newspaper, more diverse than that of a film. There is no specialised public for broadcasting; it cuts across all classes, transcends all boundaries of habit and income, country and town. You can no more use the measuring-tape on such an audience than you can predict a race result from the book of form.

The B.B.C. has its sources of guidance, as it has always had. Letters from listeners; well-informed comment in the Press; the experiences of its staff (there are many hundreds of them, and they have contacts in every walk of life). In the last resort there is the growth of wireless licenses as a final vote. But the best safeguard for the quality of broadcasting lies in the broadcasters themselves. The only safe policy for a broadcasting corporation is the policy that the B.B.C. has always striven to carry out, and it is to make everything that is broadcast the best of its kind.

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NO definite date has yet been fixed for the opening of the new 1YA.

NEW PLYMOUTH is to have a State Theatre opening in the New Year.

SEEN in Hawke's Bay recently; bath taken from the bathroom into the backyard for the purpose of scalding a pig.

"DAMAGED LIVES," the "film" that everyone should see," seems more a lesson in how not to speak than in sex. Some of the scenes are pathetic in their absurdity.

CHURISTCHURCH radio license figures are on the up and up. Last month there was an increase of 349, making a total for the southern city of 15,649.

"JOURNALESE," the book about New Zealand journalists, politicians, faith-healers and artists, and written by Robin Hyde, of Auckland, is now on the market.

THE story is told in "Journallese" of Dame Clara Butt's visit to Wellington. As she stepped on to the stage, a voice in the gods said: "What a lively tart!" Dame Clara joined in the general mirth.

THE scaffolding is now almost removed from the Town Hall, Wellington. The building, despite its lack of tower and portico, looks impressive in its coat of cream paint.

HUNDREDS of people gathered outside the Hotel St. George, Wellington, last Saturday evening to watch the arrival of guests at the Italian Consul's reception.

NOW that summer has returned cricket teams are being formed at some of the Otago relief camps, equipment being sent to them from town.

IT looks as if the "war will be on" when the three theatres now being built in Christchurch open early next year. This will mean 13 theatres within a few yards of Cathedral Square.

PRINCESS YOUSOUPOFF, who collected staggering damages from the M.G.M. film company for alleged defamation of character in the film "Rasputin and the Empress," threw a big party at the conclusion of the case and invited the film members!