



ROYALTY, ECONOMICS AND THE STAGE.—On the left is Dr. J. B. Condliffe, who is attached to the Economic Secretariat of the League of Nations at Geneva. Dr. Condliffe is a brilliant New Zealander who has spoken from the national stations on several occasions in the past month. In the centre is his Majesty the King, whose Empire broadcast from Sandringham has this week given joy to millions of British subjects in every corner of the earth. On the right is Miss Romola Hansen, the talented singer and actress, whose voice has been heard over the air in broadcasts of "The Merry Widow," "Wildflower," "Florodora" and "The Arcadians."

# 1934—Twelve Months'

IT is the fashion at about this time of the year to look back on the year's achievements, and perhaps to make resolutions for next year. It is certain that radio can stand this sort of examination better than many organisations, for in 1934 radio in New Zealand has gone ahead even more rapidly than in past years. New transmitters at Christchurch and Auckland have given listeners in many parts of the country a choice of three or even four programmes every evening, and have made an immense difference to listeners in those districts where reception had been poor. Perhaps with these improvements on the technical side, one is apt to forget the great advance which has been made in the entertainment department as well. That there is still room for improvement no reasonable person would deny for a moment, and when the programme for alterations to the main stations in the four centres is completed, and the board has more money available, listeners will look forward to another advance in this direction.

In the early part of 1934, the Broadcasting Board was fortunate in being able to arrange a series of broadcasts of performances by the J. C. Williamson Comic Opera Company, which toured the Dominion, presenting several old favourites—"The Merry Widow," "Katinka," "Wildflower," and "Florodora." An excellent cast was engaged in these productions, and the broadcasts were some of the most popular ever presented in New Zealand, one being given in each centre. Another musical comedy broadcast that proved very successful was the relay by 3YA of a performance of "Les Cloches de Corneville," by the Christchurch Amateur Operatic Society.

A notable feature of the year's work was the fact that the Broadcasting Board branched out on several occasions as an entrepreneur. On the visits of Senia Chostiakoff and Madame Elsa Stralia to the various centres, the board arranged celebrity concerts, which proved very successful. Probably the most memorable was the second of these concerts presented in Wellington—the performers included Madame Elsa Stralia, the famous Australian soprano; Senia Chostiakoff, the Russian tenor; Andersen Tyrer, who has been described as "England's finest pianist"; his wife, Madame Nanette de Lornay, who is well known as a violinist in Europe; the Wellington Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Mr. Leon de Mauny, and the massed Wellington choirs, of over 500 voices. The guest conductor for the evening was Mr. Andersen Tyrer. A finer selection of artists could hardly have been obtained in one concert

anywhere in the world, and the evening will be remembered for a long time by Wellington music-lovers. In addition to these public performances, Madame Stralia and M. Chostiakoff toured all the YA stations, giving many studio recitals, and they were received with enthusiasm by listeners at all stations; the board was fortunate also in being able to arrange for M. Paul Vinogradoff, the eminent Russian pianist, who is now a resident of Wellington, to tour with Chostiakoff.

Other artists engaged by the board for tours of the New Zealand stations included Barend Harris, the Australian bass-baritone, who specialised in Hebrew folk melodies. This artist was already known to many New Zealand listeners for his recitals from the Australian stations, and his singing was much appreciated. Madame Margherita Zelanda, New Zealand's own soprano, was also able to make a brief tour of the main stations, though it was necessarily hurried owing to her long list of engagements in Australia.

Quite a number of famous pianists were heard on the air during the year; besides Paul Vinogradoff there were Mr. Laurence Godfrey Smith, a well known Australian musician, Mr. Andersen Tyrer, and Mr. Gordon Bryan, who was in New Zealand as examiner for the Associated Boards of the Royal Schools of Music, but found time to give a series of recitals from all the national stations. An attempt has also been made to arrange for a tour by Percy Grainger, the famous Australian pianist-composer, but his engagement list is full for many months ahead, so nothing definite has been decided. At present tours of the national stations are in progress by three other famous artists whom the Broadcasting Board has imported—Madame Goossens-Viceroy, a Belgian dramatic soprano of exceptional ability; Mr. Raymond Beatty, the Australian bass-cantante, and Mr. J. Alexander Browne, the Australian baritone who came to New Zealand as assisting artist with Philip Hargrave, the boy-pianist, and has remained under contract to the Broadcasting Board. It seems that these artists will prove fully as popular as others whom the board has previously presented.

During the year the presentation of the theme and continuity type of programmes improved considerably, both in arrangement and in the engagement of suitable narrators. These programmes have become very popular with listeners, and, though there has been room for improvement in the selection of musical numbers, and in