

WELLINGTON NOTES

Big Farewell to Owen Pritchard

Final Community Sing to Popular Programme Organiser—Unique Dual Recording by Tauber—Listeners and Their Musical Palates—Maori Dancer's Part in Theme Programme.

THE biggest laugh at the community sing to farewell Mr. Owen Pritchard last Wednesday, was raised by a letter which ran:—

"Dearest Owen,—I am so sorry you are leaving us and I am sure I don't know what we are going to do without you. Best wishes to Mrs. Pritchard and yourself. I once wrote to you and said I would like to send you five pounds—3lbs. of rice and 2lbs. of treacle." There were shrieks of delighted laughter from the audience when the five pounds of rice and treacle were held up. "However," continued the writer, "although there is no sub. in the letter I put something in the box at the door."

THE most striking tribute to Mr. Pritchard as song leader was that the Town Hall was packed to capacity, notwithstanding the intense heat. Frank Cooze, the New Zealand composer wrote humorous verses which were sung by Mr. Will Mason and Mr. Herbert F. Wood, and many letters and other verses from Mr. Pritchard's admirers were read out. After thanking Mr. Pritchard for the great interest and help which he had given to the community singing, the Mayor, Mr. T. C. A. Hislop, presented Mr. and Mrs. Pritchard with a beautiful clock with full Westminster chimes. In the audience was a visitor from Bathurst, New South Wales, who has for some considerable time been an enthusiastic Australian listener-in to Mr. Pritchard's singing. As a result of this farewell community sing the sum of £21/15/10 will be added to the Mayor's relief fund.

RICHARD TAUBER was heard singing a duet with himself. "I Would That My Life Might Blossom" (Mendelssohn), from 2YA on Wednesday, February 6. This delightful recording was made by one part being recorded in the ordinary way then the singer listened to that with earphones when singing the second part in order to keep both in time and tune. The two recordings were then mixed and the final composite recording completed.

"I STRONGLY suspect that the underlying trouble with those people who are inclined to find fault with radio programmes lies with the listeners themselves," said Mr. Stanley Oliver, conductor of the Royal Wellington Choral Union during a recent interview. "Listeners," he continued, "should try and exercise the same discretion in their listening as they do in their concert-going or in choosing a meal from an exhaustive menu. You cannot eat everything that is provided—you simply follow the dictates of your palate and choose such dishes as are to your liking. That is the only sensible and reasonable way of listening—look over the programme and listen-in only to what you fancy will

entertain you. I might add that, glancing through the programmes there is seldom a time between 8 p.m. and 10 p.m. when I cannot, at one station or another, renew my acquaintance with some fine standard work, or hear some new work well worth hearing, which I would not otherwise have the opportunity of hearing."

A TALENTED, but very modest, Maori maiden, Miss Miriama Heketa, was the narrator of the theme programme, "The Great Love Story of Tutanekai and Hinemoa," which came from 2YA on February 5. Miss He-



keta is Mr. Joe Knowsley's assistant at his school of dancing in Wellington, where she has been training for ten years. She has won two championships and overseas dancers visiting New Zealand who see her dancing declare that her talent is wasted in such a small country as this. There is talk of Miss Heketa's going to Australia in June for her degrees and later it is probable that she will go farther afield.

THIS Maori girl was one of the queens at a recent Queen carnival held in the city. She also belongs to the representative Maori troupe in Wellington. Miss Heketa possesses great charm and the inborn rhythm which is a characteristic of the Maoris is a great asset in her singing and dancing. It is remarkable that a native girl should be able to adapt herself to the artificial movements of ballet, which are its peculiar charm. Although other Maoris might possibly have inborn talents equal to those of Miss Heketa, they could not be as outstanding unless they exerted themselves to put in as much strenuous study as this artist, which is undoubtedly the secret of her success.

THOUGH there is unfortunately little hope of anything as startling as

last year's prices being announced, farmers all over New Zealand will be listening eagerly to 2YA on Wednesday morning, February 13, at 9 o'clock, when the proceedings at the second Wellington wool sale of the season will be broadcast. Prices seem to have been stabilised at recent sales, and it seems doubtful whether any fireworks can be expected next Wednesday, but farmers will no doubt be anxious to hear for themselves how the sale is going.

A TIMELY RECORD

Victorian Music Makers

(By Bolton Woods).

UNDER the title of "Music Makers of the Sunny South," Gladys Rhys Davies has assembled in book form a "General Survey of Music and Musicians in Victoria." Our copy from Robertson and Mullens, Ltd., Melbourne, is excellent value at half-a-crown. This timely record fittingly coincides with the 1934 Melbourne Centenary, and the compiler approached her task with enthusiasm and efficiency. Within the compass of this little book we have a veritable "Who's Who?" a "Who Was Who?" and a "What's What?" of Victorian music and musicians. The data is attractively grouped, and the historical section makes interesting reading.

Prima donnas from Anna, the runaway wife of Sir Henry Bishop, down to Melba, Austral and others, composers, conductors, singers and instrumentalists, all find a place and the personnel of various colleges of music are treated with engaging interest. Churches, societies, orchestras and musical clubs of various kinds receive attention, and, but for one or two slips, the work is a dependable one.

Suggested errata might make reference to Frances Alda (not Alder), a native of Christchurch, New Zealand, not Melbourne, by the way. Her original name was Davies. An important omission is the name of Claude M. Haydon, native of South Yarra, Melbourne, a composer of much merit, residing in Wellington. The statement that the British Music Society has closed down is due for qualification. It was only the head office that put up the shutters. All the branches throughout Britain and the Empire are flourishing.

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