

AUCKLAND NOTES.

Noise Effects in Drama "Cement"

Studio Staff and Producer Take Pains to Achieve Realism—Short Wave Reception at 1YA Efficient—English Pianiste's Premiere—1YX Change-over.

IT is no wonder that the futuristic drama "Cement" by Maurice Hay, which was recently performed over 1YA by the J. M. Clarke Dramatic Players, proved so successful and was enjoyed so much by listeners. There was a cast of 14 players, and the drama was excellently produced. Listeners have no idea how much trouble the officials of 1YA and the producer went to in order to make the unusual play the success it was. For instance, 38 different effects were employed in the large studio. These included many glass frames which were broken, a series of pitched electric bells, huge slabs of concrete weighing 1cwt. each, a specially constructed gadget for making a noise to resemble the squeaking of motor-car brakes, whistles galore, a big roll of linoleum to portray the bumping of a motor-car, a washing

tub full of water to make a crash of a motor-car into a stream, a set of tympani and a bass drum, and numerous other effects which the staff intend to keep to themselves. It was also necessary to run a microphone to the front door of 1YA to pick up the noise of the starting of a motor-car engine. The effects in the studio had to synchronise with recorded effects used, so accurate timing had to be carried out. In fact, synchronisation was everything for the success of the play, and the staff and producer deserve great credit for the fine work they put into the play. Five rehearsals for effects alone were held in the studio beforehand.

THE suggestion made by an Auckland radio writer last week that 16 or 20-valve short-wave receivers, together with special aerial systems, should be used by the Broadcasting Board to receive the Empire short-wave station implies a criticism of the Broadcasting Board which is not in any way justified. The writer is apparently not aware that the best short-wave receivers on the market to-day do not employ more than nine valves at the most. As far as quality is concerned no more than seven valves are used. The relay receivers at present in use by the board compare more than favourably with the best commercial receivers available overseas. Regarding the special aerial system he mentions, it is interesting to note that the aerial system in use at the Post and Telegraph Department's station at Brown's Bay was located there because the area was considered by experts to be the most suitable around Auckland for shortwave reception. In the circumstances it is hard to see how the Broadcasting Board can do more than it is doing.

THE eminent English pianist, Mrs. Hester Stansfeld Prior, who has been specially engaged by the Broadcasting Board, will give her first recital from 1YA on Wednesday next at 8.38 p.m. She will play Schubert's famous "Brandenburg Concerto," and will be assisted by strings and flute. It is interesting to note that Mrs. Stansfeld Prior is one of the very few women members of the Royal Philharmonic Society, London. She is not only a pianiste of note, but a lecturer who has spoken in London for the London University Extension.

A SMART bit of work was carried out by the technical staff of 1YA on Wednesday night of last week, when the auxiliary station, 1YX, was moved from the top of Lewis Eady's building in Queen Street to new quarters specially made available in the new 1YA studio building in Shortland Street. After the station closed at 10 o'clock, the staff set to work to dismantle the transmitter, while others began to pack up the studio fittings.

Working furiously throughout the night, everything was put together again by 6 a.m. on Thursday, and at that hour the first test transmission was carried out, the station being on the air at 5 o'clock the same evening as usual. With an improved aerial erected on a building where there is far less absorption than was the case with the Lewis Eady building, 1YX's transmission has been greatly improved.

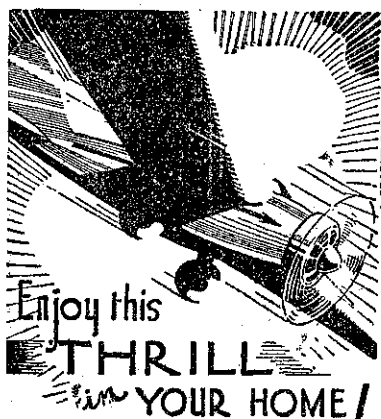
IT is Auckland's turn next Sunday night to have opera. At 8.30 p.m. 1YA will present the complete recorded version of Puccini's "La Tosca," which was recorded during an actual performance of this great opera in La Scala, Milan, by the principals, chorus and orchestra of that theatre.

THE Empire Shortwave station was received well in Auckland last week, the electrical recording of the speech by Mr. Walter Runciman, President of the British Board of Trade, last Thursday night, coming in at full strength. The experiment of using different transmitting aerial systems every 14 minutes is now being carried out by this big station, and should, sooner or later, result in maximum aerial efficiency being secured.

ON Wednesday night, a few minutes before 11 o'clock, when 1YA was scheduled to close down, the transmitter at Henderson suddenly went off the air. The trouble was due to a condenser, which blew out. The trouble was quickly remedied, and the station was on the air at full strength a few minutes later, testing.

THE results of the principal events of the New Zealand Swimming Championships held in the Municipal Tepid Baths at Auckland last week-end were quickly broadcast by Station 1YA. Listeners who reside in distant parts of the Dominion and had relatives and friends taking part in the big swimming events were thus able to become acquainted with the results, and kept in touch with the position of each provincial team in the contest for the Yaldhurst Shield awarded for most points gained.

AT present the Rev. C. G. Scrimgeour, director of the Friendly Road station, 1ZB, is making a tour of the North Island, having launched a well-planned campaign to obtain an extension of station facilities and hours. He has held several large and enthusiastic meetings of listeners in the different townships, and has received many promises of support. He was in Wellington last week arranging for monster meetings to be held there, and also at Palmerston North.



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