

NOTES FROM LONDON

B.B.C.'s Big Moment Is Near

King's Jubilee Broadcasts Biggest Task in Corporation's Career—Will Princess Elizabeth Talk Over The Air?—New Afternoon Service For N.Z.

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This page was written specially for the "New Zealand Radio Record," by L. Marstrand Gander, a well-known broadcasting writer in London.

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PLANS for the silver jubilee celebrations are, at the time of writing, still uppermost in the minds of the B.B.C. programme builders. While final arrangements have yet to be made, I can reveal that a most ambitious Empire "hook-up" is planned. It is

The Picture on the Opposite Page

ON the opposite page is a composite picture arranged by the British Broadcasting Corporation in honour of the King's Jubilee. In the background is a map of the world showing the places at which the King's voice will be heard, while the photographs show his Majesty at the microphone at Buckingham Palace, Big Ben, the dome of St. Paul's, the State coach, a crowd near the Palace gates and the B.B.C.'s engineers at the control board.

proposed to create the biggest Empire network yet brought into existence. On May 6, the actual date of the King's accession in 1910, it is intended that a great round-the-Empire broadcast shall lead up to the event for which British peoples in all lands will be waiting, his Majesty's talk from Buckingham Palace. Incidentally, this will be the King's first talk from the palace.

Loyal greetings will be offered from each part of the Empire in turn by the head of the State wherever this is possible. Not only will the Dominions and the greatest of Britain's overseas possessions pay tribute in this way, but also such places as Fiji, Gibraltar, and the Channel Isles. This unique personal and representative demonstration of affection will end with remarks from the Prime Minister, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, speaking for the Home Country. Finally, it is almost certain that the Prince of Wales will ask his father to accept the Empire's felicitations. The B.B.C. would very much like to include a broadcast by Princess Elizabeth

in the jubilee celebrations. I understand, however, that there is small likelihood of this taking place.

The girdle round the Empire will follow the special review of the chief events of his Majesty's reign which, as I have already announced, will be a feature of the broadcasts. This is being prepared by an eminent authority, Dr. Harold Temperley, professor of modern history at Cambridge University. He wrote a particularly successful programme for the B.B.C. on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the outbreak of war, compiled from original documents, blending scholarship with considerable dramatic skill. In this he was associated with a former pupil, Mr. Laurence Gilliam, now one of the most hopeful of the B.B.C.'s young hopefuls, who will also assist in the production of this jubilee programme.

WILL the power of the Empire transmitters at Daventry be raised? At present the maximum power used is 20 kilowatts, while on the shorter wavelengths it is considerably less. America is building a 50-kilowatt station, and the tendency is to use greater power on these short-wave broadcasts. It is an open secret at Broadcasting House that the B.B.C. would like to use more power. "Well, what stops them?" you ask.

Money! The B.B.C. has a fabulous income—£2,000,000 a year. Yet the corporation declares that it has no capital reserve and must meet fresh capital expenditure out of income. It has also to find another £90,000 in the next twenty months for the new high definition television service. All the same B.B.C. finance is something of a mystery. Only skeleton accounts are issued; huge sums are lumped together under general headings without any details whatever.

In spite of this plea of poverty, the B.B.C. has just made an important extension of programme hours in the Empire service. Transmission VI has made its debut, and the call sign GSI—L for Liberty—has come on the air. This experimental transmission, given from 2.30 a.m. to 3.30 a.m., G.M.T., is intended to provide an evening programme for Western Canada, which the B.B.C. claims is the only part of the Empire not catered for in this way. In addition Transmission VI will provide an afternoon programme for Australia and New Zealand, a morning programme to Hong-Kong and Shanghai, and breakfast time music to India. The extra transmission is being given on Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. It brings the total hours of transmission up to 110 a week on the Empire service.

THERE have been many reports concerning the future of Mr. Cecil Graves, B.B.C. Empire and Foreign

Director. He was the favourite nephew and heir of Viscount Grey of Fallodon. For some months Mr. Graves has been on sick leave, and it was reported that he intended to resign. I understand, however, that Mr. Graves has no such intention. He is to visit Newfoundland this summer and will resume his duties at the B.B.C. in the autumn. Mr. Graves must have a considerable private income. Having launched the Empire service successfully, he could retire with honour. But he is obviously determined to do a "worth-



PRINCESS ELIZABETH II.

Will she speak over the air?

while" job. The Empire service is his religion and his life. He will hate no one for saying so—but he is a great fellow—a super enthusiast and one of the most popular men at the B.B.C. Everybody hopes that he will recover fully and carry on the Empire service to fresh triumphs.

SOME Swiss pupils wanted to know what questions would be asked in their examinations, and they hid a microphone in the stove in the council hall where the teachers were discussing the examination papers. A premature frost set in during the discussion; the masters went to set a fire and found the microphone. They found out who had installed the microphone and before a full school gathering awarded him first prize for "Applied Physics" and expelled him.