

Environment of cultured speech is, I think, of untold benefit to the subconscious mind of youth, and the speech of the New Zealand youth is now in the melting pot. Some are developing quite a Cockney twang, others the more common of the expressions from the American films, and between the two there is very little decent English spoken. Possibly it would be difficult to find announcers with the right type of voice. I have met very few in New Zealand. However, there are quite a number of Oxford and Cambridge men out here who are doing very little good for themselves, yet who have just those qualities of speech which are so desirable. Of course, we do not want the exaggerated Oxford drawl, but happily that appears to have died a natural death.

In conclusion, I hope that somebody else who is interested in the welfare of the youth of this country will assist in a matter which is rapidly becoming of national import to New Zealand.—

CAIUS.

Christchurch.

Answers to Correspondents

N.E. (Mt. Eden): The announcer at that time is Mr. Collins.

Dunedin (Dunedin): Arrangements have been made already as far as 2YA are concerned to broadcast the "Houseboy" series between 8 p.m. and 8.40 p.m. "Eb and Zeb" are to be featured on Fridays between 9 p.m. and 10 p.m. For the other transmissions we suggest that you communicate with the respective stations.

"MIKADO" JUBILEE

Universally Popular

IF a vote could be taken, with all the Gilbert and Sullivan enthusiasts throughout the world as the electorate, to decide which of the operas was the first favourite, there can be little doubt that "The Mikado" would come out easily at the top of the poll. The story is one of the most delightfully absurd in the whole series, and the final solution of the awful difficulties in which the characters find themselves is so cunningly delayed until the very last moment, and is then so mirth-provoking in its swift cutting of the Gordian Knot, that it never misses its effect of hearty laughter, no matter how often it is heard.

The personages, too, are so happily contrasted, offering splendid scope for whimsical fun and for finely lyrical tunes, that Sullivan had one of his very best chances here. The music, even apart from the tale, is all delightful, whether it be the sentimental airs of the soprano or the tenor, or the Lord High Executioner's whimsical songs, or the Mikado's grim humour.

The ninth in the immortal series of comic operas, it came after "Princess Ida," which on its production failed to win the whole-hearted welcome which had been given to the others. It may be that the satire which is its basis was of too subtle an order to find favour with audiences which had learned to

look for more obvious fun. However that may be, the immediate success of "The Mikado" more than atoned for any lack of appreciation given to "Princess Ida," and the whole world of music immediately hailed the new work as the best which had yet appeared.

The present radio revival at 1YA, 2YC, 3YA and 4YO on Tuesday, May 7, is most appropriate, falling as it does within the jubilee year of its original production. "The Mikado" started its long run of 672 nights on March 14, 1885, and has since been played more often and in more places than it would be at all easy to count.

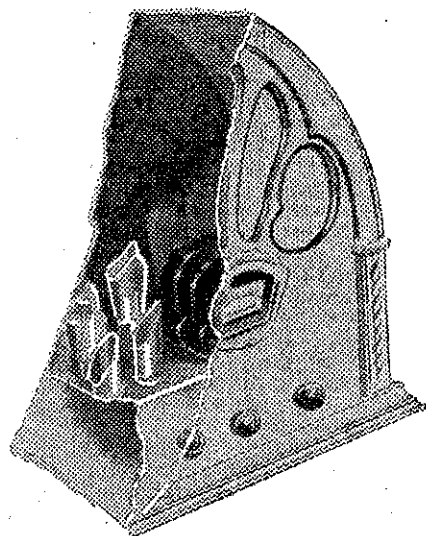
According to Gilbert himself, "The Mikado" was suggested by the slipping, in his studio, of an old Japanese sword

to the floor. He picked it up, pondered over it, and thought of the Japanese village recently established at Knightsbridge as a living miniature of the Oriental homeland. With Knightsbridge so near, Gilbert overlooked no opportunity for stage realism. The company of the Savoy was specially coached by Knightsbridge Japanese of both sexes in all the intricacies of Nipponese deportment.

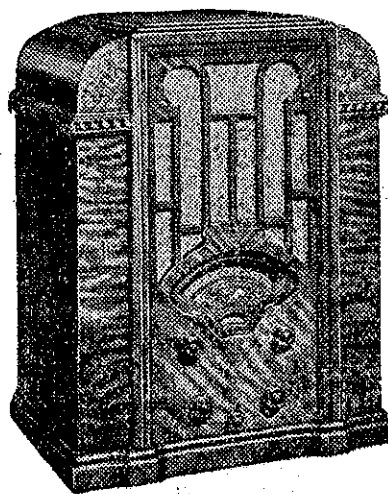
They were taught to walk with the mincing steps of tiny feet; they were initiated into the subtle language of the fan; the three little maids learned the hiss which translated the English giggle. "The Mikado," true to the Savoy type, proved to be Topsy-Turveydom tricked out in cherry blossoms and chrysanthemums.

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