

"RADIO— Real Cohesion of The Citizens Of The Community"



New Director's Message To Listeners Of New Zealand

In 1916 a ranker in the British Army; in 1936 one of the highest-paid officers in the New Zealand Civil Service!—that is the achievement of Professor James Shelley, of Canterbury College, the new Director of Broadcasting, who will take over his duties in December.

"I OBVIOUSLY cannot say just yet what recommendations I will make or what I intend to do in the new office," Professor Shelley said in an exclusive interview with the "Radio Record's" Christchurch representative. "It would indeed be arrogant of me to think of saying anything definite about the lines on which I shall work until I have made a proper survey of what has already been done, and made an estimate of what it is possible to do under present conditions.

"Generally speaking, I may say that I regard the radio as 'The Great' modern instrument for securing a real cohesion of the citizens of the community, based on mutual understanding and sympathetic tolerance. The community spirit and the greatness of an ancient city state such as Athens, depended on the close personal relation of the comparatively small number of citizens, and the instrument used was the actual human voice in the presence of the whole group of citizens themselves.

"The introduction of printing made it possible to secure the intellectual cohesion of a much greater number of the people, but the difficulties of reading, and the absence of the living voice made this type of cohesion rather impersonal, and the lubricant of human sympathy was lacking. This meant that estrangement of a rather violent kind sometimes arose when there was no need.

"An attempt to overcome this has been the rapid development in recent years of the conference method,

An S. P. Andrew study of PROFESSOR JAMES SHELLEY, New Zealand's new Director of Broadcasting. A special interview with Professor Shelley appears on this page.

whereby, at any rate, a few people can be got to realise that intellectual opponents may be very good fellows and very good friends! The radio, if properly used, should provide a means whereby the sympathetic influence of the actual human voice of ancient Athens can be added to the intellectual facilities of the widespread communication of the printing press. Thus it will form an instrument for real democracy, based on a sympathetic understanding of all points of view, considered in the quiet environment of the fireside, instead of in the rather hectic emotional atmosphere of a great concourse of people or in the light of unsympathetic print.

"The unifying value of music and the spoken arts is a most important substructure to the understanding of life values, and has an incalculable value in raising the emotional discipline of a community. However clever we may be as thinkers, if we are undisciplined in regard to our feelings, then the State will fall to pieces just as easily as if our feelings were right and our thinking was inadequate."

Professor Shelley probably holds the greatest number of social, musical and art positions on local bodies of any man in Christchurch. In affairs connected with drama and art he has become a recognised leader—a position to which has unusual gifts and outspokenness entitle him. Moreover, he is a man of gentle courtesy and great personality, yet thorough despiser of anything pertaining to humbug.