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## Imelda Fama

IT is a pity that the National Broadcasting Service deprived listeners of the opportunity of a relay on Wednesday night last week of the finest pianoforte recital heard in Wellington since the last visit of a world celebrity. Programmes are apparently arranged too far ahead to include such unexpected pleasures in their numbers.

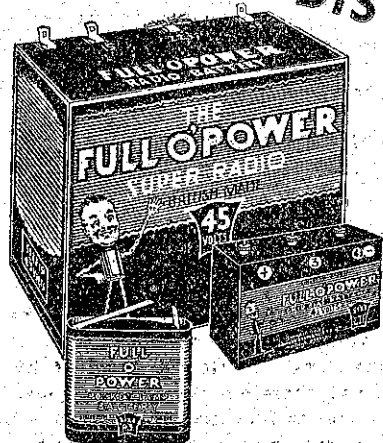
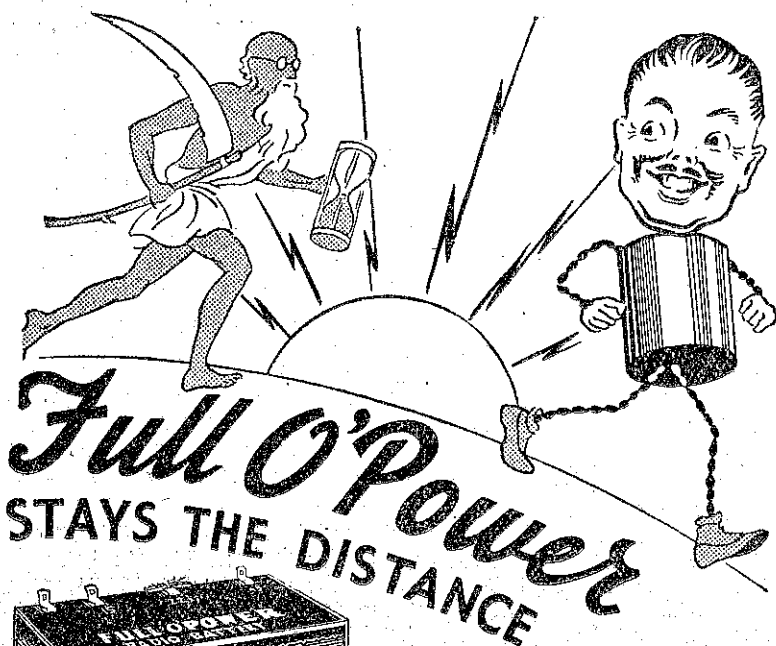
There has probably never been, within the last four or five years, a public programme so completely satisfying as that presented by Imelda Fama in the Concert Chamber of the Wellington Town Hall on that night, and from her most generous audience she received the adulation which was due to her by virtue of sheer ability at the keyboard. The Wellington daily newspaper critics did not hesitate to acclaim the standard of Imelda Fama's performance as lining up with that of the world-renowned pianists who have visited these shores within recent memory. And that is no exaggeration. There was the virtuosic quality about her recital which no other New Zealand pianist heard in broadcasts could possibly achieve without the cultural background possessed by this performer.

To be a member of Imelda Fama's audience was both a privilege and a revelation—two things which were, to their detriment, unrecognised by the vast majority of Wellington's music teachers who were the more conspicuous by their absence.

The programme itself was one to bring a shudder to the average well-trained pianist with any discernment of public performances. The sheer brilliancy of Miss Fama's opening number, Busoni's transcription of Bach's chaconne for the violin, immediately established her worth, and through the Beethoven "Appassionata" and Chopin, Debussy and Rhene Baton to her triumphant "Islamey" the pianist proved herself the possessor of every single attribute of the pianoforte virtuoso. The audience, incidentally, appeared to be a generally discerning one, which made Imelda Fama's success all the more striking. The first and the last items were unquestionably the most brilliant, and the acclamation with which "Islamey" was greeted prompted two beautiful encores.

Those Wellingtonians who attended the recital must surely have been satisfied that whoever missed it was the poorer musically. There is not only in the opinion of this writer, but by the word of many other musical sages even beyond the New Zealand coast, a quality of genius in Miss Fama's playing which it is nothing short of disgraceful to ignore. Had there been any appreciation of her real ability by people in her own community, not only the Concert Chamber, but the Main Town Hall, would have been crowded.

For those who were unable to attend Miss Fama's recital there is pity. For those who would not, there is none. It is their own loss.



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