

One other point, and it is this: Before radio came to New Zealand, we should have had to pay staggering prices to hear such a singer. Now, when he can be broadcast at the same time, the public can hear him at his recitals at prices beyond the reach of no one. This fact must be immensely important to students, notoriously hard up, and to that great body of humble people in New Zealand who have little money but a passionate devotion to music. When I looked at the prices charged to the public I began to wonder gratefully if NBS stood after all for "No Blinking Socking."

A good many years ago "The Hoofed Terror," "The Tie of Hearts," "The Perils of Pauline," and goodness knows how many more serial films, thrilled movie-goers. A feature of these pictures was the breath-taking climax to each instalment, when the hero or heroine (or both) was facing death in a situation from which there seemed to be no earthly escape—until next week. And then the escape proved a simple thing indeed. Thousands of readers will recall those stirring days, and will probably regret the passing of the serial from the evening picture programmes. To a certain extent radio serial features have taken the place of the movie serial, and the wireless presentations have all the thrill of the old "dickers" in the manner in which each instalment concludes. As soon as a most crucial moment develops and you are in the act of straining forward, horror-stricken in your chair, the fade-out music heralds the announcement that "a further presentation of this serial will be given from this station" on such and such a night. All very annoying, but it has the desired effect of making you tune in next week just to see how Dick Diehard really did crawl from out the lion's jaw after having been well and truly swallowed. And the way in which the listening public follows these serials shows that tastes are no different from what they were 20 years ago, even if the form of entertainment has changed.

Inclusion in the King's Birthday honours of the name of Dr. Sydney H. Nicholson, M.A., former organist of Westminster Abbey, warden of St. Nicholas College, Chislehurst, the head-quarters of the School of English Church Music, which he founded eight years ago, was welcomed by church people. On his tour of the Empire three years ago, Sir Sydney visited New Zealand and broadcast a talk from 2YA. His father founded Sydney University, and christened his musical son accordingly. Sir Sydney ridicules the idea that Australian and New Zealand boys cannot sing, and he was thrilled when he visited Bowral, to learn from Don Bradman's parents that the great cricketer was in the local choir as a lad; Sir Charles Kingsford Smith also was a chorister as a boy. Sir Sydney found Melbourne was justifiably proud of its admirable cathedral choir, and of the fact that, in 1935, there was only one other outside England that celebrates a daily Anglican choral evensong—the cathedral of Christchurch, New Zealand.

I shouldn't like to say how closely the NBS serial feature, "Dad and Dave at Snake Gully," now presented every Friday from 4YA, resembles a true picture of Australian life, but there is no doubt the impetuous Dad and the nasal Dave are firm favourites with the listening public. It is not hard to visualise rural districts where the major social events of life are the country dances, county council meetings, or the passing through of the city express, but I believe the popularity of the feature has a much nearer and more domestic familiarity. I suggest that in the lives of nine out of ten people it is easy to find counterparts of the many little contretemps that arise from time to time in the adventures of Dad and Dave. And don't we all just love to see others up against things which have annoyed or tricked us? I think this feature reveals George Edwards and company in their best form.

THOSE LITTLE FAMILIAR TOUCHES APPEAL

Just as you cannot judge books by their covers, neither can you judge talks by their titles. Last Friday I tuned in to 1YA just as Gregory Koshnitsky, chess champion of New South Wales, was introduced. "Oh, chess," I said to myself. "That won't interest me. I don't play. But it did interest. The champion was interviewed very capably by Gordon Hutter and kept me absorbed. He told of his early years in Moscow, how he harboured a secret ambition to travel to the "end of the earth"—New Zealand—and how chess made it possible. He learnt much about the game at the Shanghai Chess Club, where only one Chinese was a member. Questioned, Mr. Koshnitsky said that 50 years ago Englishmen were great chess players, but they had since declined. "Englishmen are too prosperous ever to become chess masters. To become a chess master one must start young and give up practically all else for its study. . . . English young men with the necessary intellectual qualifications can usually find a more profitable vocation. For them chess remains a hobby." Of women players Koshnitsky said that though perhaps quite as intellectual as men, women are not so good at thinking in abstract. "Chess thinking involves sustained concentration."

CHESS CHAMPION WAS NOT "SLOW" TALKER

Quite by chance I tuned into 4ZB's children's session recently and heard a few far-too-brief comments on a sea disaster of 31 years ago. A Dunedin survivor of the Dundonald, which was wrecked on the cliffs of Disappointment Island on March 6, 1907, told something of the horrors of that tragedy—of the 16 survivors who somehow reached the shore

and lived for seven months on the barren, windswept island, their only food being seabirds, seals, and weeds; finally, of a six-mile voyage in a miserable craft of veronica wood and canvas to the Auckland Islands and a Government food depot. I should say children would be thrilled to hear these adventures, and I personally could have stood more. Incidentally, Jill and Peter were remarkably secretive about the survivor's name, but he is quite well known as Mr. Karl Knudsen. He was third mate of the Dundonald at the time of the wreck.

Heaven forbid that radio announcers should be "elocutionists," but anybody who speaks even a single sentence over the air must be above approach in the important matters of grammar and pronunciation. A new voice heard over **ANNOUNCER'S BAD PRONUNCIATION** 3ZB the other night annoyed me for slips of that kind. The matter was quite good, but the pronunciation, my words!

Sydney Jones was the composer of those delightful musical comedies, "The Geisha," "San Toy," "The Gaiety Girl" and "The Prince of Cadonia," and I expected to hear a good deal of him and his works in Mr. C. R. Allen's talk **WANDERED IN HIS "MEMORY" TALK** 4YA last Wednesday. Mr. Allen dealt somewhat generally with the comedies, digressing frequently into often irrelevant stories about actors and actresses. I couldn't help forming the impression that the title "Sydney Jones" was only a very useful sheet-anchor to return to when the speaker threatened to get too far away from some semblance of continuity. However, ignoring the Sydney Jones aspect, the talk was a very interesting "musical comedy memory," and I am sure many of Mr. Allen's "side-issues" must have brought pleasant thoughts to more than one listener.

The standard of plays from 1YA is high lately, and last week the good work was continued when Zoe Bartley-Baxter produced in the studio Noel Coward's delightful comedy, "Hay Fever." It was a worthy successor to "Libel" a few weeks before. All the members of the cast did well, particularly A. J. C. Fisher (director of the Elam School of Art, Auckland), as David Bliss. I thought the turgid atmosphere of the Bliss home was extremely well caught, and efficient arrangement of the Noel Coward musical compositions and effects added greatly to the entertainment. I know dozens of listeners who think there is only one thing wrong with these plays—they are not featured often enough on 1YA programmes.

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