

announced merely as herself, I would have judged her on her own merits and thoroughly enjoyed her singing for itself alone. Whether this reaction is shared by other listeners or not I do not know, but, to my mind, it is neither fair nor dignified to saddle our performers with such titles as New Zealand's Gracie Fields, New Zealand's Deanna Durbin, or New Zealand's Larry Adler. It is fair neither to listeners nor to the performers, nor to the Gracies, Deannas and Larrys. And there is far more dignity in having our own Jane Potts or John Jones, than a performer borrowing lustre from someone else's title. No one, thank Heaven, has yet called Allan Loveday New Zealand's little Mozart.

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Richard Crooks was once an iceman. Franz Oscar Natzke, the Auckland bass, now doing so well at the Trinity College, London, was formerly a relief worker and blacksmith. We

NOW COMES THE SINGING FARM HAND

have had "the singing iceman" and "the singing blacksmith" and last Friday evening 1YA surprised listeners by featuring "the singing dairyfarm-hand." He was George Ayo, aged 23, a fine, well-set-up and particularly dusky son of India, who looks more like Paul Robeson. What was more tresting, he has a bass-baritone voice with a striking resemblance to that of the famous negro singer. Like most listeners who heard George Ayo, I was greatly impressed with his singing of four numbers, "Asleep in the Deep," "Kashmiri Love Song," "Deep River" and "Ma Lindy Lou." He was not listed on 1YA's programme for Friday. No one, not even he himself, knew that he was going on the air as late as last Wednesday afternoon, when he walked into the station and asked if he might be heard. Employed on a dairy-farm at Whata-Whata, Mr. Ayo confessed that he had never been taught, neither had he ever sung to an accompaniment in his life. But when George Ayo was given a studio audition, the programme organiser, Mr. Eric Waters, was astounded at the voice he heard. So was Frederic Collier, Australian bass-baritone,

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inferior brand of cement.

The Springboks and Australians in the second test last year only failed to use battleaxes because by some unfortunate oversight the officials omitted to keep a supply on hand. Further illustration would be tedious, but not impossible.

If the Statute of Westminster means anything (and even Berriedale Keith is a little uncertain about parts of it), then certain disintegrating forces within the Empire must be stronger than the forces tending to promote greater solidity. What these forces are is not relevant here, but one can justifiably regret that games are failing to do much in a positive direction, because the Press, the people, and the financiers of sport have conspired to make them gladiatorial shows in which one nation glories in the ability of its chosen representatives to "whack the tails off" the others. The sooner that is honestly realised, the sooner sport will return to its correct perspective.

who happened to be in the building. Present in Auckland on a fortnight's annual leave, the Indian was immediately booked to sing on Friday. He did so, after a couple of rehearsals. He has a fine quality voice, a perfectly natural production and remarkably good enunciation. It was surprising considering it is absolutely untrained. He showed excellent control and sang in perfect time. To the educated ear, one or two discrepancies were to be noticed, nevertheless, to the natural ear his voice has great appeal. I should say that if he heeds advice given him and places himself under a good teacher, more will be heard of George Ayo. He came from India five years ago.

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Station 4ZB has introduced a "Comicalities and Frivolities" session in their Sunday transmissions. Listening to last Sunday's broadcast, I decided it was too short and was put on too late at night.

COMICALITIES MARRIED BY SILLY INCIDENT

Most people are abed at 10 on Sunday days. However, the session was quite bright, and it opened with that best of all Hulbert Brothers recordings, "A Modern Colour Poem," which alone was worth sitting up late to hear. It also introduced a new Gillie Potter rambling—new to me at any rate—all about Henry VIII. I had one objection to this presentation. No one expects any station to possess two versions of every record, and listeners do not mind waiting the second or two while a record is being turned over. Why then should 4ZB attempt to disguise this simple happening by permitting the announcer to butt in with some irrelevant remarks? I shouldn't have minded that so much, but in this instance the announcer was cut off in the middle of what he was saying because Gillie "held the air" again, but the cut-off was not quick enough, and half a smart gag by the comedian was bitten off and lost.

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Latest among the organisations to haunt their sweetness on the air is that of the territorials. Listening on Saturday night to their little dialogue from 2ZB, I thought it well put over, if

THE ARMY'S ATTACK ON THE AIR.

not terribly exciting, and there was an ingenious touch here and there that showed the Army has studied the psychology of advertisement with some profit. One learned in the questions and answers given that the territorials do not foster a militaristic spirit, that territorial service does not include service overseas, that these days the Army forms threes instead of fours, that those who boss have been themselves bossed, that the training—since it inculcates leadership, initiative and a sense of humour—is of value to a business career, that the uniforms will be blue, and that boots, greatcoats, and certain allowances of pay are given to territorials. It was put quite attractively, but I thought more might have been made of the fun of camp life, at which everything used to be amusing except the porridge.

I like "Uncle Percy," who conducts the children's session from 4ZB on Sunday. I am not considering the material he puts over, though, incidentally, I think that his material is

FRIENDLY MAN IS "UNCLE PERCY"

just what children seek, but purely his microphone personality. Recently I heard a small boy say, "I'd like him for my real uncle." There you have his personality. "Uncle Percy" has the most friendly way of speaking to his unseen listeners, and I don't know of anyone to equal him. I should say his session is the pick of all children's sessions heard from any station in New Zealand. He gives the impression of talking to you and you alone, and he talks just as if he has known you all your life, and there is none of the usual "palaver" which adorns the regular commercial children's sessions. I don't mind admitting that I listen in every Sunday myself to "Uncle Percy," because, as I said at the start, I like him.

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Not so long ago, no matter to what station one tuned in, nor at what hour, one could be certain of hearing "The Isle of Capri." It became so famous that it was ironically dubbed "New Zealand's National Anthem." Now, it

POPULAR TUNES CAN BE OVERDONE

seems history is repeating itself, and "The Merry-go-Round Broke Down" is threatening to out-rival "The Isle of Capri" in monotonously regular nightly performances. During the past fortnight I have heard this tune so often that I am beginning to wonder if the studios are short of decent records. When one stops to consider what a menace to sanity a tune may become when, for some obscure reason, it leaps into popular fancy, one feels there is cause to be thankful for a certain gracious dispensation of Providence. When the lachrymose "Prisoner's Song" was at the height of its fame, radio as a form of entertainment just didn't exist. Consider what we might have endured then. . . As I type these words 4ZB has put on "The Merry-go-Round Broke Down."

Somewhat doubtful whether 2ZB's "March of Music" would turn out to be merely Suppe's "Light Cavalry" Overture, I tuned in for the first time last week to find the title had not misled me and got an

ALL THE WAY FROM DARKEST AFRICA.

interesting little illustrated talk on the influence of the negro tom-toms on modern music. Though casually accepting the influence of darkest Africa on modern jazz music, I had not before realised just how clearly—if one listens—one can hear the rhythm of the tom-toms running through such negro spirituals as "All God's Chillun's Got Shoes" and the hot rhythm pieces of the day. After this short, clear exposition, I shall always hear it in future. It was like suddenly discovering a self-evident truth that somehow you had always taken for granted but never really bothered to apply.

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For Coughs and Colds, Never Fails