

MUSIC OF THE WEEK

*There is no art without life,
There is no life without growth,
There is no growth without change,
There is no change without controversy.—Frank Rutter.*

SOME interesting songs were performed by Mr. Geoffrey Colledge from the Wellington main national station last week. They were Australian aboriginal songs, set, I understand, to music by Dr. Lethbridge. The translator claims to have retained the actual notations and rhythmical style of these primitive people, and the recital was at least interesting, even if the songs were not particularly melodious. It was something new—and new songs are always welcomed by listeners.

Mr. Colledge has a voice of good quality, but is inclined to be free at times. I understand he played some of his own accompaniments—if he did, Mr. Colledge is also an excellent pianist. The accompaniments were well played.

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THE Tudor singers performed during the week from 2YC, and Mr. Temple White conducted. The programme was varied, and the vocal quality quite satisfactory. The song cycle, "Wind Flowers," was best, but once again the balance of voices was not all that could be desired. It was, however, better as the evening went on. There was a slight tendency at times for the sopranos to dominate.

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ON Tuesday and Saturday, Kipnis is to present his final concerts in New Zealand from the Auckland Town Hall. A word to the Auckland public. To miss a Kipnis concert is to miss something memorable. I met Kipnis in the south and asked him how he was taught such remarkable control of the voice. He smiled and said, "My teacher made me learn to sing softly first." New Zealand singers, why not go the Kipnis way?

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AND now, since my listening has been interrupted this week, perhaps a few words in retrospect may be of interest to my readers.

Since I began listening I have been agreeably surprised at the possibilities of many New Zealand artists. Everyone I have heard has impressed me with the idea that they were trying their very best. With the vocalists, the most redeeming feature has been the almost complete absence of affectation. Such things as "buy" for "bay" and "luf" for "love," are errors common in many overseas professional singers.

Looking on the broad side of things, New Zealand vocalists have given me the impression that they have been reasonably well trained, but lack polish. There is a great deal of careless singing—slipshod work which should not be tolerated. There is not the slightest excuse for careless work, as with the complete absence of an audience, artists have little to distract them from their work.

The selection of music has not, however, been all that could be desired. Many artists tackle work far too difficult for them. It is better to sing simple things well, than to attempt the difficult song and fall short of the mark.

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INSTRUMENTALLY speaking, New Zealand is apparently very strong in pianists, but as for other instrumental artists, I am sorry to say that they have a lot to learn. Violinists are the worst performers as a rule, and artists on any stringed instrument should remember that perfect intonation and accurate bowing must be employed for a satisfactory performance. The woodwind and brass has had little to do as far as solos are concerned, and of the two, the brass players appear to be of a higher standard than the other sections of the orchestra.

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AS I have previously claimed in this column, insincerity in art is the greatest enemy with which a young student has to contend. It is all very well to claim that the commercial aspect of life must make one cautious when commenting on a performance, but I venture to state that more indirect good is done to both critic and artist when real sincerity lies behind the criticism. Too many young musical lives have been "lost" by the same thing—"We must send Miss So-and-so to the Continent to further her studies. She is such a wonderful player." You have probably heard the same comments time and time again, when you have inwardly known that Miss So-and-so was not by any means as good as her friends have made her out to be.

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THERE is another type of musician in New Zealand whom I am pleased to say I find very much in the minority, and that is the musical snob. You know the type I refer to. Only the very classical "musique" will do him—"ballads are just rubbish, and, of course, light instrumental music has no value at all." This type of musician is the greatest enemy of all to the art.

BY "SCHERZO"

He remains aloof in his criticism, quotes a "cultural authority" to cover nearly every performance he listens to.

As a rule such a type knows really very little about real music, and it is a relief to find that only a few of this sect exist in the Dominion.

Radio Round the World

THAT Richard Tauber enjoys a joke against himself is evident from this story which both he and his wife relate with glee. His film-star wife, Diana Napier, boasts a frankly unmusical family. Her mother, however, is justifiably proud of having such a celebrated son-in-law, and reminds everyone of it when opportunity occurs. Mrs. Tauber tells how recently when her mother was playing bridge with a visitor from Australia (a distinguished singer) she remarked "My son-in-law is singing at Covent Garden this season, in fact, he's opening it with 'The Fiddle.'" At the astonished look her visitor bent on her, she added "You know—'The Fiddle,' by Wagner." Incidentally, Mozart's "Magic Flute," so abused, has provided Richard Tauber with his most successful role.

ANOTHER triumph for realism in microphone background effects was scored in a recent episode of an American NBC feature, which was laid in an operating room. Unable to obtain the sound of instruments clink-clinking as he wanted it, the sound-man slipped out and borrowed a set of surgical tools from a physician friend. He clinked them with the authentic tinkle.

SEVERAL years ago a young San Francisco musician, Grace Adams East, trumpeter, made her first appearance in Washington and instantly caught the attention of music-lovers in the American capital. Miss East, who arrived a few weeks ago in Sydney, has been engaged by the Australian Broadcasting Commission for a Commonwealth broadcasting tour. Commenting on Miss East's opening recital, the Washington "Evening Star" said: "It is not often that one has the opportunity to hear some of the orchestra instruments in a concert hall, and the trumpet recital of Grace Adams East, of Berkely, California, given last evening at Wesley Hall, was a distinct novelty in the routine concert season. Not only is the trumpet seldom used in recital, but it is also rare to hear it played superbly by a woman. The curiosity naturally attendant on hearing this instrument as a full-length solo programme was outbalanced by the high artistry which Miss East brings to her performance. Under her skilful handling it becomes a medium of interpretation in which colour and expressiveness are the outstanding characteristics."