

RADIO AUNT SAYS FAREWELL

Special to the "Record"

by

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MISS MAYNARD HALL—"AUNT PAT."

... "Succeeded in getting some 'real Maynard' over the air."

INTO the secret places of a child's affections, only the young in heart can enter. And since our civilisation, with its disillusion, rides the heart unmercifully hard, youth too often ebbs away as adult years lengthen.

Perhaps that is the reason why really successful announcers for children's sessions are so rare—and, when they are found, so extravagantly loved. Perhaps that is the reason why the resignation of 3YA's "Aunt Pat" at the end of this week will be felt among the small listeners of some Christchurch homes as very like a death in the family.

For this radio aunt has won for herself a following as staunchly loyal as any in the Dominion. Even those who have only heard her voice, night after entertaining night, have learnt to know her as a friend. More devoted still are the thousands who, at one time or another, have been to visit her in the studio. Some went in fear and trembling, others went running; but all when they arrived found a fairy godmother—ready to enter into their fancies and to amuse them in their own fascinating way. There is one crippled boy, shown round the studio by Aunt Pat, who will never forget the exciting sights and sounds of that wonderful afternoon.

THE announcement of Aunt Pat's resignation from the children's session was made only last week, but already she has received a flood of letters expressing gratitude for what she has done and the hope that she will be back at the microphone before long.

To that, Aunt Pat answers definitely: "No. I want a rest. I have loved the work and have never tired of it. But physically I am tired. That is why I am giving it up—regretfully, but finally."

So it seems the Christchurch children must abandon hope, and turn to another for the fun of 5 o'clock sessions.

BLACK Saturday looms for the child listeners of Christchurch this July 30. For that day is to mark the farewell to radio of Miss Maynard Hall, 3YA's "Aunt Pat" almost since children's sessions were started at the station. This kindly friend of listening youth has decided to retire from the work she loves.

Aunt Pat has earned her rest, and if she is taking it who can grumble?

As Miss Maynard Hall, she entered radio some years ago, when 3YA was opened by Mr. A. R. Harris. Her first job was accompanist. Then, when the station was without a programme organiser for a short time, she took over that duty also. She brought to it valuable experience, backed by a knowledge of Hollywood, and her term was most successful. A series of talks which she put over met with enthusiastic response.

Finally, someone decided the time had come to start a children's session. Mr. Harris turned to Miss Hall, and thus, in the radio sense, Aunt Pat was born. Before her Mr. E. J. Bell, of the Canterbury Public Library, had been Uncle Jack in the children's sessions, but Miss Hall later became supervisor of children's sessions throughout New Zealand. Part of her duty was tour the Dominion, giving advice and help.

STILL, there was plenty of fun as well as hard work in Aunt Pat's notable broadcasting career. She often remembers now, with a reminiscent smile, that evening when neither clergyman nor children arrived for the newly-started song services. Aunt Pat knew nothing about how to conduct a religious ceremony, but her resource would not admit defeat. She soon had a hymn record on the gramophone, and no doubt that gave her time to plan the next step. The service went forward smoothly.

Afterward, when Mr. Harris congratulated her on the impromptu one-woman service, her cheerful reply was characteristic: "If I'd known," she said, "that I would be asked to say prayers over the air, I would never have taken on this job at all!"

There are plenty of people who are thankful she did **not** know about the prayers before she joined! Expressive of the feeling that listeners have for her is this letter which she received recently:—

"What charm you have communicated to listeners all this time! Something much sweeter than mere pleasure. Who is it says, 'Why trouble to tell me what you are when what you are itself speaks to me so loudly that I cannot hear the words?' You have succeeded in getting some 'real Maynard' over the air, and Aunt Pat will always mean friendliness, gladness, kindness and graciousness and beauty to all who ever heard her. Thanks be for her."

ACTUALLY, Aunt Pat in her generous way would pass on the praise to her helpers and friends. She is deeply appreciative of kindnesses from the 3YA staff. Of Mr. Harris she said: "I owe him a great deal. Not only was he conscious of the value of (Continued on page 57.)"