

A Real Old-Timer

A REAL "Old Timer" who was driving cattle happened one day to strike our place at tea time. We had the wireless on for the dinner music session, and he was very interested in it. At first he thought it was a gramophone, but on being told it was the wireless he wanted to know how far the music could be heard. When we told him it was coming from Wellington he thought for a moment and then said: "Last night's music, I suppose!"—"Effie."

Parnell By-election

THE Parnell by-election, which takes place on Wednesday, May 7, will be featured over the air. All stations will broadcast progress results as they come to hand. 2YA will not observe a silent night that week.

1YA Marriage

MR. OWEN PRITCHARD, programme organiser at 1YA, was married on Monday, April 21, to Miss Lena Kenny, and in view of that event was the recipient of two presentations. On the Monday previous the members of the 1YA Broadcasting Choir presented him with an oak clock suitably the staff presented him with some silverware, accompanied with their very best wishes for happiness.

Grand Opera From 4YA

Programme Planned

UNDER the direction of Mr. Alfred Walmsley, grand operas are to be broadcast regularly from 4YA. These radio presentations will be a delight to the music lovers of Dunedin and to all listeners throughout New Zealand who tune in to 4YA.

Mr. Walmsley, who is an admirable tenor singer, has but recently returned to Dunedin from England after an exceptionally successful experience with the Carl Rosa Opera Company. Besides becoming familiar with all the grand operas being produced in Britain, Mr. Walmsley came into personal touch with such leading musicians as Dr. Malcolm Sargeant, Sir Thomas Beecham, Sir Landon Ronald, and Sir Henry Wood.

The first operas to be arranged by Mr. Walmsley for radio presentation at 4YA are "Cavalleria Rusticana" and "I Pagliacci," and these will be broadcast on Monday, May 5. Vocalists to assist in the studio production will be: Mrs. Eric Ewart, L.A.B., Miss Betty Hamilton, Mr. William Ruffell, and Mr. William Bathgate. There will be full choruses by villagers and peasants.

We are to hear "Cavalleria Rusticana" from Covent Garden on Thursday, June 21. For the benefit of those who may not be familiar with this story of "rustic chivalry" (and they must be few, for no opera is more

often given in England), I will briefly outline the plot. The scene is Sicily, second only to Corsica as a setting for passionate melodrama. A soldier returns from the wars to find that during his absence his sweetheart has married a stay-at-home neighbour. He attempts to make love to another village girl, but his ardour gives out and he turns back to Sweetheart Number 1. There is a scandal, a fight, and the soldier is killed. The opera falls into two scenes, the interval between which is filled by the celebrated intermezzo. Mascagni, the composer, wrote "Cavalleria Rusticana" for a competition organised by a firm of music publishers. It won the prize.

ALSO full of well known airs is "I Pagliacci," which opens with the famous "Prologue," which explains that the play is taken from life, and that the sentiments expressed by the actors and singers, while sometimes noble and sometimes bad, are always human, and that actors and strolling players have their own joys and sorrows and tragedies in real life. The prologue over, the curtain rises and the scene of the play is laid in the village of Culabria. The main characters are Canio, his wife (Nedda), and two rival lovers (Silvio and Tonio). There are some very beautiful solos and duets, notably the beautiful "Bird Song," in which Nedda, yearning for love and freedom, pours out. In the famous aria "On With the Motley," Canio, the broken-hearted husband, sobs his grief at being, not a man, but a jester, a toy to amuse the mob while his heart is breaking. Act 2 is the play, taken from life, as Tonio explains in the prologue. Harlequin serenades Columbine (Nedda), and Tonio has a comic love scene with her. Harlequin interrupts the scene by leaping into the room through the window, and after Tonio has given them a mock blessing, Nedda and Harlequin sing and dance a dainty little gavotte.

The play, curiously enough, parallels the real tragedy of the first act so closely, that Canio, coming on as Punchinello, overhearing Columbine's parting words to Harlequin—"Tonight and for ever, I am thine, Love," the same as in the first act to Silvio—completely loses his self control, and demands that Nedda tell him the name of her lover. This is probably one of the finest and most dramatic arias in this class of opera. The audience of villagers think his emotion is great acting, and applaud him, but Nedda knows he is no longer acting. She vainly tried to calm him by singing a few bars of the gavotte, but Canio refuses to listen. Nedda realises the impossibility of further acting, and openly defies him, whereupon Canio draws his dagger and plunges it in her breast. As Nedda dies, she calls for Silvio, who has been in the audience. He rushes forward and receives the dagger in his heart.

Canio, like a man in a dream, looks at the havoc about him, sees the horrified audience, and drawing the curtain, explains—"The comedy is ended."

Auckland Notes

(By "Call Up.")

THE 1YA Station Choir, who scored such a success with their presentation of "The Rebel Maid" early in April, will give their second performance of the year on May 27, when their programme will consist of a miscellany of part songs, duets, and solos. Mr. Len Barnes, who conducts them, hints that there will be something "off the beaten track" in this programme. The choir's third performance will be the presentation of the opera "Marama," written by the well-known local musician Mr. Archie Don.

THE general feeling among Auckland listeners now seems to be that programmes and studio service are good, but that there is room for improvement in the actual transmission. There seems to be a lack of volume which is unwarranted. The strength is uniform and clarity good, but listeners, especially those with small sets, are complaining about the volume. One dealer says he recently tried several good crystal sets on a good aerial in Remuera, but could not get 1YA satisfactorily with any of them, although it was only about five miles away. Many of these complainants attribute this fault to the aerial, saying that the station came in strongly previous to the change from a four-wire to a single-wire aerial.

AUCKLAND radio dealers report very brisk business during April, in marked contrast to the slack time experienced in March. One dealer sold three £65 sets in a week, which shows the modern trend to buy large sets, which are also handsome pieces of furniture. Sales of small sets are gradually decreasing, but many of those who do buy such sets are displeased at not being able to take out a six months' license at the beginning of the radio year. Thirty shillings is a large sum to raise out of the week's wages in many homes, and it would be considerably easier for a large number of listeners to pay fifteen shillings half-yearly.

SOME years ago, long before talking pictures had been introduced to New Zealand, Mr. Edward Coubray, of Auckland, had been experimenting with kinematograph apparatus, his ultimate ambition being to produce a film which could be broadcast over the air. For some time he was held up in his work by the fact that even the best amplifiers and microphones the world could produce had many faults. When these became gradually so improved that they were very near perfect, Mr. Coubray patented his own Coubraytone system of recording sound pictures, and a company was formed to exploit the apparatus. Initial attempts were very promising, and the Coubraytone is now being used to take an epic Maori drama at Taupo. This is under American supervision, and Mr. Alfred Hill has composed a special musical score for it.

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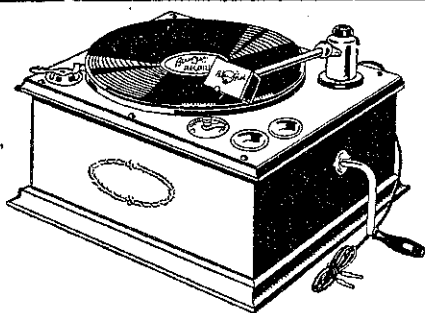
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