

avoids such finishing letters as E and G and T, and in a flash, with a smile, adds another N. There is a Scots word so spelt—meaning a ravine or waterfall—but no English word. No. 5, who has been already thinking hard, heaves a sigh of relief and says E. Now No. 6 is in the toils. He thinks of "Linnean," but remembers that the rules bar proper nouns and all "capitalised" words. So, perforce, he adds the inevitable T and loses one of his precious points.

No. 7 then starts another word. The fun gets fast and furious. The fact that mischievous intent, cleverly exercised, can catch somebody further round the circle adds to the zest, and the element of chance so enters that the cleverest can be caught helpless. Nevertheless, skill in spelling counts in the long run, for those without it are more likely to be caught napping by a particular sequence of letters or to finish a word unwittingly. When the number of players is reduced to three and at last to two there is still excitement for those who have dropped out after losing all their points.

A dictionary is a necessary adjunct to this exhilarating game—as a court of appeal. A player must have in mind an accepted word, and by consent it must be in the dictionary used for the appeals. If a player whose turn it is to add a letter doubts whether his predecessor has a real word in mind, he is entitled to challenge that player to declare it. Then only is the dictionary opened. Should the dictionary not contain the word, or the player own up that he had no real word in mind, the challenger escapes and the defaulter loses a point. On the other hand, if the dictionary contains the word declared in answer to the challenge, the challenger loses a point. In this way the game is kept on a good level and wrangling is impossible.

With the observance of these few rules this sort of spelling bee combines great fun with instruction. It can do much to promote accurate spelling and a growing vocabulary. If you haven't tried it, do so. You will find it worth while.

A "Radio Clinic"

THE lack of censorship over matter broadcast in America has resulted in a further amusing development. A certain station in the West broadcasts what is known as a "radio clinic," conducted by a doctor—at least by one who holds degrees conferred by two (American) medical colleges.

Thousands of sufferers from real and imaginary complaints send in to the station recitals of their symptoms, to which the kindly doctor gives his individual attention, afterward coming to the microphone and broadcasting prescriptions, which are numbered. Occasionally, atmospheric and other interferences prevent clear reception of the doctor's words of wisdom, so that patients are apt to mistake the prescription numbers. Cynics have suggested the likelihood of a sufferer from dandruff believing himself recommended to try a prescription for torpid liver.

Unfortunately, the "clinic" has attracted the notice of local medical men, who—such is their lack of imagination—are urging the revocation of the doctor's license.

The Opera Maritana

To be Produced by Orpheus Society

THIS charming and well-known opera by Vincent Wallace will be presented in its concert form by the Orpheus Musical Society on Tuesday, July 29, in the Town Hall Concert Chamber, and broadcast by 2YA. "Maritana" is probably one of the best-known works produced by musical societies, and under the capable direction of Mr. Harrison Cook patrons of the concert can be assured of an artistic performance.

Radio

To distant state,
To foreign land,
This wonder great
The earth has spanned.

In friendly conversation we
May enter now across the sea
By Radio.

Ships on the ocean,
Wrecked or mined,
Or planes in motion
Flying so blind,
When ill conditions try to thwart,
Are guided oft to reach their port
By Radio.

Like magic power
To country homes,
News of the hour
From cities comes.
We marvel—then we stand in awe!
Yet science says there's much in
store

For Radio!

—"Doreen."

The opera is an old one, for it was first produced in the Drury Lane Theatre, London, November 14, 1845, where it was accorded immediate success. Since then it has been produced countless times and rarely fails to please. It is a regular item over the air from the British Broadcasting Corporation, and has been heard from New Zealand stations on more occasions than one.

The principal characters are:—
Charles II, King of Spain Bass
Maritana, a gipsy singer .. Soprano
Don Jose de Santarem, his Minister .. Baritone

Don Caesar de Bazan Tenor
Lazarillo Mezzo-soprano
Marchioness de Montefiore .. Soprano
The story by Fitzball, like so many operas, deals with the love affairs of a gipsy, but is different, in that it ends happily.

In Act I the Spanish King, Charles II, while wandering about his kingdom in disguise, falls in love with the beautiful young gipsy girl Maritana. The king's companion, the crafty Don Jose, is in love with the queen. He sees in this meeting of the king and the gipsy a chance to further his love affair with the queen. A jolly young roysterer, Don Caesar, appears on the scene just in time to prevent the lad Lazarillo from ill-treatment from the hand of his

cruel master. A duel between the master and Don Caesar results, although it is Holy Week, when duels are forbidden. Caesar is cast into prison under the penalty of death.

IN Act II Don Jose comes to Don Caesar and Lazarillo in their prison cell. Caesar here sings the soldiers' song, for he cannot reconcile himself to the death of a common criminal. Don Jose makes a proposition. If he, Caesar, will go through the marriage ceremony with a veiled lady he may die by being shot, for Don Jose sees the chance of introducing the widow of a nobleman to court, where he could not have brought the gipsy girl.

The wedding takes place, and the veiled bride is led away, while Caesar takes his place in front of the firing squad. The faithful Lazarillo has, however, removed the bullets from the guns, and Don Caesar's last dying groans are but feigned ones. Don Jose, intent on compromising the king, has taken Maritana to a ball as the niece of the Marquis of Montefiore, the host. Caesar follows as soon as his executioners have left him, and arrives at the palace. Don Jose, though astounded at the presence of the man he thought dead, immediately seizes the situation and unveils and presents as Don Caesar's bride the elderly Marchioness de Montefiore. Caesar is taken aback, for he had not imagined this his veiled bride.

ACT III is an unravelling of the complication. Don Caesar comes to Maritana's rescue, as the king is making love to her, and later kills Don Jose in a duel, revealing the dead man's malignant designs toward the king, who, seeing the unworthiness of his conduct, seeks the forgiveness of the queen. On the happily united couple the king confers honours, and everyone is satisfied.

For details of the music of the opera see the Gramophone Notes in another section of this issue.

THE soloists for the principal parts of the forthcoming presentation have been carefully chosen, and can be relied upon to give finished interpretations of the tuneful numbers for which the opera is famous. The part of Maritana is being sung by Miss Ena Rapley (soprano), who achieved such great success in the recent production of the "Arcadians" by the Dennis Operatic Company. The part of Don Jose has been undertaken by Mr. Ernest Short, Wellington's leading and popular baritone, whose artistic and musicianly work is always appreciated. Miss Ngairi Coster's charming mezzo-soprano voice will be heard in the part of Lazarillo, the orphan boy. Mr. Charles Edwards has been engaged for the role of Don Caesar, and his fine operatic tenor voice should be well suited to the part. The small but exacting bass parts of the King of Spain and a Captain of the Guard are being undertaken by Mr. R. J. D. Madigan, who possesses a splendid voice of adequate range

Heard in New Hebrides

THE Rev. W. V. Milne, writing from Nguna, New Hebrides, says that they have had the privilege of hearing the Moderator's voice over the wireless.

"On Sunday, June 8, I turned on to Auckland. Service had already started, and it sounded Presbyterian, so I hung on, though the voice was very faint and static was bad. It was only between bursts of static that I could hear anything at all. During the first reading, Isaiah 40, I called Mrs. Milne to come and listen because the voice sounded very like Mr. Budd's. I was pretty sure of it when I heard him intimate that Mrs. Riddle, from India, whose father had been so long in the New Hebrides, would speak in the S.S. Hall.

We did not get any good of the sermon, I am sorry to say, on account of static and the voice being so faint. Finally, it was announced from 1YA that it was the Rev. G. Budd preaching in St. David's, so I was right in my supposition."

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