

(Continued from page 1.)

I was particularly interested in this piece of apparatus, and Mr. Biere withdrew it from the camera to show exactly what was happening. The cell was sparking and the light differed in intensity according to the sound. There were bright sparks and dull ones, but there were thousands of flickers every second. These are admitted to the film through a slit one-thousandth of an inch, and the slide of the film has a mark on it 1/1000th of an inch wide, of a density corresponding to the note sounded by subject. It was all very wonderful. There before me the little ditty being sung was being turned into electricity and amplified, then into light, and finally into black and white, and recorded. But the process was expensive, for the camera was valued at over a thousand pounds, the little photo cell ten pounds, and its life ten hours.

W.B.'s ejaculation—"Hey, Sam, who comes after Katie of Kaiwarra?"—interrupted my musing.

"Don't know, Bill—you wrote it, didn't you?"

"S'pose I did. Were's some blimmen chalk," and W.B. disappeared into the building and emerged a few minutes later with a blackboard inscribed by hieroglyphics that were intelligible only to the man himself.

"Did Mr. Bishop write it himself?" inquired one of the assistants who was near me at the time. I explained that he did, and that the other ditty that he was to sing, "Ode to the Kiwi" (or some name like that, I have forgotten what the boys call it), was likewise original.

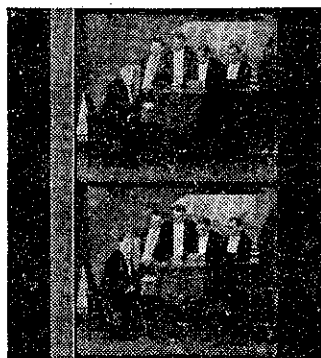
"That is the beauty of the whole show to-day—it is original," added one

The First Studio Talkie

of the Melody Four, who were nearby. The little cornfields ditty is our own arrangement."

"Well, there will be no copyright problems," I added, remembering the efforts that had already been made by broadcasting artists to overcome this difficult situation.

"Just once more, that introduction,



This is W.B. (at the piano) and the Melody Four singing the Kiwi Song. The light marks on the left are the sound impressions.

please, Mr. Bishop," I heard Mr. McLean ask, and in a few moments all was ready for the first studio talkie.

It was bitterly cold, for the wind was cutting over the wall, sheltering Mr. Bishop and almost freezing everyone else. I noticed that some disappeared and came out with coats on.

I was regretful that I had left mine at the office, and tried to shelter behind a wing of the building, but it was hopeless. I was glad when a little later someone announced that there was some tea inside.

The making of the talkie was no more than I had expected after the preliminaries; the camera was set in motion by the simple expedient of turning the switch, and W.B. just did his turn. When he had finished, camera-motor and sound-recorder were turned off, and the deed had been done.

"Well, 'ow did it come through?"

"Fine," we all chorused, for it had been a good turn.

"Did you like it, Walter?" asked W.B., addressing himself to our old friend.

"Too right, I did, Bill," was the pat rejoinder, for the opportunity to recall the broadcast patter was too good to miss, and Mr. Marshall rose to the occasion.

While the films were being changed, the Melody Four took their position by the piano, the microphone was adjusted, and everything was in readiness.

"Now once over to your Uncle Billy," and a dress rehearsal was staged.

Half-way through W.B. picked up a piece of cinder and wrote something on the wall, and later added another word.

"All right, boys, but there are a couple of things," and W.B. moved over and held a consultation. "Right

oh, lettergo," and the Melody Four made their talkie.

In the next and final act the five took part. It was the "Ode to the Kiwi," and even though we had heard it often it did not fail to raise a smile (for laughs were prohibited at this stage) when it was finally sung to the camera. A few moments after the last word had been uttered, the camera, sound equipment and microphone were down and packed, for there was another film to be made that afternoon. This week, the famous Rotorua Maori party are to have a film recorded at Rotorua.

"How does it feel like to be film stars?" I queried.

"Great, except we'll get a wire to take an aeroplane to Hollywood when they see this effort," said one of the boys.

"When will the film be ready?" we asked Mr. Biere.

"We'll develop it this afternoon, you can see it next week, and it will be out to the theatres a week hence, but when it will be released I do not know."

"That's fine," and thinking that our readers would like to see a piece of the film I asked if we could get a print in time for this week's issue.

"Yes, I think we can manage that," said the photographer, and that is how this unique picture is in the paper this week.

And so the first New Zealand studio talkie was made by broadcast artists.

A 1YA Lecture-Recital

MRS DAISY BASHAM, whose talks about famous composers are always so informative and interesting, will take for the subject of her next recital "Rossini." She will, on this occasion, be assisted by Mr. Len Barnes, baritone.

Rossini, happily remembered as the most modest and good-humoured musician who ever lived, holds his place on the operatic stage of to-day solely by "The Barber of Seville," which, in spite of its age, is one of the best comic operas the world possesses. His serious work, "William Tell," is no less worthy of affectionate regard, but except for the overture it has apparently disappeared from the present-day theatre. It begins with a fine, tuneful section for the 'cellos in four parts, popular with 'cello players and with listeners alike. The section which follows describes a great storm among the hills; calm succeeds, and a quiet pastoral scene, and there is a stirring march, these combining to make the overture picturesque and graphic in a way that the overture for the older Italian operas did not by any means always achieve.

One of the numbers to be played by the 1YA Orchestra on the evening of the lecture-recital will be the "Semi-ramide" overture, only the overture of which now survives. It is interesting, however, to recall that the opera itself made something of a success when given under Rossini's own direction at the King's Theatre, London, in 1824.

The 2YA Eight O'Clock Revue face the camera on the occasion of their last appearance in the series. From left to right, they are: Messrs. Wally Marshall, Sam Duncan, Will Bishop, Frank Bryant, Miss Doris Clark, Mr. Sid, Allwright, Miss Elsie Croft.

—Wallace, photo

