

Jottings

TWO of New Zealand's finest vocalists will shortly tour the YA stations. Merle Miller, 3YA studio pianiste, and a mezzo-soprano singer of outstanding merit, will, early in September, give three recitals from 1YA and 2YA. Later in the month Margherita Zelanda, coloratura soprano, of Dunedin, who toured the YA stations a few months ago, under engagement to the Broadcasting Company, and who created a furore when she sang at the Auckland Radio Exhibition, will appear at all stations.

IT was pleasing to hear "Uncle Jack" on the air again last week from 3YA. Uncle Jack, who is Mr. E. J. Bell, Librarian at the Public Library, Christchurch, was the pioneer of radio uncles in New Zealand, and a very popular one. It is a year or more now since he last appeared before the microphone of the children's session, which he forsook because of pressure of other duties. Children who love stories will look forward to hearing him again.

MR. A. B. CHAPPELL, chairman of the 1YA Musical and Dramatic Committee, will give a talk over the air on Wednesday evening, August 19, telling listeners the why and wherefore of this committee, and the work which it does. This is one of fourteen such committees, representing many sections of listeners' interests, who meet regularly and whose advice and recommendations the Broadcasting Company value very highly.

MR. OLIVE DRUMMOND, 2YA's well-known announcer, will be leaving for Nelson on August 26 for a fortnight's vacation. Mr. A. L. Curry, announcer at 3YA, will relieve him in his absence. We are sure all listeners will join with us in wishing Mr. Drummond the best of holidays and a safe return to the microphone.

Auckland Piano Students' Association

To be Heard from 1YA Next Week

THE Auckland Piano Students' Association, which will provide an evening's entertainment at 1YA on Thursday, August 27, is now in the third year of its existence, and continues to justify its place in the Auckland musical world.

In addition to the study of piano-forte works by the members, a series of lectures embracing a wide field of musical interest is contributed to the fortnightly meetings by eminent visitors and local musicians.

The association has lately acquired a comprehensive and valuable library of piano music, four and eight-hand works as well as solo compositions. With such material at hand the prospects for future work are reassuring.

A gratifying testimony to the success of the A.P.S.A. is the recent formation of a Students' Association in Hamilton, which proposes to affiliate with the Auckland body. An interchange of ideas and music cannot fail to be of mutual benefit. A feature of the programme to be broadcast from 1YA will be examples of two-piano work in which the association specialises.

An Interesting Selection.

OF particular interest on the programme will be "The Warriors," by Percy Grainger. This is the music to an imaginary ballet written originally for orchestra and three pianos, and "dished up" (the composer's own words) for two pianos, six hands, by the composer. Probably listeners will hear it for the first time and opinions as to the merits will doubtless be considerably divided, ultra-modern as it is in construction. Some passages are cer-

tainly unique. The "imaginary ballet" conceived by the composer presents a pageant in which the ghosts of male and female warrior types of all times and places are spirited together for an orgy of warlike dances, processions, and merry-makings, broken or accompanied by amorous interludes; their frolics tinged with just that faint suspicion of wistfulness all holiday gladness wears.

In the finale he imagines them all gathered—a sort of Valhalla—old Greek heroes, black Zulus, flaxen-haired Vik-



MERLE MILLER, 3YA studio pianiste and a mezzo-soprano soloist of outstanding merit, who will shortly give recitals from other YA stations.
—Steffano Webb, photo.

ings, lithe Amazons, squat Greenland women, Red Indians, Fijians, and graceful cannibal Polynesians—all arm in arm in a united show of gay, innocent pride, and animal spirits, fierce and exultant.

2YA's Afternoon Classical Hour

THE hour of classical music broadcast each day by 2YA, from 2 to 3 p.m., appears to be finding much favour among listeners. In particular, the presentation, extending over four afternoons last week, of Beethoven's "Pastoral Symphony," played by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, and recorded on a series of five double-sided records, has aroused much favourable comment.

The Royal Auckland Choir

Long Record of Popular Activity

(By "Call Up.")

THE Royal Auckland Choir, composed of male voices entirely and formerly known as the Auckland Liedertafel, has enjoyed a lengthy period of popular and successful activity, having been formed in 1892. In that year Mr. Gilbert King, manager of the Bank of New South Wales, called a meeting for the purpose of forming an Auckland Liedertafel, and a good attendance resulted. Mr. Arthur Towsey was elected conductor, and held this position until he left Auckland in 1905.

The first rehearsal was held in the studio of Mr. Frank Wright, the well-known New Zealand artist, where the members stood or sat among easels, paint, and palettes, which, in the words of the conductor, certainly "lent colour to the meeting." At that early stage of the choir's career music was scarce and some difficulty was experienced in providing copies of full scores.

Since its inception the choir has explored the whole gamut of part-singing—every composer of note from 1600 onward having been drawn upon. There is an unwritten rule that at least four works out of eight should be new at each concert, and a work must have been performed at least four years ago to be selected for a new programme. It will thus be seen that a tremendous field is necessarily covered and that it is no easy task arranging the programmes.

After the late Mr. Arthur Towsey's resignation from the conductorship, Alfred Hill took the baton for a short time, and then he was succeeded by Dr. W. E. Thomas, Mus. Doc., Oxon., who has continued to hold the position ever since—a period of twenty-six years. The choir has been singularly fortunate in having such able conductors to assist it throughout its career.

There are at present just over eighty performing members, five of whom are original members and several others of whom have over thirty years' service with the choir to their credit. Three concerts are given each year, and these are now broadcast, the second of the 1931 series being heard over the air on August 20.

The patron of the Royal Auckland Choir is his Excellency the Governor-General, and the office-holders are: Mr. J. F. Ewen, president; Mr. B. H. Coltman, secretary; and Mr. Cyril Towsey, accompanist.

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