

Brass Band Concert

From 3YA on November 1

BRASS band concerts are a frequent feature of broadcasting programmes, and they are always acceptable to listeners in general, but additional interest will attach to 3YA's relay from Oamaru on November 1, owing to the fact that this is the first occasion on which the champion B Grade band of the Dominion has been put on the air.

The Oamaru Municipal Band won the B Grade championship in Dunedin in 1930. It secured the highest points in both selections, and put up two magnificent performances, of which the judge spoke in the warmest praise. Musical critics expressed the opinion that the band's playing was much above the standard expected in the B grade competition. A pleasing feature about the personnel of the band is that with the exception of about half a dozen players, the members are young fellows in their teens and early twenties. The conductor, Mr. Henry Pheloung, is a native of Oamaru, and belongs to an old family well known throughout New Zealand for their musical talent. His father won distinction as the solo cornetist of the old Oamaru Garrison Band, which, in its palmy days of thirty years ago, was the crack band of the Dominion. Another brother was at one time the premier cornet player of Australia.

To Mr. Henry Pheloung's innate musical ability, the Oamaru Municipal Band owes its present high standard. The band will render a march and a hymn, the overture, "Sunday Parade," and the selection "Nabucco" (Verdi).

Miss Vera Slater, A.T.C.L., will, in addition to acting as accompanist for the evening, contribute two pianoforte numbers. Miss Slater is a brilliant pianiste, and has had a most successful career. In 1922 she was awarded one of the two senior exhibitions offered in New Zealand under the Trinity College examinations, the examiner, Mr. Creser, speaking in highest appreciation of her performance. Listeners are promised a treat in her two numbers.

Other artists on the programme will be Miss Pratt, of Dunedin, whose beautiful contralto voice has previously been heard over the air, and Mr. Allan Shrimpton, an exceedingly fine baritone, who has appeared on the concert platform under the management of those well-known entrepreneurs, Messrs. J. and N. Tait. Mr. W. J. Hill, a violinist of repute, and Mr. J. McLeon, a singer of songs in the lighter vein, will supply acceptable items.

The Oamaru Savage Club Orchestra is under the baton of Mr. Henry Pheloung, and is probably the finest combination of its kind that has existed in Oamaru. Recent public appearances have won for it unstinted praise.

The whole of Sunday evening's programme has been carefully selected, and promises to be the most enjoyable concert organised in the White Stone City for many years.

Still They Complain

Even the B.B.C. Comes Under Constant Fire

The British Broadcasting Company, with the wealth of revenue derived from four million licensed listeners and the world's finest artistry at its command, undoubtedly provides an excellent service. But—well, just glance through the following extracts from recent London papers, and you will realise that the B.B.C. is subject to criticism on all points precisely as is the broadcasting service of this Dominion. You will learn, too, how the B.B.C. system of allegedly non-political control lends itself to political exploitation at the expense of the licensed listeners.

THERE was too much organ yesterday—three recitals in seven hours.

WHY was London Regional idle for two consecutive hours yesterday? It meant that London had to take a two-hour programme from the Midland studio.

DURING vaudeville broadcasts I have often noticed with some pain that the individual playing the piano accompaniment seems to be seized with a kind of frenzy, which renders the singer practically inaudible. Several of my readers have written to me protesting. They call on the B.B.C. either to advocate a more frequent use of the soft pedal or to shift the piano further away from the microphone.

I STILL find a good deal wanting in the voices of the dance band vocalists. Again I stress the importance of this point to dance band leaders. If they must have a "voice" let it be a good one.

VARIETY may be the spice of life, but it is certainly lacking in the B.B.C. programmes for Sunday.

THE "Evening Standard," prompted by the ever-increasing interest in public broadcasting, has formed a complete wireless department. Its policy will be "better wireless"—better transmissions, better reception, better apparatus.

THE B.B.C. certainly might arrange for a little more variety.

THIS week has been made notable by the fact that the National Anthem was broadcast. . . Thirty-six Continental stations close down with their national anthem; but the national anthem of the greatest kingdom on earth is never heard.

JUDGING by the letters that reach me, it is not Bach and the high-class music that is most generally criticised, but vaudeville and jazz.

THE B.B.C.'s new arrangement with the Post Office, whereby the latter will receive 10 per cent. instead of 12½ per cent. of the license revenue, is regarded in many quarters as unsatisfactory. Even now, it is contended, the Post Office is taking far too large a share of the license revenue, and this, in conjunction with the fact that the Treasury is receiving a large proportion also, is undoubtedly hampering the B.B.C. considerably. I hear also that pressure is likely to be brought to bear on the B.B.C. to devote this extra £35,000 to a more satisfactory Empire short-wave service. That this is unlikely to be done is obvious when the B.B.C.'s financial position is examined.

Rigid economy is still being practised at Savoy Hill, and there is no doubt that, what with the cost of the Regimental scheme and the new Broadcasting House, the B.B.C. has not a penny to spare.

THE appearance of the B.B.C. Theatre Orchestra in the Sunday programmes has led many of my correspondents to express the hope that the B.B.C. is at last determined to give up its die-hard policy about brighter Sunday programmes. I must admit that I myself was surprised when I noticed in the National programme for Sunday that at 4.15 the Theatre Orchestra would play a more or less popular programme of music, but on inquiry I find that the B.B.C. has not the slightest intention of revising the Sunday programme policy; nor has it any intention, at the moment, of broadcasting alternatives to the religious services; nor is there any intention of retiming the evening programme items, so as to allow listeners to listen to the

main musical broadcast at 7.30 or eight instead of 9.5. So I am sorry to disappoint my readers. The die-hard Sunday programme policy still survives!

RADIO listeners should protest most strongly against the proposal to impose a further tax on broadcast entertainment. If the recommendations of the Economy Committee—now being considered by the Government—that another £475,000 should be filched from the radio revenue go through, the result can only be a depreciation in the entertainment values of B.B.C. programmes. There is some slight excuse for the Post Office netting its £226,583 from wireless licenses, because the Post Office contributes, or has contributed, a little toward B.B.C. services. But the Treasury has done, is doing, and proposes to do nothing for the £516,426 it took last year. At the present rate of license-issue the Treasury would get another £596,166 this year, but the proposal is that this sum should be increased to more than £1,000,000.

IT is a disappointment to find that the B.B.C. has made an alteration in the usual programme routine. For some considerable time Leonardo Kemp and the Piccadilly Hotel orchestra have been a welcome item during the lunch hour every Monday and Tuesday. They are particularly skilful at selecting the appropriate kind of material for that session. Now they are confined to one day only, and their place was taken, this week, by a concert from the Manchester studio, where three artists rendered a programme that was perfectly suitable to a Sunday evening and perfectly unsuitable to a week-day lunch hour. Savoy Hill will not displease the public if they discover the superiority of second thoughts.

LEONARD GOWINGS is a veteran broadcaster. Neither his nasal tone nor interpretation pleased me. Among others, he sang the old favourite "O Mistress Mine," and "Slow, Horses, Slow," by Mallinson. The latter was interpreted in a manner contradictory to the title and theme. Then there was the Studio Orchestra with a dolorous programme, Arne's bright, frolicsome stuff being followed by dismal matter by Dr. Cyril Rootham. Most of the afternoon was mournful. Later the Wireless Chorus accentuated the gloom with ecclesiastical music by Byrd and Hoist. In the Byrd numbers the chorus gave every credit to Mr. Stanford Robinson, the conductor.

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