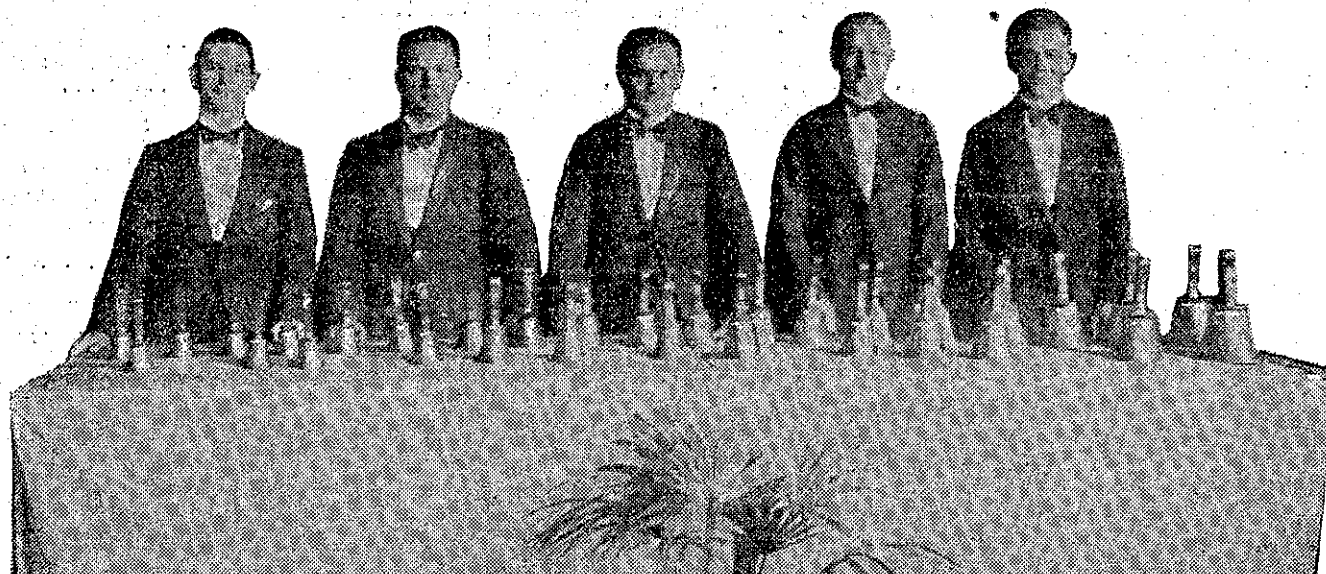




The Radio Bellringers and Marimba Quartet.

Personnel (from left to right): H. Dalziel, E. J. Andrews, L. Andrews, W. J. Sution, F. K. Eggers.

Novel Broadcast by the Radio Bellringers

MANY of those who hear this novel broadcast from 4YA will no doubt recall, with pleasurable memories, the periodical visits to the Dominion of the Lynch family of bellringers, and that very popular combination, the Barnado boys.

The Radio Bellringers have been working for some considerable time to make themselves proficient in this old-time art of entertaining, and have reached a state of proficiency which, it is claimed, places them in the same rank as the professional companies which have been heard at various times in the Dominion.

The origin of bell-ringing is lost in the mystery of by-gone ages. Although the bell is found in almost every country in the world in one form or another, nothing is known of its invention, which, in all probability, dates from the time when the sonorous properties of metals were first recognised.

In China bells have been in use for more than 4000 years, and in a larger form than in any other country. The oldest bells yet discovered in Europe are not castings, but plates of metal bent into shape and riveted or brazed together where the edges meet. Bells in their earliest forms were small, similar to the hand-bells which will be used by the Radio Bellringers, but as their use became more general for public purposes they greatly increased in size.

From the earliest days of civilisation the bell, in some form or other, has played an important part in the lives of the people. There is not the slightest doubt that bells, as we now know them, were invented by the Christian Church, though not at the earliest period of its existence, for then, in consequence of persecution, no loud summons was possible as a signal for assembling.

On great occasions in life the bell is called into play as a concomitant to the emotional expressions of people. On festive occasions, such as weddings, national celebrations, etc., the pealing of bells expresses joy. The same bells, muffled, convey sorrow or grief at the passing away of some loved one. In the Mediaeval Church an individual was cursed by "Bell, book and candle." Danger was expressed by the rapid pealing of a bell, as, for example, the fire-bell. As a means of denoting the hours of the day the bell has been used for centuries—both at sea and on land. Poets have found inspiration in the "deep-toned chime of the bell," and composers have not hesitated to use the bell as a means of

On Saturday, August 27, listeners to 4YA will hear for the first time the Radio Bellringers—a combination of five players who will revive a form of entertainment which at one time was extremely popular and maintained several touring companies in various parts of the world.

obtaining some particular effect in some of their compositions, as, for example, the tolling of the bell in the "Miserere" scene in "Il Trovatore."

Bells are made of what is known as bell metal—an alloy of copper and tin, in reality a species of bronze. The erroneous idea that silver and gold as component parts of the alloy improve the tone of the bells may be traced to the custom of casting gold and silver coins into the molten metal when it was blessed by the priests, who processed solemnly round the furnace, reciting a psalm.

The approved design of a good bell is the result of the accumulated experience of many generations of bell-pounders. The scientific proof as to why this particular form should be the best is yet to be set forth. The approved form cannot be deviated from without injury to tone and tune. The details are intricate and the variation most delicate. These secrets the bell-pounder keeps to himself, because the allowances which must be made for tuning while yet maintaining the best proportion are the result of long experience which cannot be taught.

ENGLAND possesses very few ancient bells, which may be accounted for by the havoc and destruction made upon them at the time of the Reformation, when they were looked upon as so much metal that could be realised; consequently many were sold as old metal. In the eighteenth century also a common way of raising money to restore church buildings was to dispose of the bells, which were sold as old metal.

The war period saw the destruction of some of the world's finest bells when Germany was forced to render them into metal for war purposes.

The bells which listeners will hear from 4YA on Saturday, August 27, will ring out melodies well-known to all music-lovers. The times of performance are 8.30 and 9.28 p.m.

In addition to the bell numbers, each member of the combination is a xylophone player, and they will introduce in addition to the bell solos two marimba quintets. This is the first occasion on which the marimba ensemble has appeared before the microphone, and the various numbers to be played should constitute some of the brightest features on the radio-programmes of the week.