

neighbours, and acquired so little knowledge of them that the country within a day's ride of its most important garrison is an absolute terra incognita, and that there is absolutely no security for British life a mile or two beyond our border."

The result of this minute was that a frontier Commissionership, including Sind, was sanctioned by the Home Government and Sir Frederick (after Lord) Roberts, had been designated as the first Commissioner when the outbreak of the second Afghan War caused the project to be postponed.

Twenty-three years later the project was successfully brought to completion by Lord Curzon, but on a more modest scale than Lord Lytton's proposals.

In the course of a recent interview Captain Falcon stated that things on the frontier were quiet at present; any isolated uprisings were purely local.

The tribes, he said, were very pleased with their new system of government. They were governed by a British Army officer. The reason for the long history of trouble on the frontier could be explained by the natural desire of the tribes to fight. They could not help it, it was more or less inherited.

They were always fighting, and they were always looting. The disturbances that had taken place were merely ordinary occurrences in the normal lives of the tribes. These, rather naturally perhaps, had been exaggerated in the eyes of the public, by reason of the fact that India, where there was serious trouble at times, was apt to be confused with the border region. Any recent raidings in the border were purely normal happenings.

The tribesmen, Captain Falcon added, were very fierce, bearded and warlike men. They were very treacherous, and were always ready to plunder, or to kill or murder. They needed to be dealt with firmly.

Captain Falcon is well known in Auckland, where he delivered a number of lectures on conditions in Afghanistan and surrounding country some years ago. He is shortly to return to his army position at Poona.

An Ingenious Argument

AN Auckland tenant in making a further request for reduction of rent played her trump card when in all sincerity she remarked to the magistrate that she thought a reduction should be made, as wireless reception in her street was poor.

GRAND OPERA FROM 4YA

Complete Presentation of Mozart's "MAGIC FLUTE"

ONE of the outstanding radio concerts of the year is scheduled for Saturday, September 24, when 4YA will relay from His Majesty's Theatre a complete presentation of Mozart's magnificent grand opera, "The Magic Flute."

Mozart wrote and produced "The Magic Flute" in 1791, the year of his death. He wrote it to help Schikaneder, an actor-manager of highly-mingled virtues and vices, who yet had the gift of winning friends. This musical extravaganza (for that is what it really is) was highly successful, and it relieved Schikaneder from his financial straits. It is the more extraordinary, therefore, that this managerial upstart could not see his way to help Mozart in his distress; for while the cheery people of Vienna flocked nightly to see the amazing "show" and to hear the master's incomparable music, Mozart lay dying in deepest poverty. Within a few hours of his last breath he wished he might conduct another performance of the work, and he smiled when, at his request, somebody sang Papageno's air.

Yet Mozart was laid in a pauper's grave, which has never since been located, while Schikaneder waxed fat. So humanity conserves chaff and throws the wheat to the four winds of heaven!

Mozart was an enthusiastic Freemason, yet at the same time a fairly devout Catholic, and this led to his composing some very important Masonic music, and is also said to have inspired some of the mysterious touches in his opera, "The Magic Flute." Actually, however, there is little reason to believe that Freemasonry played any part in the composition of this work, although from time to time various writers have set out to prove that it is Masonic in its origin.

"The Magic Flute" is an opera in two acts, the action occurring at the Temple of Isis at Memphis, about the time of Rameses I. In some of the finest music ever written it unfolds the love story of Tamino, an Egyptian prince, and Pamina, daughter of the Queen of Night. The other principals are Sarastro, High Priest of Isis; Monostatos, a Moor, chief slave of the temple; the Queen of Night; Papagena, and Papageno, a picturesque bird-catcher.

The overture to "The Magic Flute" is one of the most popular, and one of the greatest, of all operatic overtures, and the score abounds in delightful melodies, including a magnificent quartet, which is said to have been planned by Mozart during a game of billiards, of which it appears he was at least as fond as was the philosopher Herbert Spencer. Another terrifyingly dramatic aria is the Queen's Air, famous not only



for its beauty, but for its extreme technical difficulty, more especially for its remarkable range. It was specifically composed by Mozart for his sister-in-law, who first played the role. Other great solos are Sarastro's magnificent "Invocation" (Great Isis), in which he prays the gods Isis and Osiris to give strength to the neophytes Pamina and Tamino, and the noble air "Within These Sacred Walls," justly considered one of the finest of basso numbers.

The music is some of the finest ever written by that master of pure lyrical melody, Mozart; the story abounds in humour as well as tragedy, and Mozart's handling of humorous themes is inimitable. The staging and dressing is being done on a lavish scale, although that will not be noticeable to radio listeners.

Mr. Alfred Walmsley, who is in charge of the production, can be relied upon for a first-class presentation. He is thoroughly familiar with the work, having played the tenor solo roles in several productions in London, including some with Sir Thomas Beecham, who is probably the greatest living conductor on Mozart's works. Mr. Kirk Burnand will conduct a full operatic orchestra and ensure the success of direction.

The principal soprano role, that of Pamina, daughter of the Queen of Night, will be played by Madame Winifred Fraser. Madame Fraser is well known throughout the Dominion for her artistry and her dignified stage presence, fine voice, and interpretative powers make her an ideal Pamina.

The arduous role of the Queen of the Night, whose music goes to top "F" in alt, will be sung by Miss Jean Mee, a young singer with an unusually high, clear voice. The tenor role of Tamino will be taken by Mr. Walmsley. It will be remembered that Mr. Walmsley won an operatic exhibition at the Royal College of Music, and after his training there was engaged by the Carl Rosa Grand Opera Company, playing parts for them in the Lyceum Theatre, London, and on tour. Mr. Walmsley, with other members of the cast in London, was personally coached for "The Magic Flute" by Sir Thomas Beecham.

One of the most important parts in the cast is that of the bird-catcher, Papageno, whose humorous but beautiful music and comic, yet tragic figure, will be presented by a young Dunedin

singer, Mr. Jack Gordon, who shows unusual promise as an actor-singer. The role of Sarastro, the High Priest, will be taken by Mr. J. B. Watts, and other prominent solo parts are taken by Miss Betty Hamilton (Papagena), Mr. Dave Inglis (Monostatos), Mr. Frank Watt (Speaker), and Mr. E. Paris (Priest).

An unusual feature of "The Magic Flute" is the number of ensembles, particularly ladies' trios. The Three Ladies of the Queen have a number of trios, as have the Three Genii of the Temple. Naturally they have to be sung by experienced performers, so the three roles will be taken by Miss Estelle Burnard, Miss Phyllis Clare, and Miss Kathleen Butler, and the Genii by Miss Doris Wilson, Miss Dorothy Mackay, and Miss Edith Clare.

Besides the numerous principals in the cast there will be a chorus of about thirty, with a complete professional orchestra.

Children's Sessions

FROM 2YA.

Monday, Sept. 26: Radio children, Aunt Molly, Kipling Lady, and Uncle John are to be the guests of honour on a world tour to-night. We will visit all the different countries, meet the different people, and ask them to sing their native songs to the listeners-in.

Tuesday: The programme to-night is being supplied by the pupils from Madame de Mauny's studio. Jumbo and Jumbuna will conduct the session and send birthday greetings.

Wednesday: Sesame will have the pleasure to-night of hearing the delightful choruses sung by the children from the Kilbirnie Convent. Snow Queen and Snowflakes have also been invited to join in.

Thursday: Big Brother Jack has special animal imitation stories for you to-night, after which the choir from the Technical College will sing some of their well-known songs and choruses.

Friday: Wool Woman and Uncle Jim will be here in the studio to welcome the Glee Club from the Wellington Boys' College. Their conductor, Mr. Hislop, is bringing down another of his entertaining stories to read to you.

Saturday: Cousin Dorothy is bringing a surprise party to the studio to-night from the Hutt. It is for the benefit of Spot. Aunt Molly and Uncle Jasper have heard a rumour that they are not supposed to know anything about it.

Sunday: Uncle George will conduct the service to-night, and will be assisted by the children's choir from St. Matthew's Anglican Church.

Slot Radios

A DEVICE which prevents a hire-purchase buyer from using a wireless set unless the appropriate instalment has been paid has been invented by a radio engineer at Hartlepool, Durham. It consists of a time switch which is released by dropping a coin in a slot meter in the set, which operates a spring. When the time arrives for the next payment the spring will have run down, automatically cutting off the set. Listeners who buy sets with this device attached would, therefore, have to pay whatever daily, weekly, or monthly instalments was arranged before they could listen to programmes.

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