

Why I think

Radio Plays can be Broadcast Successfully

WHY have I persuaded the Board to allow me to break out in a fresh place and broadcast plays? For two perfectly good reasons.

First, because I firmly believe that listeners will miss a lot of good fun and enjoyable entertainment if plays are not broadcast in increased numbers in New Zealand.

We all like plays! We always have liked plays, from Punch and Judy upward, haven't we? Why, then, you may ask, did the play run last in the list of preferences in the questionnaire?

Probably because many of the plays broadcast hitherto were not written for radio presentation.

I suppose the average listener has not the slightest desire to analyse his likes and dislikes. He simply wants to be entertained, and dissertations on the technique of broadcasting probably leave him cold; wherefore I hope no one suspects me of attempting to give one. I'll risk a few brief remarks, anyway.

There are many rather obvious reasons why a broadcast play must be specially written for the purpose to be entirely successful.

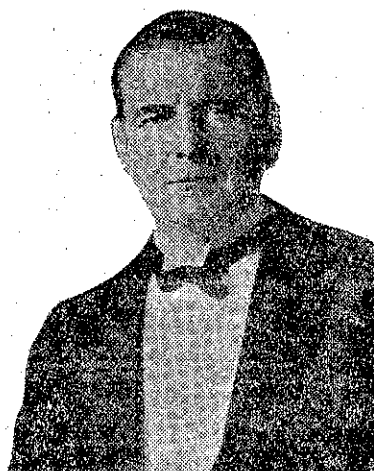
Everyone realises that a stage play, in its original form, is almost invariably unsuitable for broadcast presentation, and adaption is almost always necessary. Now adaption is a tricky business at the best, and it is certainly more difficult to adapt anything for radio presentation than for any other purpose.

Only an extremely good play can hold the attention of a radio audience for more than an hour, and this fact may necessitate cutting to

An Interview with that Prince of Mirth WILL BISHOP

WILL BISHOP

well-known Comedian
Broadcaster from 2YA
has written and will
shortly broadcast a
Radio Play



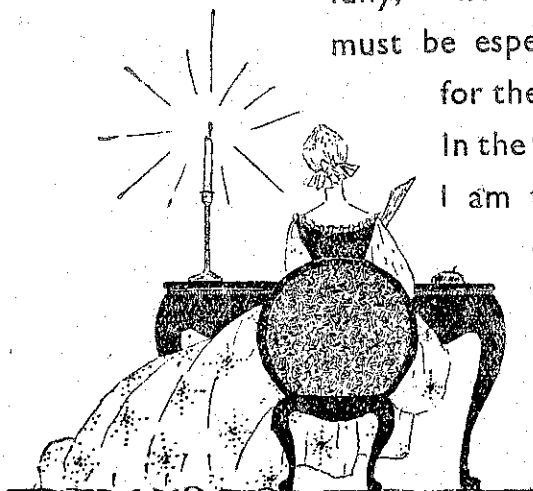
—S. P. Andrew photo.

... entitled ...

"THE DUMB WIFE"

In his interview W. B. explains his point of view with respect to Radio Plays. "They can be Broadcast successfully," he asserts, "but must be especially written for the microphone.

In the "Dumb Wife" I am taking a story—an old story and weaving it into what should be a broadcastable comedy.



keep the performance within desirable limits. Further, numerous additions to the dialogue are usually necessary to explain stage situations and to prevent misunderstandings by the unseeing audience. The result is frequently a somewhat clumsy and unsatisfactory version of the original play.

I believe, therefore, that the completely successful radio play can only be produced by securing a suitable plot and developing it for broadcast performance and for nothing else. If a play is written with the consciousness that it is for radio presentation the probabilities are that action and situations which are perfectly clear to the listener will be automatically produced.

IF the right type of play to suit the taste of New Zealand listeners can be evolved and developed, there are enormous possibilities of pleasing radio audiences. Variety in all forms of entertainment is always desirable, and while much of the world's best music is available on the record there is a definite lack of dramatic material to balance the programmes.

There should also be possibilities for short musical plays in future, and if the critics are not too severe upon me I hope to produce something in that line before long.

I know it is usual to give advice as to how to listen when radio plays are discussed, but I have no intention of doing so. I'd hate to attempt any instruction on the "art of listening." The "art of making 'em listen" is my chief concern.

Oh! I forgot to mention that my second reason for play-writing is a financial one!